

c285

APR 11 1949

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN JOURNAL

*A Presbyterian monthly magazine devoted to the
statement, defense and propagation of the
Gospel, the faith which was once for
all delivered unto the saints.*

Volume I — Number 1

MAY 1942

Yearly Subscription \$1.00

OUR SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN BANNERS

By Rev. William Childs Robinson, D.D.

THE TRIUMPH OF INCLUSIVISM

By Rev. E. Edwin Paulson, S.T.M.

CHRIST'S WORDS ON WAR AND PEACE

By Rev. Robert F. Campbell, D.D.

THE CHURCH AND WAR

By General Douglas MacArthur

WHY GO ON?

By Rev. Samuel McPheeters Glasgow, D.D.

A UNITED CHURCH

By Rev. D. S. Gage, D.D.

THE FEDERAL COUNCIL

By Rev. Daniel Iverson, D.D.

Our Southern Presbyterian Banners

BY REV. WILLIAM CHILDS ROBINSON, D.D.

"In the Name of our God we will set up our banners." Ps. 20:5.

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth". Ps. 60:4.

When Scottish Presbyterianism was threatened by Stuart Totalitarianism the leaders of the Church renewed the Covenant signing that hallowed document with blood drawn from their own veins. Recalling General Leslie from his service under Gustavus Adolphus, they marshalled an army to maintain their covenanted faith. As the blue stocking host gathered flying before each captain's tent was a blue banner with this inscription, "For Christ's Crown and Covenant".

When Hampden C. Dubose returned from the Confederate War he found that the fathers had fallen asleep, that the generation of young men who had escaped the sword has missed a college education, that the theological seminaries were closed that the colleges had lost their endowments, that few were left to lead in public prayer and that the songs of Zion were being sung by mourning women. But through the sorrows of war and the humiliation of Reconstruction, our Church was rich in God. The fathers had lifted their banners in God and the living God in whom they trusted did not forsake them.

In another hour of need, we are seeking to wave the banners which our heroic fathers lifted in the Name of God. Under these banners there have come to our people blessing and increase, power and strength. The God of our fathers is equally potent to-day. He is the all-sufficient God, all-sufficient for Himself and all-sufficient for His people. May His Spirit give us strength to keep these banners waving from every Southern Presbyterian Bethel, every place in which He hath caused His Name to dwell: the blue banner of covenanted loyalty to Christ as the only King in Zion, the only Head of His body the Church; the banner of His holy Word; the banner of the Westminster Standards which testify to His saving grace and sovereign glory; the banner of missions as the mission of the Church.

I. The Redeemer is the only King of Zion, the only Head over His Body the Church. Alexander Henderson used Psalm 110:1 to set forth the truth that God had placed Christ at His own right

hand to govern his Church. The Church is subject to Christ alone not to Caesar. As B. M. Palmer declared at Augusta in 1861, God hath given Christ to be Head over all things to His body the Church. I owe allegiance as a citizen to the country and as a believer to the Church. God has established two governments—Church and State—but neither of these is subject to the other, while I am subject to both and God is over both.

The Church recognizes the Headship of Christ when she accepts the system of doctrine, government, discipline and worship which He has given her in His Word and obeys His command to add nothing thereto (B.C.O. 10). Likewise when she confines her activities to the functions He has commissioned her to perform. God has not given to the Church the police functions of the magistrate, but the preaching of His Word, the enforcement of His law, the gathering and perfecting of His saints. The Headship of Christ is recognized in the acceptance of the sufficiency of the written Word, the architectonic principle of the Scottish Covenants. The Church is God's servant proclaiming His revealed will, not His confidential adviser presuming to supplement that Word in either worship, discipline or doctrine. The Headship of Christ is recognized in trying to govern the Church according to the pattern shown in the Mount of Scripture.

Presbyterianism is a system of church government by courts composed of elders (the presbyters of Scripture) called of God through the suffrage of His people. These courts are organized to represent the unity of the Church and to maintain the authority of Christ speaking in His Word. The Presbyterian officers receive their call, their authority, their gifts from Christ (Eph. 4).

II. The Bible is the Word of God written, the sceptre of the King, the mouth of the Lord, the rule of faith, life and worship. The Fathers of the Southern Presbyterian Church maintained the infallible truth and Divine authority of the Holy Scripture in distinction from those critical views which deny that the Bible is what it professes to be and what our Lord Jesus Christ declares it to be. Our Church has had its part in making the South the Bible belt. In His infinite wisdom God has given this Book to be a lamp unto our feet and where its light illumines the way the freedoms of mankind flourish.

The very architecture of our Presbyterian

Churches has testified that we have sought to be the Church of the Word. According to the Reformed Faith, the New Testament altar is in heaven where the great High Priest ministers, and that from this heavenly fount the blessings of the covenant of grace are dispensed by means of the pulpit where the Word is preached and the Table where the Lord's Supper is spread.

The Holy Spirit is the author of saving Faith in Christ and in working faith He uses the instrument of His own forging, namely, the Word He hath inspired. It pleases God by the foolishness of preaching to save, so that faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ. Thus, "faith has a perpetual relation to the Word, and can no more be separated from it than the rays from the sun whence they proceed."

III. As the Apostle repeatedly called his readers to observe the pattern of doctrine delivered to them (Rom. 6:17; II Tim. 1:12) so our fathers at their First General Assembly adopted the Westminster Confession and Catechisms as their confession of the living God. Our standards recognize a God who is infinite in majesty and eternal in love, a sovereign Father and a fatherly Sovereign. They echo the Saviour's "Father, Lord of heaven and earth." The consistent Calvinism of these standards is a vision of God in His majesty, of the King in His beauty and a consequent sense of our utter dependence upon Him. We depend upon God for truth and in the obedience of faith receive what He has revealed in His Word. We depend upon God for life and history as we state in the doctrines of foreordination, creation and providence. We depend upon God for religion, not seeking to construct human religious masterpieces, but worshipping the God who has graciously revealed Himself to Christian faith. Justification by faith alone means that we depend wholly upon the work of Christ for acceptance with God, that He is our Righteousness and that the Holy Spirit hath enabled us to receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation.

Our Confession sees God, the Father, first in creation, God, the Son, first in Redemption, and God, the Spirit, first in regeneration and seeks to give God all the glory of the whole saving process. In words that future events have proven prophetic Professor A. Lecerf of the theological faculty of the University of Paris brought this testimony from a Lutheran colleague to the Edinburgh Calvinistic Congress: "Our people need doctrine, a strong doctrine. I think God has something in store for His Church, something very dreadful. And because God knows that His Church needs a back-

bone, He is bringing her back to Calvinism which is the backbone of Christianity."

IV. In immediate connection with the Headship of Christ, our first General Assembly wrote upon our banner the Great Commission. Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature is the great end of our Church's organization and obedience to it is the indispensable condition of our Lord's promised blessing. Missions is the one grand comprehensive object a proper conception of whose vast magnitude and grandeur is the only thing which in connection with the love of Christ can ever sufficiently arouse the Church's energies and develop her resources, so as to cause her to carry on with the vigor and efficiency which true loyalty to her Lord demand, those other agencies necessary to her internal growth and efficiency. The Southern Presbyterian Church is a missionary society and every member is a member for life of that society.

God has so blessed this banner lifted first by a Church hemmed in by hostile armies that to-day we have more members on the foreign field than we had when we started in the home field. And though many of our missionaries have had to leave under the pressure of Japanese conquest, the seed has been sown and the harvest is certain. It is interesting to notice that our three ministers who have done the most noteworthy social service have been men who most emphatically maintained that missions was the mission of the Church. While they were loyally preaching the Gospel in season and out of season, God gave to Hampden C. Dubose the added privilege of sharing largely in the suppression of the opium traffic, to J. Leighton Wilson to contribute the decisive article which stopped the African slave trade, and to B. M. Palmer to deliver the eloquent civic address which crushed the Louisiana lottery. As these fathers of the Southern Presbyterian Church administered in the Church the task which the Founder laid upon the Church, God gave them the added privilege of accomplishing noteworthy things as citizens. They did not confuse the two distinct spheres in which men ought to serve the one God.

As my distinguished predecessor Dr. R. C. Reed well said, the Church is an institution that did not originate in the will of man and that does not exist to further ends determined by the will and wisdom of men. "Its mission is to promote the glory of God and the salvation of men from the curse of the law." "The Church is an organization of which Christ is the Head and King, it can speak only what He has commissioned it to speak."

May the God of all grace give our feeble hands strength to hold aloft the mighty banners which the Fathers of the Southern Presbyterian Church lifted in the Name of our God!