

The Presbyterian Outlook



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Let the People Know!

**THE GREATEST
weakness of our
church today is the
ignorance of the
average church member
as to what the church
is doing in America
and across the world.**

—WILBUR LaROE, JR., Moderator of the
Presbyterian General Assembly, USA.

Church Paper Week, October 12-19

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The Presbyterian Outlook

OLD IN SERVICE

Established 1819

NEW IN SPIRIT

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Affirmative Vote for FC Is Accorded by Synod of Oklahoma

USA Synod Asked to Share Control of Conference Site

One out-of-the-ordinary matter considered recently at the meeting of the Synod of Oklahoma was the denomination's relationship to the Federal Council of Churches. This question, submitted to the presbyteries for their advice, was taken up by the synod, with the result that, save for one negative vote, the vote was unanimous in favor of continued membership.

Another step by the synod was made possible by the First church, Durant, which presented the body a 20-acre conference site on the new Lake Texhoma, with half the purchase price already paid. Synod gratefully accepted the gift, elected directors, and planned to invite Oklahoma Presbyterians, USA, to accept joint ownership and control.

Much of the synod's activities had to do with the Program of Progress which it heartily endorsed. All objectives were accepted. Wade H. Boggs, Christian Education secretary, brought the challenge of the new movement now spreading across the church.

Popular meetings were devoted to men's work, when L. R. Klein of Dallas, president of Texas' men's council, spoke; and visitation evangelism, which was presented by Marc C. Weersing of Jackson, Miss.

Southminster church in Oklahoma City, where the sessions were held, is one of the newest in the state, having been completed last February. Francis H. Daniel, Durant, was synod's moderator. Next year's meeting will be held at the Beal Heights church, Lawton.

(EDITORS' NOTE.—This account is based chiefly upon information provided by H. Grady James, synod's stated clerk.)

Church of South India Is Formally Inaugurated

Madras (RNS).—A new experiment in Christian church unity began here with the formal inauguration of the Church of South India, which embraces all Protestant denominations in the area. The rites took place in St.

FEDERAL COUNCIL VOTE

Present standing of the vote by presbyteries on Southern Presbyterian membership in the Federal Council of Churches is shown below:

Against	For
Congaree, 17-8	Tennessee, 20-1
Knoxville, 30-13	Brazos, unanimous
Paris, 19-14	Potosi, 12-3
	Texas-Mexican, 23-1
	Lafayette, 13-5
	Lexington, 29-1
	El Paso
	Central Texas
	Dallas, 31-12
	Abingdon, 24-21
	Greenbrier, unanimous
	Synod of Okla.,
	1 negative vote
	Neither
	Kanawha*

*Kanawha Presbytery at its fall meeting, after defeating an "ultimatum type" demand upon the Council, adopted 45-5 (?) a resolution asking for a commission of the General Assembly, composed of an equal number from each side of the question, to investigate the Council. A similar proposal was defeated by the 1947 General Assembly.

George's Anglican Cathedral and were presided over by Chirakarottu Korula Jacob, bishop of Central Travancore.

The new church, which will comprise a Christian community of about 1,200,000, unites the four Anglican dioceses of Madras, Travancore, Tinnevely and Dornakal, the South India Provincial Synod of the Methodist Church, and the South India United Church. The latter body was itself a union of Presbyterian and Congregational Churches.

A packed congregation in the 130-year-old Madras cathedral, including 600 representatives of churches, missionary societies and Christian associations from all parts of the world, witnessed the solemn consecration of nine prelates who were named for episcopal sees in the United Church by a joint committee of Anglican, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and Methodist churchmen.

Of the 14 bishops, who include five native Indians, seven were formerly of the Anglican Church, three were Congregationalists, two Presbyterians and two Methodists.

S. C. Synod Cuts Out Lynching Reference in Committee Report

General Exhortations

Are Allowed to Remain

The Synod of South Carolina heard the annual report on Social and Moral Welfare, going step by step through a list of some common ills: a secularized and commercialized Sabbath; liquor; crumbling homes; sex delinquency; gambling; world disorder. Then it began to rub its collective eye and bend its ear to hear what was being said about Negroes and the Greenville lynching incident.

Samuel S. Wiley, former Navy chaplain, now pastor of Anderson's First church, as the committee's chairman, read on:

"... There are two special areas in which Christian judgment must be exercised. ... The question of civil rights of minorities involves the treatment of the Negro in the South. We call upon the Synod of South Carolina to condemn racial antipathies as incompatible with the Spirit of Jesus. [While we watched a lynch mob in a neighboring state escape justice, self-righteously congratulating ourselves that it could not happen here, there were brewing in our own bounds conditions which brought about a fiasco in which confessed murderers went scot free. Aside from the unfortunate national and international impressions of democracy as it is practiced in the South which were given, we must consider the judgment of God upon hateful prejudices between peoples. There is little to choose between Hitlerite Germany's treatment of the Jew and the South's attitude toward the Negro. The conquerors are infected with the same virus that tainted the criminal mind of the Nazis. Let us pray that Christian hearts may be entirely free from hate. Let us repudiate politicians who fatten on the cry of 'white supremacy,' sowing discord and hatred. The white race cannot maintain supremacy by injustice.] Jesus taught, 'Whosoever will be great among you, etc. ...' Let the white race show its strength by helping the colored man.

"We have a long way to go and the solution is not easy. Let not the fear of intermarriage, which is so often

THE OUTLOOK FORUM

Putting Up Other Lords

In Lieu of the Sole Lordship of Christ

By WILLIAM CHILDS ROBINSON*

IN the September 15, 1947, issue of THE PRESBYTERIAN OUTLOOK there is an article charging our **Book of Church Order** with putting too many and too high sounding words under the Lordship of Christ. That article endorses instead the language of the Plan of Union. Holding the doctrine of our book, I disagree with the doctrine of the Plan of Union. Agreeing with the doctrine of the Plan of Union, Dr. Frank H. Caldwell is critical of our book. Evidently, Dr. Caldwell and I recognize that the two statements differ. In defense of the doctrine of our book I wish to call attention to its history, its wording, and its meaning.

I. Its History

Our paragraph 8, which is a full statement of Christ's Headship and Kingship, is the **preface** to the Presbyterian Form of Government adopted by the Westminster Assembly. This preface represents the victory won in the Westminster Assembly by George Gillespie of Scotland against the Erastians who wanted the church governed by Parliament. And George Gillespie's testimony is the voice of Scottish Presbyterianism as enunciated by Melville, Bruce and Henderson against the efforts of Stuart kings to dominate the church. As the preface to the Westminster Form of Presbyterian Government it became the word of Christ's patience to the heroic martyrs who suffered and died for Presbyterianism in "the killing times" of Scotland. As adopted by the Westminster Assembly, this Scriptural statement carried the Biblical texts for every sentence at the foot of the page.

Our ninth paragraph was taken over, for substance, from "the Second Buke of Discipline" put into use in Scotland in 1582. We shall look at the change made in this paragraph in the Plan of Union later.

Our tenth paragraph sets forth exactly the doctrine which Principal John Macleod has described in his **Scottish Theology** as the Presbyterianism and Puritanism of John Knox and his associates. It is not directed against any Protestant groups. But it is a recognition that the Lord Jesus Christ as the bounteous Head, the generous King of the Church who has abundantly provided for his Church in his Word: her doctrine, her government, her worship, and her discipline. Macleod shows that it was this doctrine which made old Scotia's grandeur arise. James Walker in the only other volume on Scottish theology says that the Kingship of Christ over his visible Body was to the Presbyterians what the papacy was to the Romanists. And further, that the every day Presbyterian carried such a conviction of the presence of Christ in that worship which was solely of his ordering as surpassed even the Romanist's assurance of Christ in the mass—so that the Reformed Faith rose and the Romanist faith fell in old Scotland.

Naturally, Dr. Caldwell finds it hard to equate Presbyterian polity with the distinction between clergy and laity. But this is not an Apostolic distinction. In the New Testament we have the priesthood of all believers. The word clergy occurs only once in the Greek New Testament and that in the sense of the laity, the flock of God. The distinction arose about the year 200 and does not fit our polity which is drawn from the Apostolic Church.

II. Language

It might be proper to use all the hard words about the

language of our eighth paragraph used by Dr. Caldwell in his article, if these were merely men's words. But as the Doctor himself admits these words are for the most part literal Scripture. Indeed it is of Ephesians 1:21 that Dr. Caldwell used the sharp phrase "trying to gild the lily." When one so speaks of the Word of God he runs two dangers. First, he is in danger of setting himself up as the judge of the Word of God instead of taking the position of the penitent believer—letting the Word of God judge him. And, secondly, he is in danger of missing some of the meaning that is in God's Word for hours of stress and strain.

In 1939 when totalitarianism was rampant in Europe the Continuation Committee of the World Conference on Faith and Order met at Clarens, Switzerland. It considered two definitions of the church. These two statements are both as rich, as full, as detailed in their recognition of the Headship of Christ as is our paragraph which Dr. Caldwell condemns as repetitious. The Reformed Church of Holland drew up a heroic Pastoral Letter in September, 1941, taking issue with the position of the occupying Nazi. The first section of this magnificent document is as long as our paragraph 8 and quotes many of the same passages as we use, such as Phil. 2:9-11, Matt. 28:18, and Eph. 1:20-22. Will Dr. Caldwell indict these heroic brethren also with gilding the lily because they also appealed to the Christ whom God set "above all principality, and power and might, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come?" Or does he not rather stand in admiration and respect for their martyr testimony?

Would these full expressions of Christ's power have been too many for Pfarrer Paul Schneider when he was torn from his congregations and from his six children and sent to a concentration camp, because he had obeyed his presbytery and had come back from exile to minister to his flocks. And as he was dying in the Buchenwald concentration camp was the Presbyterian teaching that God had exalted Christ above all the demonic principalities which gave dominion and power to his Nazi jailors and that Christ would continue exalted above all such might in the world to come, merely gilding the lily? Some day when Dr. Frank Caldwell leads the hosts of God against such pagan powers as the Presbyterians of Germany and Holland met, he will find this eighth paragraph more meaningful than his article does.

In particular, his shortened form of this paragraph leaves out the Kingship of Christ. And this eighth paragraph is the only place in which our standards assert that Christ is now, by his resurrection and ascension, upon the throne of David. Here only do we echo the testimony of Peter at Pentecost (Acts 2:30f) that God has fulfilled his promise to David and raised up David's great Son to sit on that throne at the Father's right hand of which David's throne was the type. If this is left out, the way is open for that Dispensationalism which teaches that Christ is not now King and will not be King until some future kingdom age. The Presbyterian doctrine is that he reigns as King now in his invisible kingdom of grace and that he will sit upon the throne of his visible glory when he comes a second time in his glorious appearing.

III. Meaning

As our eighth paragraph was taken over bodily from the Preface to the Westminster Form of Presbyterian Government, so our paragraph 9 was taken over in substance from "the Second Buke of Discipline" of the Kirk of Scot-

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land. The meaning of this paragraph has been radically changed in the Plan of Union by the insertion of the word **and**. The "Second Buke" and our book say that Christ rules the Church, through his Word and Spirit by the ministry of men, thus mediately exercising his own authority and enforcing his own laws. The Plan of Union changes this to read: "He rules the church through his Word and Spirit and by the ministry of men." Throwing in that little word **and** has changed the whole sense of the paragraph. According to our book, Dr. Caldwell, for example, is Christ's instrument when he preaches and when he, in company with his fellow presbyters, exercises discipline so long as he and they act by Christ's Word and Spirit. But if Dr. Caldwell or I preach or act in judgment apart from the Word and the Holy Spirit then such an act is not the act of Christ, and if one of us gets the church of God to endorse such a merely human word or act he is guilty of great presumption. The Plan of Union by inserting **and** claims the authority of Christ for a minister's acts that are not according to his Word or Spirit.

Nor is this an accidental change. Our book, paragraph 19, says that, "The exercise of ecclesiastical power, whether joint or several, has the divine sanction, when in conformity with the statutes enacted by Christ the lawgiver, and when put forth by courts or by officers appointed thereunto in his Word." This paragraph 19 is taken over bodily and appears as paragraph 9 of chapter 5 in the 1943 Plan of Union. But it is wholly deleted in the 1947 Plan of Union. The omission in the 1947 Plan is "stunningly significant." The 1947 Plan of Union is unwilling to say that Christ is the lawgiver in the sense of the only lawgiver. The 1947 Plan takes the dominant USA position that the church has the authority to make and to enforce its own laws.

The 1947 Plan of Union says in chapter 5, section 2, that church assemblies "can call before them any offender against the order and government of the church." Our Book of Church Order says that nothing "ought to be considered by any court as an offense, which cannot be proved to be such from Scripture." In other words, Christ is our only lawgiver and his Word is our only law and one is only an offender if and when he has violated the teaching of God's Word. But in the 1947 Plan of Union the Constitution and the General Assembly become added lawgivers, and their decisions added laws, and one becomes an offender when he is out of accord with the order and government provided by the Constitution or decrees of the General Assembly, and as such may be suspended from the sacrament and deposed from the ministry. But our Confession well says that Christ alone is the Lord of the conscience and has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to the Word or beside it in matter of faith and worship. To this grand affirmation Dr. Peck added and Dr. Leslie approved the following: **SLAVERY TO CHRIST ALONE IS THE TRUE AND ONLY FREEDOM OF THE HUMAN SOUL.** Let us continue to teach with the Prophet Isaiah: The LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our King.

No, there is something more than a mere matter of words distinguishing the Plan of Union from the Southern Presbyterian Book of Church Order in regard to the Lordship and Headship and Kingship of Christ. Our book proclaims him as the only King in Zion, Head over all things to his Body the church. The Plan of Union does not so recognize him, but gives much of his kingly authority to mere men who often speak without his Word or Spirit.

More on the Lordship of Christ

By FRANK H. CALDWELL*

IN RESPONSE to my article entitled "Putting Words Under the Lordship of Christ," Dr. William Childs Robinson has written an article entitled "Putting Up Other Lords in Lieu of the Sole Lordship of Christ." With a view to clarifying understanding of my article in relation to Dr. Robinson's, I wish to make the following observations:

1. Dr. Robinson says: "Holding the doctrine of our book I disagree with the doctrine of the Plan of Union. Agreeing with the doctrine of the Plan of Union, Dr. Frank H. Caldwell is critical of our Book." It is a gratuitous assumption that I hold a doctrinal view of the Lordship of Christ in relation to the church which is at variance with our Book of Church Order. I subscribe to that doctrine of our book without reservation and I perceive no significant distinction between that doctrine as expounded in our book and as expounded in the corresponding document of the Plan of Reunion.

2. In Dr. Robinson's article he says further: "Naturally Dr. Caldwell finds it hard to equate Presbyterian polity with the distinction between clergy and laity." My article was not concerned to "equate Presbyterian polity with the distinction between clergy and laity." The statement of our book under consideration in my article was: "Christ, as King, has given to his church, officers, . . . all which are either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary inference may be deduced therefrom; and to which things he commands that nothing be added, and that from them naught be taken away." (Chap. II, Section 10.)

*Dr. Caldwell is president of Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary; he is a member of the General Assembly's Committee on Cooperation and Union and a member of the drafting committee which has prepared the Plan of Reunion which is now being studied throughout the church.

The critical judgment expressed and illustrated in my article was: "Christians of other denominations might well be inclined to say that it is arrogant and insulting. But let us be very conservative and restrained and just admit that it is a bit ambiguous, or misleading, or that it takes in rather much territory."

The point, if not clear, had nothing to do with attempting to state or justify a particular doctrine of ordination, of the "clergy," or of "the priesthood of all believers." The point was that, as a matter of Christian courtesy, and as a matter of interpretative restraint which would seem to be more in accord with that of related passages of the Confession of Faith, the language of Chap. II, Sec. 10 (but not the essential doctrine) might well be modified somewhat as has been done in the 1947 revision of the Plan of Reunion which says at this point: "3. The Lord Jesus Christ, is the only Head of the church, and hath given it the ministry, oracles and ordinances of God."

No "Gilding the Lily"

3. In his section on "Language," Dr. Robinson rebukes me for allegedly characterizing the words of Scripture as "gilding the lily." That would be a possible interpretation of one sentence in my article if taken in isolation, and I am glad to have the opportunity to clarify my meaning. My thought was not that Ephesians 1:21, or any other language of Scripture referring to Christ is, in itself, effusive, or of the nature of "gilding the lily." Rather, as I thought the context made clear, it is the practical effect of the use of such language at this particular place in the Book of Church Order which seems to me to constitute a "gilding of the lily." Previously in my article, the scripturalness of the language, the soundness of the doctrine, the desirability that such doctrine be included in our standards, and the fact of its inclusion in the Confession of Faith, had been explicitly stated.

4. Dr. Robinson further states of my article: "In par-