

# the PRESBYTERIAN JOURNAL

*The circulation leader among independent publications in the Presbyterian-Reformed world*

## Lost Through the Back Door

The pulpits of our land must resound with the exposition of Holy Scripture. This includes also adequate catechetical instruction of the young. The back door of the average church is wide open and more good people are lost via the back door, because they have not been adequately instructed, than are taken into the front door by evangelism through the conversion process.

—Harold Lindsell  
(See p. 9)

S. S. LESSON AND YOUTH PROGRAM FOR AUGUST 3

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## MAILBAG

### ANOTHER MANIFESTO?

I am working on a "Progressive Manifesto" that I intend to disrupt someone's church party with, but I haven't yet decided who. Maybe I'll take it to the local Presbyterian Vatican where it is so sorely needed.

There are three points in my manifesto. The first: I demand that

the next General Assembly be called off and that the \$75,000 thus saved the Church be spent in the alleviation of real poverty wherever it may be found. Better that than waste that much money as in recent conventions of the kind we've had.

The second: All board and agency personnel who are so passionate

about the needs of the poor — especially those of my city — shall be given a six months leave of absence for the express purpose of permitting them to take work in the "inner city." The salaries thus saved will be given to a committee of laymen only, who will see to it that these executives distribute the money among the needy in the course of their leave assignments.

The third: Instead of using the elaborate materials prepared for church schools by our office of Christian education, for a period of one year all local congregations shall sacrifice these aids and use the Bible only in their educational programs. The money saved by giving up this valuable material shall be devoted to the Church's first priority as defined by the last General Assembly — feeding the hungry.

On second thought: Because I am a Presbyterian and not a member of a minority group, I imagine any church I tried to read my manifesto in would probably throw me in jail.

—Doug Littleton  
Richmond, Va.

# the PRESBYTERIAN JOURNAL

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### NOT SO BAD?

As a commissioner to the 1969 General Assembly in Mobile I became a receiver of the *Journal* and have read the issues rather thoroughly before and after the Assembly meeting. I am writing now to advise you that I find the material in the *Journal* most misleading as it informs readers of the actions which took place there.

I found the Assembly moderately stimulating for generally forward steps which were taken. The way the *Journal* has reported those steps one would get the idea that this was a very radical meeting in which a small group monopolized everything and which will plunge the Church into some kind of catastrophic condition. Now, as a participant, I have to say that this simply did not occur.

Most of the actions which were approved should have occurred at least five years ago and I came away with a feeling that the commissioners, although not all overjoyed with everything accomplished, had a healthy sense of unity. The *Journal's* reporting seems determined to destroy this unity and to tear down the very slight progress we made in Mobile.

# True Worship Acclaims Him King

WILLIAM C. ROBINSON

According to the constitution of the Presbyterian Church US, the Church is Christ's visible kingdom of grace. To His majesty belongs the right to rule and teach the Church; this is done through His Word and Spirit by the ministry of men as under-shepherds who obey His authority.

To His Church Jesus Christ has given officers, oracles, ordinances, laws, and censures. He visibly governs His people when they observe His system of doctrine, government, discipline and worship.

"The acceptable way of worshiping the true God is instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men," states the Westminster Confession of Faith. Nor is He to be worshipped in any way other than that prescribed by Holy Scriptures.

As the Larger Catechism specifies, God forbids "corrupting the worship of God, adding to it, or taking from it, whether invented, and taken up of ourselves, or received from the traditions of others, though under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretense whatsoever."

When the constitution of our Church is followed, every worship service in each congregation witnesses to the reign of Christ the King. On the other hand, when that worship is used to express the imaginations of any group, however well-intentioned, the Church is no longer His kingdom. Instead, it becomes only a representative democracy.

When the Church's worship is

handed down from councils, boards or secretaries, it becomes merely a bureaucratic oligarchy. A spokesman for the confessing Church in its struggle against conformity to contemporary culture once said, "The Church is no longer the Church where it does not know a higher authority than its own, or an obedience other than that of self-government."

Moreover, "Religious worship is to be given to God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and to Him alone" (Confession of Faith). The introduction of popular melodies not addressed to God, the projection of pictures of nude women on the screen, the singing of irreverent songs — these things are not conducive to spiritual worship, whatever responses they may be intended to evoke.

Our Lord Jesus Christ did not commission His young people to sing such lines as "To . . . with Jehovah"! Rather, Jesus gave the first and the great commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord (Jehovah) thy God with all . . ."

Jesus wished to do the will of His Father, to do always the things that pleased Him, to worship Him in spirit and in truth, to glorify God.

## Christ Was Reverent

Notice particularly the deep reverence with which Jesus addressed God in worship: "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name." "Holy Father." "Righteous Father."

When He was rejected by the great cities, Jesus "rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, that Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes.

Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

If anything, this holy awe became more evident as the end approached. "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say, Father, save Me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father glorify Thy Name."

And then, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done."

At the end, His obedience was even more evident: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." He then cried, in effect, "Even though I cannot understand why Thou hast forsaken Me, still Thou art 'My God, My own God.'"

"Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit."

Christ died as the Lamb of God bearing the sins of the world, but He Himself was also the High Priest offering this sacrifice to God. As a true priest, He sacrificed Himself in the spirit of worship, adoring the divine holiness, vindicating God's fidelity to His covenant promises, offering a totally sufficient satisfaction to the justice of God, and thus declaring the Most High to be most righteous.

From His supreme act of worship we have a just God and Saviour. He who is the righteous Judge of all His creatures has made Himself our loving, forgiving, heavenly Father.

In every service of congregational worship, make it evident that Christ is reigning! Make His kingship visible in that Zion to which you belong!

"Crown Him with many crowns  
The Lamb upon His throne  
Hark how the heavenly anthem  
Drowns all music but its own." ☩

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