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the PRESBYTERIAN JOURNAL

Advocating continuation of a Presbyterian Church loyal to Scripture and the Reformed faith

In Vain

One scans World Council of Churches publications in vain for an expression of concern that men know Jesus Christ, be baptized as He has commanded and be added to the Lord in the Church of Christ. Conciliar leaders plead constantly that mission must be to "the whole man." What they mean is that mission must be to bodies, minds and social organizations. Concern for the immortal souls of men is not only neglected: it is scorned.

The articles, pamphlets and books pouring forth from Geneva and the conciliar mission boards are directed very largely (and in many cases exclusively) to carrying on mission conceived as humanization.

Some denominations abroad have ceased evangelizing — and growing. Some boards recall missionaries who are active in evangelism . . . Publicity, personnel and cash are given to development, not discipling. The focus remains unswervingly on man.

—Donald McGavran
(See p. 7)

S. S. LESSON AND YOUTH PROGRAM FOR SEPTEMBER 3

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MAILBAG

PRAISE THE LORD!

My father left a copy of the *Presbyterian Journal* which I have been reading. I am, to say the least, confused.

You see, my parents, now divorced, were (and still are) members of the United Presbyterian Church here in Oak Hill. When I was about 12

years old (I am now 23), I became a member. But I have only been a Christian for about 3 months. It wasn't through a Presbyterian church that I found my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Why?

I was never taught salvation or blood atonement there. In fact, I was always told people who took

their religion seriously were a bunch of fanatics. Now I am married and have a young child. I have been born again through Jesus Christ. I have come to see the UP Church for what it is.

But what's this? *Evangelism* in your *Journal*? A quote from Ramsey Pollard that schools that teach modernism have sinned? A strong stand against permissiveness in an editorial? Praise the Lord! The entire UP Church is *not* apostate!

But what of local churches? What about local UP members whose lives have been blackened by divorce, alcohol and spiritual confusion? What about the UP Church in Chilliocthe that is popularly referred to as a country club? Honestly, I wonder if the UP Churches I have been to — here and in Florida — are even connected to the same organization which publishes this *Journal*!

Why don't you spread the wonderful truth of salvation to the UP ministers so they can tell their congregations about it? We need unity, but not in apostate organizations such as the National and World Council of Churches. Rather in the name of Jesus Christ. We need born again believers who are looking for their Utopia in heaven (where there will be no denominations) and not the liberal modernists who think they can build a perfect society on the earth and that this is Christian doctrine.

If my family and I had known Jesus earlier, there wouldn't have been two divorces (my parents and my own). If we had been "fanatics" earlier, we all would have found happiness. I hate to say it, but some of the UP churches are sending a lot of people to hell by not letting them know about the salvation which is available in Jesus Christ. They let tradition and formalism take the place of Jesus.

No, we don't really need churches to find Jesus. He can be found anytime, anyplace. But it certainly is a shame to have so many buildings and so much money going into "dignified country clubs." I pray for *re-vival*!

—Mike Needham
Oak Hill, Ohio

There's a letter expressing both the frustration and the hope of this ministry. God willing, there will be a Presbyterian Church in this country through which people will find Jesus Christ.—Ed.

the PRESBYTERIAN JOURNAL

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ing at school. They are responsible for bearing witness to Jesus Christ. We have believed in Christ as our saviour and have acknowledged Him as our Lord, then we ought to be willing to make it known. There are many ways of witnessing for Christ. It is possible to do it in such a way that we appear self-righteous and arrogant. Of course, we want to avoid giving this appearance, but that does not give us an excuse for not witnessing at all. In our conversation we ought to let it be known that we believe in Christ and that we are grateful for what He has done for us. We can let it be known, without seeming self-righteous, that we go to church and that the life and work of the church is important to us. Just as the words we speak about Christ and His Church are important, so is it important that we live lives consistent with the words we speak. This means that our speech will be clean, wholesome and reverent . . . no dirty jokes and stories and none that make light of holy things. It means being clean and honest in our conduct . . . respecting the character and reputation of the people we date. It means being kind and considerate of other students and of teachers. When we say that Christ means much to us, our lives ought to show it.

The purpose of witnessing is to honor God. We do this not only by telling and showing how much Christ means to us but also by trying to win others to believe in Him and to trust Him as their Saviour. We do not do all that witnessing demands until we at least try to lead someone else to Christ. In the school situation we have some splendid opportunities to speak to our friends and acquaintances about their need of Christ and His love for them. Christ is not ashamed of us. Does it sometimes appear that we are ashamed of Him?

PROGRAM LEADER: As we begin another school year let us not make the mistake of thinking that school is just an interval of time to be endured until we can get down to the real business of living. Our school years are a very important part of our lives, and we need to enter into this time with seriousness of purpose and with the prayer that God will enable us to make the best use of it for our good and His glory.

Closing Prayer.



BOOKS



JOHN CALVIN VS. THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION, by Holmes Rolston III. John Knox Press, Richmond, Va. Paper, 124 pp. \$2.95. Reviewed by the Rev. William C. Robinson, Claremont, Calif.

The Marrow issue in Scotland and the antinomian controversy in England show that it has not been easy for Reformed theology to steer a safe course between the Scylla of legalism and the Charybdis of license. Thornwell put the matter thus: Christ is always crucified between two thieves, neonomianism that steals from Him the glory of justifying His people, and antinomianism which deprives Him of the honor of sanctifying them. If the thesis of this book can contribute toward easing these tensions, by all means let us consider it.

Rolston sees grace preceding law in Calvin and law coming before grace in Westminster. For the Reformer, grace is at the center of God with law as its instrument or means. Sin is primarily the failure of man to be grateful for grace, then disobedience to God's will. As created, man is grace-receiving. His first obligation is to own and trust in God. He is not made to achieve righteousness on his own and glory in himself. Abraham believed in giving glory to God. If there are riches of grace that we have not yet found in Calvin, let us by all means do so. We fear, however, that Rolston has made the contrast more absolute than his sources warrant. Certainly there is grace in the covenant of life according to such federal theologians as Rollock, A. A. Hodge and Dabney, and much law in Calvin.

Thus we have reservations concerning the presentation of the significant thesis of this book: the description of Adam as myth; the reduction of Calvin's three uses of the law to two, omitting that the law is given to restrain transgression; the use of Calvin to fault federal theology for not teaching universal grace at creation, and then faulting Calvin for not carrying through a complete universalism.

Rolston credits Calvin with teaching a righteousness of God communicated to man both by impartation and by imputation. Then he insists that there is not the slightest

hint in Westminster that righteousness in God is anything more than a demanding attribute. And yet our standards teach a communication of righteousness by imputation in justification, and an infusion of grace to renew the whole man after the image of God in sanctification (Larger Catechism, 75,77).

In the midst of this discussion, Rolston quotes portions of a sentence from Calvin's refutation of Osiander (*Institutes*, III, xi, 3). In so doing he omits from Calvin's sentence, "that Christ may justify us by the power of His death and resurrection." Osiander derives our righteousness from Christ's divine nature by a pantheistic transfusion without any reference to what Christ wrought for us in His human life of obedience and His death for our sins.

The emphasis in Calvin falls on what Osiander omits, for example: "When we say that grace was imparted to us by the merit of Christ, we mean this: by His blood we are cleansed, and His death was an expiation for our sins . . . If the effect of His shedding of blood is that our sins are not imputed to us, it follows that God's judgment was satisfied by that price" (*Institutes*, II xvii, 4). In a magnificent summary of what Christ has done for us in His incarnate ministry, Calvin bids us ever "see that our whole salvation and all its parts are comprehended in Christ. We should, therefore, take care not to derive the least portion of it from anywhere else" (*Institutes*, II, xvi, 19).

By all means let us magnify the grace of God with Calvin, but at the same time let us with him give to Christ all the glory for what He suffered and did — yes, and is doing and will do — for us and for our salvation. The grace of God is only fully revealed in the sinless Son of God giving himself for us fallen, guilty, undeserving sinners. Thus does He bring us, clad in His righteousness, to our gracious heavenly Father. ☩

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