

P 285
572P

The Presbyterian JOURNAL

APRIL 12, 1978
VOL. 36, NO. 50
\$6.00 A YEAR

REPORTING THE ENLARGEMENT OF A PRESBYTERIAN WITNESS LOYAL TO SCRIPTURE AND THE REFORMED FAITH

At Face Value

A person's approach to Scripture might be likened to this example: When you punch the numbers on one of those electronic pocket calculators, you take the figures appearing in the window absolutely at face value. It never occurs to you to doubt their accuracy. But when you read a historical novel for review purposes, you mentally stand aloof from it all, constantly asking, "Can this account really be trusted?" That's what "the battle over the Bible" is all about.

We have never known a theological problem to develop around the differences between the accounts of battle casualties as recorded in II Samuel and I Chronicles. But we have seen serious theological problems develop concerning basic salvation themes when one side staunchly defended inerrancy and the other side disavowed inerrancy but staunchly defended its evangelical commitment.

—The Editor
See p. 7

ENDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOR APRIL 30
BIBLE STUDY FOR MAY

COMP

Collection of NC Lib
Chapel Hill NC 27514



Mailbag

THE ERA DEBATE

The review of Phyllis Schlafly's book, *The Power of the Positive Woman*, by Mrs. Gregg Singer in the Feb. 1 Journal raises questions which deserve careful consideration.

Mrs. Schlafly and Mrs. Singer betray an alarming ignorance of or indifference to the facts, particularly those related to the present state of the law.

In fact, no federal statutes have removed "all inequalities that the positive woman might have found [previ-

ously]." Only a few states have, by passage of state equal rights acts, removed those inequalities. On numerous fronts, women are denied benefits or rights accorded to men, or are guaranteed those rights only by decisions of state or federal courts on constitutional grounds.

For example, only this February did a state court in Louisiana strike down a state law permitting husbands to unilaterally alienate community property. Pension benefits to widowers and deceased woman wage earners and housing benefits for families of woman military personnel were significantly less until the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the regulations in question on Fourteenth Amendment grounds.

Mrs. Schlafly also fails to appreci-

ate the reality of women's lives. It appears in her claims of privilege status for women. But for a significant number, regardless of marital status, employment is an economic necessity. As a class, however, women are, by education, socialization and unequal pay practices, as well as by "protective" labor laws, forced into low paying jobs.

Most disturbing is Mrs. Schlafly's exclusion from the ranks of thinking Christians of those who support equal rights for all people. Such a view is inconsistent with both law and Christian principles.

—Mrs. Melissa Rich
Cottonwood, Ca

NOT A DEBATE

In your March 15 article "Wheaton Area Is Target of Fundamentalist Witness" there are some gross inaccuracies which I believe in fairness should be corrected.

The last four paragraphs imply that Dr. Culver was participating in a debate with "opponents" on the issue of homosexuality, one of his "opponents" being the academic vice president of McCormick Theological Seminary.

The presbytery was seeking to hold an educational event, not necessarily a debate, though very differing opinions on the subject were represented.

Further, my role in the event was to serve as worship leader and "moderator." There is quite a difference between a person who serves as moderator and worship leader and one who debates someone as an opponent.

The seminary's position on the matter was in no way presented or argued by myself or anyone else at the meeting. I did just what a moderator is supposed to do—moderate the meeting and summarize the various positions taken by the speakers without editorializing.

Further inaccuracies in your article are to be noted in the fact that it was not a "public debate scheduled as a prelude to the UPCUSA Church presbytery's advisory vote in April." The Presbytery of Chicago adopted its statement in February opposing the ordination of homosexual persons. Nothing is scheduled for further discussion of the subject in April, nor was this seminar meant to be a prelude to any kind of pres-

The Presbyterian JOURNAL

ISSN 0032-7549

REV. G. AIKEN TAYLOR, PH.D., EDITOR
CHARLES E. BOYCE JR., ASSISTANT EDITOR
REV. JAMES A. McALPINE, MANAGING EDITOR
JOEL BELZ, ASSOCIATE MANAGING EDITOR

Seeking to promote a rising reformation in God's Church according to the whole counsel of God known as the Reformed faith; to define, describe, popularize and promote the Reformed faith; to encourage and assist Reformed conservatives; and to report on activities in Presbyterian and Reformed bodies.

THIS WEEK—

VOL. 36, NO. 50, APRIL 12, 1978

MUST THE BIBLE BE AN INFALLIBLE BOOK?.....7

Within the question of infallibility lies the entire basis of Christian faith
by THE EDITOR

THE CHURCH AND HOMOSEXUALITY.....9

God's plan for male and female must be the Church's guide in matters of human sexuality
by B. CLAYTON BELL

STANDING ON THE PROMISES.....11

In looking for God's promises, don't skip lightly through the Old Testament
by EVEREK R. STORMS

DEPARTMENTS—

Editorials.....	12
The Layman and his Church.....	13
Sunday School Lesson, April 30.....	14
Circle Bible Study for May.....	16

THE PRESBYTERIAN JOURNAL, a weekly magazine devoted to the statement, defense and propagation of the Gospel, "the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints," is published every Wednesday by the Southern Presbyterian Journal Co., Inc., in Asheville, N.C. Second class postage paid at Asheville, N.C. 28802.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: \$6 a year for individuals (add \$2 for overseas), \$4.50 for members of Every Family Plan churches.

EDITORIAL AND BUSINESS OFFICES: The Innsbruck Mall, 85 Tunnel Rd., Asheville, N.C. 28805. Phone (704) 254-4015.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND ADVERTISING: Address P.O. Box 3075, Asheville, N.C. 28802. Please allow three weeks for address change. Include old and new addresses and ZIP codes.

EDITORIAL AND NEWS: Address P.O. Box 3108, Asheville, N.C. 28802. Manuscripts on topics of current interest welcome.

POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to the Presbyterian Journal, Box 3075, Asheville, N.C. 28802.



EDITORIALS

And That's a Fact!

No discussion of Scripture in Reformed circles (see p. 7) can be considered complete without relating the Word to the Spirit and the Spirit to the Word.

"The Spirit breathes upon the Word . . ." in the language of the old hymn. It is the Spirit who opens the Word and who applies the Word—enlightening the mind and renewing the will by means of the Word.

Here's a mind-bender to unravel: Just as there is no word from the Living Word save through the written Word, so there is no saving or sanctifying word from the written Word or the Living Word save by the Holy Spirit—who points not to Himself but to Christ.

That much, Reformed theology unanimously believes and professes. But there is more. And without the rest, Reformed theology tends to move in tighter and tighter concentric circles until sometimes it seems almost

to turn inward upon itself.

Biblical theology which, in the hands (and hearts) of a Calvin or a Knox, turned the world upside down, in the hands of a 20th-century Calvin Doe or Knox Roe *sometimes* fizzles like a wet fuse and wins as many victories as a Don Quixote.

The difference is power and that, beyond the slightest shadow of doubt, means the quickening of the Holy Spirit—"Tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." This concept, power for witnessing and service, is one that modern Reformed theology too long has neglected.

The Spirit not only breathes upon the Word, He breathes upon the believer. This simple but oh! so important truth has been sensed and eagerly pursued by Pentecostals and charismatics—Christians who in their pursuit of spiritual power too often have misunderstood and even abused the

"gifts" aspect of the precious do-
trines of grace.

Too often it has been insisted that Christian manifesting the fruits of the Spirit must also manifest some dramatic gift of the Spirit, or he is "second-class" Christian. Not so!

While the Apostle Paul suggests that every Christian may claim one more of the Spirit's gifts, he qui specifically rejects the notion that any of the more spectacular or "public" ones may be claimed by every Christian or even by many Christians. For some, the gift may be to serve by one standing and waiting.

But a divine endowment must accompany the Spirit's testimony in, of and through the Word, or the Christian's testimony (in or out of the pulpit) will remain powerless.

And that's a fact!

When We Reach Fifty

Something seems to happen when one reaches the age of fifty. Part physical but largely emotional, we are inclined to view our lives as half full or half empty. Like the alcoholic with his half empty bottle, we are inclined to demonstrate something akin to desperation—that life is passing us by without our having accomplished what we want to.

When brought face to face with this reality of our limited human existence, some men and women will make a desperate attempt to hang on to their youth by way of mod clothing, teen-age slang, teen-age fads and occasionally through "last flings" with younger women; these all too often wind up with a divorced grandchild wondering what hit him.

Time, far from being our servant and our ally, becomes a grim enemy that all the pills, paints and potions cannot banish. At twenty, it would seem that we have time and energy enough for just about anything that takes our fancy. At forty, having achieved a measure of maturity, stability and security, most of us begin to use our time for a few more civic or community pursuits, as if to reassure ourselves that we are involved, useful citizens.

But the magic mid-century magic seems to bring about a new awareness of time, that it is not from a bottomless well to be frittered away. This

Equal Rights Are Forfeited

"Equal rights for all citizens" is a phrase much used in the current discussion of homosexuality. Let us consider this matter by using a true story from another field as an analogy.

A respected California citizen was convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol and causing an accident. He was given a mere fine and an admonition, for he was the president of a prestigious educational institution. Some months later while chancellor of the university, the same man, again driving under the influence of alcohol, was responsible for a more serious accident which took the lives of two ladies.

Here was a citizen of prominence, scholarship, culture and position. But he was denied a citizen's right to drive a car. Was the revoking of his license an undue discrimination of the rights

due all citizens? Or rather had this man not forfeited his right to a driver's license by his first conviction, and doubly forfeited it by the second accident in which his drunken driving destroyed two innocent lives?

Likewise, we hold that a practicing homosexual forfeits the so-called "equal rights due all citizens" and should not be placed in a position of authority over our children, either as a teacher or as a preacher.

The Supreme Court of the United States has upheld the right of a school board to drop a teacher known to be a practicing homosexual. The law of the Lord condemns all homosexual acts as sin (Gen. 19:1-11; Lev. 18:22, 20:13; Rom. 1:18-32; I Cor. 6:9-10; I Tim. 1:8-10), and the sole function of the Church as a spiritual government is to declare, administer and enforce the law of Christ as given in His Word.—WILLIAM C. ROBINSON. □