

The Presbyterian JOURNAL

OCTOBER 11, 1978
VOL. 37, NO. 24
\$6.00 A YEAR

C285
S-3P

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

Solitude!

For almost two years, I didn't talk to anyone or in any way share my life with anyone else.

I couldn't even tap on the wall to someone. My cell was completely isolated on all four sides from any other prisoners of war.

I had two points of contact. The Vietnamese, when they brought me my food or checked my cell. But I wasn't allowed to talk to them in any way.

My other point of contact was visual. I had drilled tiny holes with a wire through my door, and I would get my eye close to it and see other Americans out in the courtyard.

—Roger Ingvalson

See p. 9

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOR OCTOBER 29
CIRCLE BIBLE STUDY FOR NOVEMBER

COM

Collection
University of NC LIB
27514



Mailbag

END TIMES OR ANOTHER CYCLE?

Again we can be grateful to the *Journal* for opening up further discussion on an important issue—this time in “Postmillennialism Revisited” (Sept. 6).

Seemingly completely overlooked, as the interest waxes hot over whether these are the Last Days, is that there are cycles in the way societies go. There are rises and falls of civilizations. A knowledge of history tells us that following dark periods there have been great upswings in general human behavior throughout one nation, or many. The greatest example was Western Civilization itself with its great uplift brought about by the pervasive Christian influence in so

much of Europe and America. Civilizations have gone up and down for a long time now and they may do so for centuries, even millennia, yet to come.

Just because things look so hard again doesn’t necessarily mean that they will continue downward and the longed-for return of our Saviour will be soon. A good sense of history tells us that Christians have turned whole civilizations around before, and if they are good “salt” and “light” now, in Scriptural obedience, they can do it again. It need have nothing to do with millennial matters. It’s just “teaching them all things whatsoever I have commanded you,” whether He returns in 1984, 2984 or 10,984.

Obviously, God did not intend to give us clear answers to the millennial question. There have been so many giants of our faith—even believing in the absolute authority of an infallible Bible—in all four of the basic camps of the millennial issue, that perhaps I agree with my friend who says he is

only a “pan-mil.” And that’s one who knows an all-sovereign God will cause everything to “pan out perfect” as He moves history.

What must make the heart of our Lord grieve is this: Christians often seem to squabble among themselves over their differences more than they love one another because of their deep, central beliefs held in common. And we in our Reformed faith tradition are probably the guiltiest of this theological fault-finding, for we take doctrinal matters so seriously. But we must look to the great thrusts of Scriptural truth-giving, and not criticize our brethren over points lifted out of context where there are honest differences of opinion.

We can readily observe one fact: Those who become preoccupied with believing that surely our Saviour is coming shortly tend to neglect the work they should be doing in the kingdom here and now. Christ orders us to “proclaim the Gospel of the kingdom” and to teach “all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” As for the matter of the idle speculation about when His return will be, He told us that it is not for us “to know the times or seasons.”

We have a world to win! We have the leadership of it to take away from the humanists!

—Robert M. Metcalf Jr.
Memphis, Tenn.

The Presbyterian JOURNAL

ISSN 0032-7549

REV. G. AIKEN TAYLOR, PH.D., EDITOR
JOEL BELZ, NEWS AND MANAGEMENT
CHARLES E. BOYCE, PRODUCTION AND ADVERTISING

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. 37, NO. 24, OCTOBER 11, 1978

LEST WE FORGET.....9

With God at our side, we are never alone, regardless of where we may be.

by ROGER INGVALSON

TRAGEDY AND GLORY IN ETHIOPIA.....12

Missionaries may be temporarily denied access to a country but God can reopen the doors.

by ROBERT K. CHURCHILL

DEPARTMENTS—

<i>Editorials</i>	14
<i>The Layman and his Church</i>	15
<i>Sunday School Lesson, October 29</i>	16
<i>Circle Bible Study for November</i>	18

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.

MAILING ADDRESS: Subscriptions and

Advertising: P.O. Box 3075, Asheville, N.C. 28802. Please allow three weeks for address change. Include old and new addresses and both ZIP codes. **Editorial and News:** P.O. Box 3108, Asheville, N.C. 28802. Manuscripts on topics of current interest are welcomed. **Location of Office:** 12 Innsbruck Mall, 85 Tunnel Rd., Asheville, N.C. 28805. Please use this address for packages and parcels.

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

THREE CODES OF LAWS

The Pentateuch, or the first five books of the Bible, are books of law. It is helpful to distinguish the three principal codes or distinctions in these Mosaic laws, and their applications for our lives.

First there is the ceremonial law which sets forth in type God’s plan of salvation as that was later fulfilled in Christ. He was made under the law and satisfied it by obeying its precepts and also enduring its curse or penalty. We take refuge in Him who thus gave Himself in our stead that He might justly forgive us.

Then there is the civil law of the nation of Israel. This embodies and reveals valuable principles which need embodying in the laws of our states and nation. But the details of these civil laws of ancient Israel are no more binding upon us than are the laws of states or nations other than

our own.

Finally, there are the moral laws which have been well described as a transcript of the character of God, a revelation of His permanent will for His creatures. These laws are summarily comprehended in the Ten Commandments. They also include those additional moral laws of the Old Testament which are re-affirmed in the New Testament, such as capital punishment for murder and the condemnation of homosexual acts as sin.

These moral laws still govern the lives of God's people. We take refuge in Christ's righteousness for our forgiveness and acceptance with God. We accept Christ by faith and as He indwells us, we seek to be truly a follower of Christ, who perfectly kept the moral law.

The Holy Spirit writes these moral laws upon the heart of everyone who believes in Christ as his Saviour, his

Lord and his example.

—(Rev.) William C. Robinson
Clinton, S.C.

THIS AND THAT

May I commend you for the excellence of your publication. Your news of religion touches the highlights and is quite informative. Articles are edifying and Pastor Patteson's "God's Grace and Our Discipleship" (Sept. 20 *Journal*) should be reprinted in every evangelical publication in the country.

—A. C. Fortosis
Grand Rapids, Mich.

I enjoy your paper very much. It does interfere with my crocheting; I have to lay it down and read the *Journal* as soon as it comes!

—(Mrs.) Alvin W. Smith
Pittsburgh, Pa.

MINISTERS

Malcolm Bullock from Woodleaf, N.C., to the Hopewell Church (PCUS), Huntersville, N.C.

D. Scott Lindsay from Charlotte, N.C., to the Little Chapel (PCUS), Wrightsville Beach, N.C.

Robert Milliken, from Newburgh, N.Y., to the Reformed Presbyterian Church (RPCES), Lookout Mountain, Tenn.

Wilbur V. Siddons (RPCES) from Lancaster, Pa., to the Friendship Village South Retirement Home, St. Louis, Mo., as chaplain.

Vincent O. Titterud, Monroeville, Ala., has been honorably retired by Mobile presbytery (PCUS). He will continue to reside in Monroeville.

William H. Todd Jr. from Greenville, Miss., to the First Church (PCUS), Dalton, Ga.

Bertrand R. Tuggle from Memphis, Tenn., to the Swift Church (PCUS), Elberta, Ala.

D. Annette Vaughn from Conyers, Ga., to the Providence Church (PCUS), Chamblee, Ga., as associate pastor.

William B. Young from Charlottesville, Va., to the Norris Lake Church (PCUS), Lithonia, Ga.



Across the Editor's Desk

● There is much, much more behind current activities of the World Council of Churches (see p. 4) than meets the eye. For example, just as protests against that \$85,000 gift to a Rhodesian revolutionary group reached a crescendo—and as announcements from Geneva indicated that staff is being cut back for lack of funds—the WCC discovered that it had another half million dollars to distribute worldwide "to combat racism." The Fund to Combat Racism is supported by "special gifts" outside the regular channels through which funds flow from the WCC's member Churches. Special gifts from whom? Nobody is saying, but the WCC has very strong connections behind the iron curtain, from which comes a large bloc of its member Churches. Would the World Council of Churches deny

that it is getting the money with which it is doing so much mischief from Communist sources?

● Incidentally, the team reported on p. 4 was scheduled to tell their story on the campus of Duke University, Durham, N.C. Their appearance had to be canceled, however, when activist student groups threatened to riot.

● We were intrigued by a modern "parable" in the newsletter of the Fayetteville, Ga., Presbyterian Church. It seems that in a certain congregation the manager of the local grain elevator was asked to become the church's treasurer. He accepted on two conditions: 1) that no report would be required for at least a year; 2) that no one ask him any questions during the year. The congregation gulped but agreed, since everyone trusted him and most of the members did business with his grain elevator. At the end of the year, he gave his report: The indebtedness of \$250,000 on the church was paid. The minister's salary had been increased. The missions quota had been paid—200 per cent. There were no outstanding bills and there was a cash balance of \$12,000. The shocked congregation

asked, "How come?" The man answered: "Most of you bring your grain to my elevator. As you did business with me, I simply withheld ten per cent on your behalf and gave it to the church in your name. You never missed it!"

● Changing the subject: Once or twice in these columns we have hinted that we are less than enthusiastic about the so-called PTL ministry headquartered in Charlotte, N.C. Challenged by some of our readers, we have not been able to put satisfactory answers on paper, or in print—libel laws being what they are and our sources of information being quite confidential. We now have an item we *can* and believe we *should* print: The Associated Press has reported that in late July or early August, PTL president Jim Bakker bought a 43-foot houseboat and dock for which he paid about \$25,000. Just a few days *before* the purchase, Mr. Bakker had written to supporters that in the face of a current financial crisis, he and his wife were donating their money to the PTL ministry. "Tammy and I are giving every penny of our life's savings to PTL," he said. [1]