

*The Southern*

# PRESBYTERIAN

*Journal*

VOL. XVIII NO. 2

MAY 13, 1959

\$3.00 A YEAR

## **A Changed Church!**

*We all are willing, even anxious, to pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on our church and all of her activities.*

*Are we willing to receive this blessing in our own hearts? Are we willing to pay the price of completely surrendered and Spirit-filled discipleship?*

*In praying for revival let us begin at the right place—in our own hearts and lives.*



the use of the means of grace — the Word, the sacrament and prayer. In the case of children of the covenant they are included in God's promise to be a God unto us and to our seed after us. This is confirmed by the record of household baptisms in the New Testament and the word of the Apostle that the unbelieving spouse is sanctified by the believing one so that the children of even one believing parent are holy in this covenant sense, I Cor. 7:14. Infants are baptized, on the promise of God, unto future repentance and faith. By these graces they are consciously united to Christ and confess for themselves the engagements made for them by their parents.

There is an interesting analogy of this process given in Hebrews 11 in the case of Moses. The account of his faith begins with a statement that he was hidden by his parents when a babe and so saved from the commandment of death to him enunciated by Pharaoh. This is followed by a statement of Moses' own existential decision of faith. Thus one may say that by Faith God saved the baby Moses from the wrath of the King, and also that by Faith God made a believing man of Moses.

Other analogies may be found in the faith of Abraham and of Sarah as they laid hold on God's promises for an heir; and of Mary and of Joseph in their respective parts in their household. It is also interesting to notice the many cases in the Gospels in which one person exercised faith and prayer and another received the blessing. In sundry of these examples our Lord first tested the faith of the one and then granted the blessing to the other: the Syro-Phoenician woman for her daughter, Jairus for his daughter, the Father at the Mount of Transfiguration for His son, Martha and Mary for Lazarus, the four friends for the paralytic lowered through the roof. These several cases give believing parents assurance that when a child of the covenant is taken before God before he becomes old enough to exercise conscious faith for himself, he is saved by the covenant mercy of God, on the ground of the finished work of Christ, through the regenerating action of the Holy Spirit.

In such a case the only human means are the household of faith and the claiming of the covenant promises by the parents in baptism. Of course, the source of saving grace is not faith but God. But neither is the saving grace in the case of an adult from faith; for saving faith is "the empty hand of the beggar that putteth on

Christ for salvation". It is a lifting up of Christ to God with both hands crying that He, He alone, is my claim, my righteousness, my forgiveness, and my hope. We are kept from finally falling away not by the power of our faith, but by the graciousness of God, by the wonderful fact that His mercies do not ultimately fail His people. His mercy is everlasting and His truth or faithfulness endures to all generations.

—W. C. R.

## Some Questions About Sallman's Drawing of the Head of Christ

With respect and esteem for all persons involved, and for the highest court of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., which was, wittingly or unwittingly, convened at Agnes Scott College April 25th, one would ask several questions about the feature portion of this evening worship, namely, Mr. Warner E. Sallman's drawing of the Head of Christ. These questions are evoked by the Confession of Faith, catechism and form of government which "are accepted by the Presbyterian Church as standard expositions of the teachings of Scripture in relation to both faith and practice", BCO. 179. In asking these questions it should be kept in mind that the drawing took place in the context of a worship service consisting of hymns, prayer, anthem, brief Scripture and benediction. Accordingly, the program invites examination by the teachings of our Standards in reference to worship.

First, was the drawing of a Head of Christ in accord with the interpretation of the second commandment by the Larger Catechism, answer 109, which says that the sins forbidden in the second commandment are . . . "the making any representation of God, of all, or of any of the three Persons . . . in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever; all worshipping of it, or God in it or by it"? The artist described his work as "my testimony to my lovely Lord", and cited in support of his doing this Phil. 2:9-11. In this text Jesus receives God's own great name of Lord, even as in the context, vs. 6, He is described as being in the form of God before His incarnation. Further, the secretary who later spoke described the work as "the portrait of my Lord by which the Spirit of God is speaking to us through what the artist presented."

Secondly, was the giving of the chief part of this evening worship to this drawing in accord

The Southern Presbyterian Journal, a Presbyterian weekly magazine, devoted to the statement, defense, and propagation of the Gospel, the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints, published every Wednesday by the Southern Presbyterian Journal, Inc., in Weaverville, N. C.

Second-Class mail privileges authorized at Weaverville, N. C. Vol. XVIII, No. 2, May 13, 1959. Editorial and Business Offices: Weaverville, N. C.

ADDRESS CHANGE: When changing address, please let us have both old and new address as far in advance as possible. Allow three weeks after change if not sent in advance. When possible, send an address label giving your old address.

with the teachings of our Standards as to what is and what is not proper to have in Presbyterian Worship? The Confession of Faith says that "the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself and so limited by His own revealed will that He may not be worshipped according to the imagination and devices of men, . . . under any visible representation or in any way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture", C.F. xxiii. 1 The Larger Catechism declares the duty of observing the religious ordinances God has instituted in His word, prayer, thanksgiving, the reading, preaching and hearing of the word and the administration of the sacraments, and of keeping the same pure and entire as well as disapproving and opposing all false worship, a.180. It also opposes the adding to or taking from the worship God has provided in His Word, whether taken up or invented of ourselves, or received by tradition from others, though under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, a.109. Likewise the Book of Church Order, par. 10, declares that Christ as King has given His Church His system of worship "to which things He commands that nothing be added, and that naught of them be taken away." The first chapter of the Confession teaches that the whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory are either expressly set down in Scripture or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture; "unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men." par. vi.

From these citations we understand that God reveals His heart, His love, or if one prefer figurative language, His face in the preaching of the Gospel of His grace, in proclaiming Christ crucified and risen, and in the proper administration of His sacraments. God's voice is heard in the faithful preaching of His Word and His saving acts made visible in the sacraments. But where in His Word has He authorized the drawing of a head of Christ as a part of divine worship?

Thirdly, is such a service impressive as it is in focussing the senses of sight and hearing upon this visible worship center calculated to lead the minds and hearts to the worship center God has ordained, namely Christ at the right hand of God, the Lamb standing as He had been sacrificed, the High Priest ever living to intercede for His people? With the music of such hymns as *Abide With Me* in the distance, with the playing of the lights upon the drawing, a great impression was brought to bear on the congregation. But few people are able to concentrate bifocally. In proportion as attention was focussed on this visible drawing of the Head of Christ was not the eye of faith drawn away from the Lamb in the midst of the throne by whose intercessions His people receive mercy and grace to help in time of need?

The Church of the apostles and the martyrs observed the second commandment, and had no pictures of the head of Christ in their churches. The Synod of Elvira in 306 prohibits the admission of sacred pictures on the walls of church buildings. Eusebius refused to give Constantine's sister a picture of Christ declaring that there were none in the churches and that she should find Him in the Gospels.

When representations were later made the words of Isaiah, "His visage was so marred more than any man and His form than the sons of men", led to the crucifixes and to the pitiful pictures of the taking of Christ down from the Cross. Others sought to present the Lord in His majesty, as may be seen in the painting of the Resurrection in the Vatican and the Pantocrator pictures of the East. Dr. Daniel Jenkins of Chicago puts many of the modern pictures in still another category, describing them as "icons of the liberal Jesus."

No two painters present the same individual as their conception of Jesus. If our Church is to accept the pronouncement that Sallman's head of Christ is the portraiture of our Lord, does she thereby repudiate the one of "Our Leader: the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" by a Louis Ja-bor circulated to and by the General Council a few years ago? The two persons pictured are certainly different.

—W. C. R.

---

## Australian Crusade

Not in this generation has there been a work of the Holy Spirit of the magnitude now being witnessed in Australia. There are many indications that the entire area is being moved mightily. In Sydney where a four weeks crusade comes to a conclusion on May 10th, the attendance and response have been so far beyond anything witnessed in our time that local church leaders and Christians find it impossible to describe that which is taking place.

As we go to press a Presbyterian minister called from his home in San Francisco to tell something of his own experience. He had just returned from Sydney and stated that he had himself received a profound spiritual blessing and that the stories of conversions sound like the day of Pentecost. He said that in many Anglican cathedrals the bishops and others are now giving invitation for decisions at the conclusion of their services, with remarkable results.

We are indebted to *Presbyterian Life*, official organ of the Presbyterian Church in Melbourne and Victoria for the following editorial and article in the March 6th issue. Since that time Melbourne