

Collingswood Invites All Bible Presbyterians To Services of Dedication

A gracious and cordial invitation is extended to all Bible Presbyterians to come to Collingswood, N. J., for the dedication of the new Bible Presbyterian Church building. A series of meetings have been arranged for this historic occasion in the life of the Collingswood people and also of the Bible Presbyterian Church itself.

It was in the Collingswood Church's tabernacle that the Bible Presbyterian Church was formally constituted and its constitution adopted. The first two general synods were held in Collingswood in 1938 and 1939.

The congregation withdrew from the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in 1936. When it lost its case for the property in the civil courts, the congregation withdrew from its building, and for eight weeks worshiped in a tent at its present location. For the past 19 years it has been in its wooden tabernacle.

The new church building, which will seat 1,387, has been a year and a half in construction. It is being built at a cost of \$670,000. It is the largest church in the southern part of the State of New Jersey.

This event marks a historic moment, and the congregation, the elders, and the pastors all join in the invitation.

On Sunday, October 27, the congregation will open its public service of worship in the tabernacle and then all will march out and take their places in the new auditorium, and the service will be completed with the pastor delivering his sermon. This transition will be made while the chimes of the church play,

*"Saviour, like a Shepherd lead us,
Much we need Thy tenderest care."*

This is the historic hymn which the congregation used in 1938 when it left its old building and stood on the lawn and sang its faith.

The Collingswood Church has been called the "mother church" of the Bible Presbyterian denomination. It is the largest church, and has contributed more and done more than any single church in the denomination, through the years, to promote national missions and the interests of the Bible Presbyterian movement.

Also, in the tabernacle of the Collingswood Church, the constitution of the American Council of Christian Churches was adopted, as the joint committees met and finished their work. The American Council of Christian Churches will hold its

sixteenth annual convention in the new church building, October 30 to November 1, and the 21st Synod will be held from November 2 to 6. All are cordially invited to be present.

Greetings and felicitations have already begun to come in. During the celebration different agencies in the movement which the Collingswood people have had a part in establishing or contributing to will have opportunity to give their testimonies. Some

30 agencies related to the constituent members in the American Council plan to have display booths in the tabernacle during the convention. These will represent colleges, mission agencies, publishing houses, and other interests of the Twentieth Century Reformation movement.

RAYBURN'S LETTER GIVES PICTURE AND PLANS

Dr. Robert G. Rayburn, president of Covenant College and Theological Seminary, on June 25, 1957, addressed a letter to a minister in the United States who had written him for information concerning the Bible Presbyterian Church. The letter is written on the official stationery of Covenant College and Theological Seminary and concludes with an invitation to join with Dr. Rayburn, "We do hope that the Lord will lead you into our fellowship. It would be a joy to have you."

The letter is two pages in length, the major portion of which deals with Dr. Carl McIntire particularly. The identity of the person to whom the letter is written is withheld, but he has released the letter for publication. The four main paragraphs of the letter dealing with the Bible Presbyterian difficulties are as follows.

"You no doubt know of the complete break that we have had with McIntire. Frankly, if this break had not come, many of us would be out of the Bible Presbyterian Church by this time. For years many of us have felt unhappy about the way McIntire has blasted away at evangelicals as well as modernists and done it in such an unloving spirit. The Bible Presbyterian Church has turned completely away from this thing. At our recent Synod in Wilmington, Delaware, a wonderful spirit and attitude was felt. We even realized that we were going to have to be careful of our attitude toward McIntire himself, because we were in real danger of having an attitude toward him which would parallel that which he has for us and for others. The B. P. Church still stands solidly for its doctrine of the purity of the visible Church, in so far as it is possible to maintain that, but the spirit of ugly judging and sharp criticism of other believers is gone.

"I feel you would be very happy in the
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New Church Auditorium



New Auditorium and Sunday School Building

RAYBURN'S LETTER ...

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Bible Presbyterian Church now. I wish it might have been possible for you to have attended our recent Synod. Several were there from other groups. We had men from the O.P.C. and from the Reformed Presbyterian Church and the unanimous testimony was that they felt the Bible Presbyterians were now on the way to something really worthy. The Church has a very strong emphasis on missions and evangelism. Men of the O.P.C. who are warmly evangelistic tell us that this they miss in their own church in particular. The Reformed Presbyterians seem to be lacking it, too, for instead of going ahead they seem to be slipping backward.

"I know that our worst handicap has been McIntire and all that he represents to the Christian world through the *Christian Beacon* and his Councils. It will take some time for the Christian public to realize that he is no longer with us. Of course, in true McIntire fashion, he still calls himself and his little group that left us the Bible Presbyterian Church, and for that reason it is quite possible that we will soon change our denominational name, but for the present we felt it would not be wise simply because we ARE the Bible Presbyterian Church and his leaving and establishing another Church was as unconstitutional and lawless as could be, and we felt that we would only add to the confusion by giving him an occasion to say, 'See, I told you so.'

"Our desire is to ignore him and go on building a solid, scriptural testimony around the world, but, of course, we know we have quite a bit to live down. We do have a remarkable group of men, however, and I know that you would have the keenest appreciation for them. They are deeply spiritual, yet recognize the value of sound scholarship. They have warmth and yet good judgment also. Men like Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, Jr., Laird Harris, John Sanderson, Bill Mahlow and many others are not men with chips on their shoulders, seeking to find someone to criticise. They are men of vision and discernment with a truly loving Christian attitude, even toward their fellow Christians with whom they might not agree on some points."

In another paragraph Dr. Rayburn discusses his views concerning dispensationalism and he writes, "I am still a pre-millennialist, however. My attitude on that subject has moderated considerably, however, in that I feel it is most definitely NOT to be made a test of orthodoxy, nor of warm evangelicalism. I personally favor giving eschatological liberty in the organized Church. However, the Bible Presbyterian Church is still pre-millennial in its doctrinal statement, having modified the Westminster Confession just that much. It

Important Points in Rayburn's Letter

Dr. Rayburn's letter of June 25 hardly needs any comment with the Bible Presbyterians who have rejoiced in the stand of the Church through the years for the American Council and International Council and have been thankful for the ministry of the *Christian Beacon*. Some observations are, however, in order.

1. He writes: "For years many of us have felt unhappy about the way McIntire has blasted away. . . I know that our worst handicap has been McIntire and all that he represents to the Christian world through the *Christian Beacon* and his Councils."

In 1955, when Dr. Rayburn resigned as president of Highland College, he was most vociferous in his affirmation that he supported the ACCC, the *Christian Beacon*, and Dr. Carl McIntire's testimony. So strong was his insistence that when the report of Dr. Rayburn's leaving Highland College was circulated by the Rev. John Janbaz, members of the Presbytery of California sympathetic to Dr. Rayburn sought to bring Janbaz and the men with him to trial for "publicly libeling" Dr. Rayburn. One of the specifications read:

"The said March 5 letter reads, 'The general tenor of those who looked to Dr. Rayburn was that of disparagement of the separatist cause, including the ACCC, the *Christian Beacon*, Dr. Carl McIntire, and others who follow the Scriptural injunction to contend for the faith.' The document further reads,

"a. This statement makes Dr. Rayburn a leader in disparaging the separatist cause.

"b. This statement declares that Dr. Rayburn agreed in disparaging the American Council of Christian Churches.

"c. This statement declares that Dr. Rayburn agreed in disparaging the *Christian Beacon*.

"d. This statement declares that Dr. Rayburn agreed in disparaging Dr. Carl McIntire." (This was published in full in the *Christian Beacon* Supplement, May 12, 1955.)

Because of change in the presbytery, those defending Dr. Rayburn were unable to bring the trial to issue. Rayburn's letter, however, at the present time indicates that there was substance to the report signed by John E. Janbaz. It seems that Rayburn thus confirms what Mr. Janbaz reported! He did and he didn't!

That Dr. Rayburn held such views for "many years," as he writes, is further borne out by the correspondence of the "underground." The letters which turned up from the files of Highland College and the

is possible, however, that soon a little more liberty will be granted in the statement. We do have one or two men who have moved to the a-mil position since coming in."

American Council of Christian Churches in New York contain references of this nature. (See *Christian Beacon*, July 12, 1956.)

2. "It will take some time for the Christian public to realize that he is no longer with us." The July, 1957, issue of *The Banner*, official organ of the Christian Reformed Church, reports at length the address of Peter Stam, Jr., now associated with Dr. Rayburn, before the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. In that report, Dr. Stam spent more of his time talking about Dr. McIntire than anything else, endeavoring to explain that they were no longer with Dr. McIntire. But, Dr. Stam said, "We stand with Dr. McIntire in his general position in favor of separation from worldly practices as well as from unbelief and compromise. . . ." But McIntire's position on separation from unbelief and compromise has been expressed through the *Christian Beacon* and also in the testimony of the American Council of Christian Churches, of which Dr. Rayburn now says, "The Bible Presbyterian Church has turned completely away from this thing." He had just said, "For years many of us have felt unhappy about the way McIntire has blasted away at evangelicals as well as modernists and done it in such an unloving spirit." The articles in the *Christian Beacon* dealing with evangelicals have dealt with the National Association of Evangelicals and the exangelicals who have been compromising and who were disobeying the explicit commands of God. The *Beacon* has sought, in a gracious manner and factual way, to point out this compromise which has produced confusion. As people have seen it, they have been willing to stand with the separated movement, bear its reproaches.

To accuse Dr. McIntire and the American Council of "unloving spirit" is, of course, to join in the cry which the modernists have lifted* and which the compromising fundamentalists have delighted in. There has been no unloving spirit! The most unkind jab of all is to accuse men, who love Christ with all their hearts and love His people, of having an unloving spirit. It was this most unkind and unbrotherly jab which Dr. Stam made before the brethren of the Christian Reformed Church when he said, "But do not feel that we should be judge over the consciences of other Christian brethren and should exercise the proper Christian grace, humility, and love toward all men, and especially toward Christian brethren." Was this "love" for Dr. McIntire?

3. Dr. Rayburn points out that they were concerned lest they themselves would have "an attitude toward him [McIntire] which would parallel that which he has for us and for others," when the bulk of Dr. Ray-

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THE ILLEGALITY OF THE COLUMBUS SYNOD

What is called the 19th General Synod of the Bible Presbyterian Church was illegal simply because it was not called and constituted according to the specific provisions of the constitution of the Church.

The Form of Government provides, Chapter 10, Section 7: "The General Synod shall meet upon its own adjournment. On the day appointed for that purpose the moderator of the last synod, if present, shall open the meeting with a sermon, or in the case of his absence, some other minister shall open the meeting with a sermon and preside until a moderator be chosen."

Section 8 reads, in full:

"Each session of the Synod shall be opened and closed with prayer. And the whole business of the Synod being finished, and the vote taken for dissolving the present Synod, the moderator shall say from the chair—'By virtue of the authority delegated to me, by the Church, let this General Synod be dissolved, and I do hereby dissolve it, and require another General Synod chosen in the same manner, to meet at . . . on the . . . day of . . . A.D. . . .'—after which he shall pray and return thanks, and pronounce on those present the apostolic benediction."

Thus we have in quotation marks in the constitution the directive of the constitution providing that the "Synod shall meet upon its own adjournment." The moderator in lawful constitutional authority is directed to say, from the chair, a specific statement into which is to be inserted the place, the day, and the year the Synod has determined. The constitution gives to the Synod, and only to the Synod, the power to set its own adjournment and the day appointed for that has to be constitutionally read to the Synod at the close of its session at the time of adjournment. If language means anything, this is clear.

The Bible Presbyterian constitution provides that all powers not specifically granted to the courts are reserved to the congregations or to the people. This is our precious "states rights," protecting the local churches and the people from a "run-away" general synod.

It is a matter of record in the minutes of the 18th General Synod that these provisions of the constitution were not followed. Nobody claims they were! The Synod did not provide, as the constitution requires, for the time and the place and the year for the next meeting.

The 19th General Synod was called by one man, Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, Jr., the moderator of the 18th General Synod. He, without any constitutional authority whatsoever, set the place, the time, and the year. He first set it in February, 1956. He cancelled this and set it for April, 1956. He called, he cancelled, he called again.

The day appointed for that purpose, according to the constitution, was not the day set by the General Synod, as required by the constitution, but by one man!

There is absolutely no getting around this law of the Church. It is specific and clear, and there is no getting around the simple fact that Dr. Buswell did call the meeting. He opened it, and the meeting proceeded as the 19th General Synod. But without constitutional warrant, it proceeded as an illegal meeting, with many brethren and churches not present in protest of the moderator's action!

When specific provisions of the constitution are clear and even in quotation marks, with specific directions to the moderator given, and these are not followed, but constitutionally violated, the protection which the constitution gives to the churches is denied and we are confronted with a group of men in the Church determined to proceed with a meeting which the constitution did not allow.

Thus, an illegal synod has no place or authority in the life of the Church or succession of the synods. Since no lawful provision was made for a next synod to meet, the succession was broken—dead.

It should also be pointed out that no one synod can amend the constitution or change the provisions of the constitution for the holding of a meeting of the general synod. It cannot be done.

It needs further to be pointed out that when the illegal 19th General Synod adjourned, it, too, did not provide for a lawful synod to follow it.

The call for the 20th General Synod to convene at Columbus, which gave this group of synods the title, "Columbus Synod," was signed only by R. Laird Harris, moderator, and Robert Hastings, clerk, and it said:

"The Nineteenth Synod decided that the time and place of the next Synod be left to the discretion of a committee composed of the Moderator and the Stated Clerk to call a meeting at whatever season of the year is deemed necessary and whatever place seems wise."

The 19th Synod or no other synod of the Bible Presbyterian Church has power to divest itself of a clear constitutional responsibility. The constitution does not allow a committee or any group in the church to arrange for the adjournment. It says, "Synod shall meet on its own adjournment."

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THE LEGALITY OF THE COLLINGSWOOD SYNOD

When the Bible Presbyterian Synod met in Collingswood, November 20, 1956, called "The Collingswood Synod," it adopted a very lengthy statement setting forth the various arguments from the Church's constitution to prove that the Synod was a legal meeting under the constitution of the Bible Presbyterian Church. This document is very lengthy. It has not been published in *The Free Press* but it is available to those who would like to have it.

In brief, however, the heart of the issue may be stated:

When the 18th General Synod did not provide, according to the constitution, for a succeeding meeting, a serious and tragic error was committed. The question then was, Could another synod be constituted under the constitution with constitutional warrant? Certainly none of the officers, committees, or anyone else in the Church had authority to call the 19th General Synod, so far as specific provisions in the constitution relative to the meeting of a synod are concerned. It simply is not there.

But in the Bible Presbyterian Church, under the constitution, there are reserved powers. There are also certain powers given specifically to the presbyteries. The famous phrase dealing with reserved powers, which every Bible Presbyterian should know, is, "All powers not in this Constitution specifically granted to the courts of the Church are reserved to the congregations

respectively, or to the people" (Form of Government, Chap. 1, Sec. 8). So the Church is not helpless under the constitution when a synod finds itself dissolved and dead without constitutional provisions made for another one. Furthermore, in the powers given to the presbytery, Chapter 9, Section 4, we read, "The presbytery has power . . . in general, to order whatever pertains to the spiritual welfare of the churches under its care, always respecting the liberties guaranteed to individual congregations and persons under the Constitution."

Here, then, is a grant of power to the presbyteries. It certainly was, in the opinion of many of the churches and at least three of the presbyteries, pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the churches under their care that a lawful synod be called and that the lawful succession of the synods be re-established. It was, therefore, under this clear grant of power that three presbyteries—New Jersey, California, and Kentucky—at properly called meetings, took cognizance of the crisis concerning the synod, and joined in issuing a call for the constituting of a constitutional synod. In this the liberty of the individual congregations was fully respected and quite a number of local congregations, in the exercise of that liberty, chose, under the constitution, to recognize and to attend the Collingswood Synod.

Thus, in clear, unmistakable use of power

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Important Points...

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burn's letter does that very thing to Dr. McIntire—judges his motives and claims that he does not love. It is a charge which has been loosely made, but no specifications or instances have been produced to support it. Furthermore, Dr. Rayburn and Dr. Stam, who have made these public allegations of lack of love, have never come in a loving way to Dr. McIntire as a brother to discuss such a matter with him. Such an anti-McIntire campaign and platform is hardly a basis on which to build the Bible Presbyterian Church. And all this in spite of the statement, "Our desire is to ignore him"!

4. It is claimed by Dr. Rayburn that Dr. McIntire left the Bible Presbyterian Church and established another church, and that such was "as unconstitutional and lawless as could be." He, of course, ignores the fact that Dr. McIntire has not left the Church. He ignores the simple facts of the constitution which are printed in other stories of this issue of *The Free Press*. The Collingswood Synod was not lawless! It was constitutional! The Columbus Synod met without any constitutional authority whatsoever, and, though this fact has been pointed out repeatedly now to the brethren, they ignore it and proceed with their unjustified claims.

There can be no question but that this Rayburn letter reveals the discussion and the type of thing being said among these brethren. He talks about "quite a bit to live down." He talks about "our desire to ignore him [McIntire]." But this letter has not ignored him, and all of this before the Christian Reformed Church is designed to discredit what Dr. Rayburn calls "his Councils," and to hinder the great work which these Bible-believing Councils are doing in challenging the apostasy of the World Council of Churches and the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Is this their calling now to decry the very thing they are doing?

The difficulty is that the battle is long and hard, and men become weary and faint, and it is easier to fall into the softer, more complacent level.

The *Christian Beacon's* exposure of the apostasy, the American Council's militant battle in behalf of the faith, have not altered or changed. Those in the Bible Presbyterian Church who have followed Rayburn are the ones who have changed!

5. The references which Dr. Rayburn makes to the Reformed Presbyterian Church are unkind. Surely the men of the Reformed Presbyterian Church will not appreciate what he said there. And yet his Synod gives to them, as they send their official delegate to that Synod, words of appreciation and commendation. The same is true with the men of the Orthodox

Presbyterian Church, when he makes the distinction in their church between those who are "warmly evangelistic" and those who are not, and says, "that this they miss in their own church in particular."

This dividing and conquering approach is, we believe, the general line which Dr. Rayburn has been following now for a number of years. He worked it in the Bible Presbyterian Church and led in the terrific conflict, misunderstanding, and heartbreak which followed. He underscores it when he says, "Frankly, if this break had not come, many of us would be out of the Bible Presbyterian Church by this time." Who then worked for and desired the "break"? Instead, he carried on an "underground" and correspondence with one of Dr. McIntire's assistant pastors and set up a counter-movement in the Church which finally came to light, and which had as its end either getting McIntire out of the church or their leaving the church.

When such purposes as these are revealed so frankly, as they are in this letter, Bible Presbyterians should have little difficulty in deciding where they stand, in preserving the true, historic witness of the Bible Presbyterian Church. One thing can be said, letters of this nature do not exist and cannot be reproduced from the pen of Dr. Carl McIntire!

6. "The Bible Presbyterian Church has turned completely away from this thing." In this we agree. That segment of the Church which Dr. Rayburn is leading has turned completely away. We have been trying to persuade people that this is what has happened. Now we have the admission from Dr. Rayburn's own pen. The rank and file membership of the Church, however, did not realize that it was being turned away, and many still deny it. The Bible Presbyterian Church historically has had its part in carrying on the battle against the apostates and also against the compromising evangelicals. Resolution after resolution, adopted by the Bible Presbyterian Church in its earlier years, testified of this.

Year after year we went up to Synod for a time of delightful fellowship and of inspiration in pressing the battle for the faith. The Synod praised God for the American Council, its victories; it drew the line with the NAE, and it was in the forefront of the great battle against the apostasy. Yes, indeed, Dr. Rayburn is right. That is gone from the "Columbus Synod." That portion of the Church which recognizes the synod with which he is connected has "turned completely away from this thing"! Dr. Rayburn does not talk this way when he meets with the rank and file of the people of the Church. He generally speaks of his great love and affection for Dr. McIntire. But when he is writing here to another minister whom he is seeking to win to the Church, he reveals his true attitude.

7. "It is quite possible that we will soon change our denominational name but for

the present we feel it would not be wise simply because we ARE the Bible Presbyterian Church and his leaving and establishing another church was as unconstitutional and lawless as it can be, and we felt that we would only add to the confusion by giving him an occasion to say, 'See, I told you so.'"

A synod meeting is not the Bible Presbyterian Church, and this is the error in Dr. Rayburn's position. The Bible Presbyterian Church is far more than a synod which meets and adjourns. The Church which is represented through the synod that Dr. Rayburn is identified with certainly is not carrying on the position, the succession, and the testimony of the Bible Presbyterian Church. Rayburn has just admitted that it has changed. It is not in the ACCC or the ICCC; it has repudiated all the independent agencies; it no longer supports the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, which was the spearhead of the whole separatist movement in the Presbyterian field. On the other hand, the group that is represented through the Collingswood Synod does maintain all of these historic positions and is seeking to carry on the life and spirit that was in the Church from the beginning.

It has been the prayer in the heart of many that the two synods would be able to get together, reconcile their differences, and the Church could go on as originally founded. But it appears now, however, that Dr. Rayburn and those associated with him do contemplate a changing of the name. It is apparent that Dr. Rayburn has decided that they will have nothing to do with Dr. McIntire and those associated with him, for he has said that, if this break had not come, then he would have left the Bible Presbyterian Church. The responsibility, therefore, for the division that has come in our midst rests squarely among those who have taken such a position. If this group is going away, attempting to turn the church into something else, it would not only be wise but it is their duty to seek another name and let those who are not ashamed of the Councils or the *Christian Beacon* and the Collingswood Synod carry on this testimony which Rayburn has so clearly revolted against. We think it is not right, honest, or ethical to come into a church and attempt to lead a section of it into a position foreign to its history and nature.

Rayburn's letter brings now to a climax the present struggle. It is clear that there is no intention on the part of Dr. Rayburn to be reconciled with his brethren in the Church who recognize the Collingswood Synod and to go on together—united under the constitution of the Bible Presbyterian Church.

The Presbytery of the Great Plains refused to turn over the deed to the property of the Wilton, N. Dak., church, which became unaffiliated.

New Philosophy Rejects Independent Agencies

"A little time and a little patience will clarify the issues for a lot of people." With that statement one of the laymen in the Bible Presbyterian Church expressed confidence in the future of our church.

This is what is taking place. There appears an article in the June issue of the *Bible Presbyterian Reporter*, official organ "published by the Bible Presbyterian Synod," entitled, "Missions in the Church Presbyterian," by Preson P. Phillips. The article expresses in a very fine way the new ideology which has come into the church and which is designed to turn the mind of the church away from the independent agencies and to persuade the church that true Presbyterianism is considerably different from that Presbyterianism which the Bible Presbyterian Church has known in its history and constitution.

Let it be remembered that this is now the line which is being presented in the church's official organ in the same number in which appears the report of the Synod which met in Wilmington, Del., June 6-12, 1957.

I

The author, after expressing the idea that a Presbyterian Church can get along "without assistance from agencies, 'boards,' 'societies,' etc.," claims that the system which he has outlined goes back to the Scriptures, and he writes: "It would seem, therefore, that *Whatever Is Not Done By Elders and Ministers, Assembled In Some One Of Our Courts* (Session, Presbytery, etc.) *Is Not Done By Them As Presbyterians.*" (The italics are the author's.) So absurd and foreign is this view of Presbyterianism that it seems incredible that it could be presented in a Bible Presbyterian official publication. Please read the statement again!

Elders and ministers, therefore, who serve on independent agencies are not acting as Presbyterians when they do so. The late Dr. J. Gresham Machen, founder of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, insisted that he was a Presbyterian in maintaining his membership on the Independent Board.

The statement in the *Reporter*, however, has the most absurd kind of circumstances. Are not elders and ministers acting as Presbyterians when they worship in a congregation of a Bible Presbyterian Church? Are they not acting as Presbyterians when they hold a congregational meeting, call a pastor, and elect elders? Are they not acting as Presbyterians when they teach and help lead a Sunday school?

The statement before us says, "*Whatever Is Not Done By Elders and Ministers, Assembled In Some One Of Our Courts* (Session, Presbytery, etc.) *Is Not Done By Them As Presbyterians.*" Presbyteries meet only three or four times a year, the Session usually once a month, and the Synod once a year. This means that their participation in these assemblies limits what they do as Presbyterians to a very brief time in their lives. Thus an effort is made to persuade the people in the Bible Presbyterian Church that this is Presbyterianism. With all due respect, we say that the statement

quoted is perverted thinking!

Lest there be any misunderstanding, the next sentence in the paragraph reads: "It is only in these courts that we recognize the Church as an organized, visible body." Only in the Session, the Presbytery, and the Synod, therefore, is the church recognized as an organized, visible body. The statement is in direct contradiction to specific provisions of the constitution of the Bible Presbyterian Church. The visible body of the Bible Presbyterian Church involves the structure established under the constitution. It includes local congregations, and these congregations have a relationship to courts only as they are expressly limited under the constitution of the Bible Presbyterian Church. The Bible Presbyterian Church is found far more in its local congregations which assemble for worship every Lord's Day.

A whole new line of thought is being developed, giving tremendous power to these courts! In fact, it is "only in these courts that we recognize the church as an organized visible body." And, lest there be any mistake, the author says that he has simply defined what it, that is, Presbyterianism, believes would be the character of a revived Presbyterian Church. The author may think he is, but he is not talking about the Bible Presbyterian Church as it has been organized under its constitution. The tragedy is that he and others with these same views are turning away a portion of the Bible Presbyterian Church to an entirely different concept.

The constitution of the Bible Presbyterian Church has something to say about the visible church. There is a richness and a breadth to its statement that characterize the spirit of the founders of the church.

Chapter 2 of the Form of Government says, "The catholic visible Church consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children." This is a lot bigger than just the group that Mr. Preson Phillips is talking about.

Then the next paragraph of the constitution reads: "This catholic visible Church has, in God's providence, become divided into bodies commonly termed denominations or churches. Such bodies, whether local, national, or international, which in their creed and practice hold fast to the historic Christian faith, which require for admission into their communion what Christ requires for salvation, and which subordinate their authority to that of the Word of God are true Churches of Christ, despite differences in government or in matters not essential to the faith which may have caused their separation from others."

And paragraph 4 reads: "The Bible Presbyterian Church declares itself to be a branch of the catholic visible Church of Christ and further declares its willingness to hold Christian fellowship with all other such branches of the Church."

This concept of the church is a long, long way from that which is now being propagated in the official organ of the "Columbus Synod." How can a man or a group of men,

in their thinking, depart so far from the constitution which gave the Bible Presbyterian Church its birth and its blessing under God?

II

The new view, which is certainly a most un-Presbyterian, un-Bible Presbyterian view of the church, is stated in precise terminology when Mr. Phillips writes: "Certainly if we believe that 'The Presbyterian Church' is *God's Church*, constructed *God's Way* (Scripturally), by *God's Holy Spirit*, we must believe it is perfectly competent to conduct *God's Work* without assistance from foreign agencies, 'boards,' 'societies,' etc."

I don't want to be misunderstood, but it is too bad that the founders of the Bible Presbyterian Church had anything to do with these "foreign," independent agencies! Their activity in them reflected upon the competence of God's Holy Spirit to conduct His work without their assistance! Read that sentence over again! The constitution should never even have had in it a paragraph which gave discretion to the general synod in commending independent agencies to the Church! And yet the greatest single contribution that has been made to the building of the Bible Presbyterian Church has been the various independent agencies — Faith Theological Seminary, the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, the *Christian Beacon*, Harvey Cedars Bible Presbyterian Conference — all "foreign agencies" and not under the supervision of the Holy Spirit through a control of the courts of the Church!

We are frank to say that this is a narrow, bigoted concept of Christian service for Bible-believing Presbyterians. But here it is in a major article entitled, "Missions in the Church Presbyterian." This is the ideology now employed to gain support and loyalty to "official" agencies rather than the historic Independent Board. The author is a member of the Columbus Synod's official foreign mission board!

III

No one should say that here is not the whole philosophy for a tighter church. It is a church that is so tight that only this church, working through its courts, can do Presbyterian activity. Thus we have this sweeping statement: "God having raised up Bishops and Elders to sit in the courts of His Church, and having placed Deacons at the disposal of those courts, these officers and these courts are treated in our Constitution as abundantly adequate to meet all the exigencies of the Church and to do all that God requires her to do in her ecclesiastical capacity." This is not the constitution of the Bible Presbyterian Church, for it specifically says that the courts have only delegated and designated powers and that all reserved power for carrying on the work of the Gospel is reserved to the people and to the congregations respectively. Somebody has turned things topsy-turvy and inverted the whole process. There is a lot of ecclesiasti-

(Continued on page 6)

THE ILLEGALITY ...

(Continued from page 3)

Thus the 19th General Synod was illegal and any succession from that, of course, would be illegal because the break of successions was accomplished, and an illegal body cannot call a legal meeting! But even the 19th General Synod did not seek to honor the requirements of the constitution.

We wonder why it is necessary to have a constitution that provides for a Synod to meet on its own adjournment when the group present arranges for the Synod to meet at the discretion of a committee or at the call of a moderator as the majority present desire.

When the fundamental law of the church provides for a meeting of a synod, that law must be followed. If it is not, there can be no legal synod.

Are there men who will come forward and admit these facts and constitutional provisions are really true? To do so takes all the foundation away from the Columbus Synod and the new program of synod controls in the Church.

THE LEGALITY ...

(Continued from page 3)

granted in the Church, the Collingswood Synod, was constituted, and when it adjourned it provided specifically, as the constitution stipulates, for the meeting of the next General Synod which will now be held in Collingswood, N. J. The constitution is clear that the higher courts have only this specifically granted power. Synod failed to use this specifically granted power to provide for its succession. This took place in the midst of a difficult condition which had developed within the Church.

As has been pointed out in another article, the Columbus Synod was illegal under the constitution, and, as we have briefly outlined here, the Collingswood Synod has clear, unmistakable, constitutional authority for being constituted. We believe that this brief presentation of the heart of the issue will satisfy reasonable Bible Presbyterians who are not prejudiced as the result of a great deal of unfortunate propaganda and tale bearing which has been circulated. It should also be clear that those who attended the Collingswood Synod did not in fact or did not intend to organize and start another denomination. They are all still in the Bible Presbyterian Church, operating under the constitution of the Bible Presbyterian Church, and they recognize that a synod itself is not the church; it is only one function of the church, when it sits down once a year to meet as a synod. The action, therefore, of the Columbus Synod in ruling that those who attended the Collingswood Synod had joined another denomination was devoid of fact, also of brotherly kindness, and the

New Philosophy ...

(Continued from page 5)

cal activity carried on in the Bible Presbyterian Church which has no connection with any court. The concept which has here been stated by Mr. Phillips is the one which the Bible Presbyterian founders rebelled against and turned away from. They carefully phrased their constitution. The above statement is strikingly similar to some which appeared in the famous "Studies of the Constitution" prepared in 1934 by William B. Pugh, the stated clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. which presented the mandate against the Independent Board members, directing that they resign or be disciplined. He, too, claimed in similar vein, "All ecclesiastical functions must by their very nature be exercised exclusively through the judicatories of the Church." When you make the church one missionary society, and the judicatories the way in which that church directs that missionary society, you have exactly the position of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. which was maintained against the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions.

Now the same identical philosophy is being presented in the official organ of the Bible Presbyterian Church 23 years later. A generation has changed! It is just this position—that the whole church is a missionary society—that Mr. Phillips now presents. He declares: "The Perfect plan of God is the *Whole Church*, fitly framed together, an organic 'missionary society'—with each member of the priesthood taking his place as a living sacrifice in subjection to the Head. The very words used by Scripture in connection with the priestly office—'priesthood,' 'stewardship,' 'storehouse,' etc., implies a *Vital Connection* between the sacrificer and the dispenser of the sacrifices. Certainly if we believe that 'The Presbyterian Church' is *God's Church*, constructed *God's Way* (Scripturally), by *God's Holy Spirit*, we must believe it is perfectly competent to conduct *God's Work* without assistance from foreign agencies, 'boards,' 'societies,' etc."

This is the way he gives sanction to the position that the Bible Presbyterian Church as an organization is a missionary society and that this society is operated through the courts of the Church. This is identically the view that was taken by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in its drive against the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. The Presbyterian way, and the only way for real Presbyterians, was the officially approved denominational agencies which the General Assembly had set up and approved.

action, therefore, of the presbyteries, which recognized the Columbus Synod, in throwing out of the denomination the ministers who attended the Collingswood Synod have violated the constitution and deprived these ministers, such men as Dr. J. Gordon Holdcroft, Dr. Allan A. MacRae, Dr. Carl McIntire, Dr. Jack Murray, and others, of their constitutional rights and protections.

But the author of this article moves on and quotes in support of his idea that the church is a missionary society itself in ecclesiastical authority to the effect, "By the fact of his being a member of the church, he is a member of a missionary society, and that the privilege of membership is bought with Christ's blood, not with his contributions. The Presbyterian Church is a board of missions, of education, of every other effort the Church ought to undertake. And to lose sight of that idea or hide it from the people is to diminish in their minds a sense of responsibility. It is clear therefore to the extent to which we recognize the propriety of organizing missionary societies without the Church, we propagate the notion amongst our people that a man may be a Christian and yet not a member of a missionary society." Is it not a shame the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions was ever established? A bad, "unscriptural" notion has been propagated in the Church!

The tying of all this thought into the courts of the Church, and insisting that the agencies which these courts establish are the divine method of presenting Presbyterianism to the world is not the position which the Bible Presbyterian Church's constitution sets forth! In fact, such a notion cannot be found anywhere in the Bible Presbyterian Church's constitution. The philosophy which is here expounded is identically the same system of thought which was used by the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. to condemn the members of the Independent Board.

When references were printed earlier by Max Belz and others giving expression to the same slant against the independent agencies, they were defended by their friends by saying that they represented a "fringe" and "extremity" and they did not represent the real heart and life of the Columbus Synod. But this article which we are now discussing is presented in the "official" organ in support of the missionary program of the Columbus Synod. The denomination now has an official missionary agency of its own. So the philosophy is taking shape to preach a message which will bind the people of the church to the actions of the court and sustain their support to this end. Mr. Phillip's article is directed to this end.

This moves right on in to the terrible position the Presbyterian Church took as it went further and said: "A church member or an individual church that will not give to promote the officially authorized missionary program of the Presbyterian Church is in exactly the same position with reference to the Constitution of the Church as a church member or an individual church that would refuse to take part in the celebration of the Lord's Supper or any other of the prescribed ordinances of the denomination as set forth in Chapter VII of the Form of Government." We are getting pretty close to that when we are told that the privilege of membership in this missionary society is bought with Christ's blood, and then this is tied in so exclusively with the courts of the Church which the elders and the ministers are directing! It is the same road!

We wish to appeal to every Bible Presby-

ORGANIC UNION--GOAL OF ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN AND CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

terian not to give up the liberty which God gave us. Let each Christian and each local church give as God directs and guides. Let us all thank God that in His blessed providence He gave us the independent agencies with their liberty, commending themselves to the churches because of their loyalty to the faith. Let's remember that all this came as a result of a terrific struggle with the Presbyterianism which tied itself up tight and into which the modernists entered to use this machine to penalize the Bible believers. History teaches this much to us.

It should be pointed out that, if the Church in its total life is what Mr. Phillips here says it is, then it, the courts of the Church, should direct and control the property of the Church. The logic is inescapable. That is the way it is in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., and the Bible Presbyterians repudiated all of that in the protective provisions which they put in their constitution. But just what protection is the constitution to the local churches and to the people when their rights can be so thoroughly disregarded and a philosophy presented through the official organ of the denomination which tells the elders and the ministers of the church that "*Whatever Is Not Done By Elders and Ministers, Assembled In Some One Of Our Courts (Session, Presbytery, etc.) Is Not Done By Them As Presbyterians*. It is only in these courts that we recognize the Church as an organized, visible body."

It would be good if someone would just turn and read the Book of the Acts. Most of the work of the churches was done by the local churches. There was a council that assembled in Acts 15 but it did not last too long. Our appeal, and it is an earnest appeal to all Bible Presbyterians, is that we should be Bible (with the emphasis upon the Bible and with the re-emphasis upon the Bible) Presbyterians. The Bible alone is our primary standard, and the Bible must be the message which is preached and honored in our churches.

We must say that among the Bible Presbyterians who attended the Collingswood Synod and who look to its leadership in the Church, there are not any—in fact, there is not a single minister among the number—that for one minute would subscribe to or approve of this article, "Missions in the Church Presbyterian." Let us remain Bible Presbyterians!

Brethren, take your stand, come with us, and let's preserve the Bible Presbyterian Church free, in its heritage and succession.

A little time and patience does help clarify the picture, doesn't it? Who then is changing and perverting the Bible Presbyterian Church?

Franklin Dyrness in May put a lien on one of the homes of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. He never advised the Board or Dr. Holdcroft. He attended the Board's meeting in June and then resigned without advising anyone of his action.

A joint statement agreed to unanimously by officially appointed committees of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Christian Reformed Church, adopted on May 8, 1956, announces that "the organic union of the two denominations" is the goal of co-operation and collaboration between the two churches. The resolution states that because of "the basic community that exists between The Christian Reformed Church and The Orthodox Presbyterian Church in doctrine, polity, and practice, it is an obligation resting upon these two Churches to make every legitimate endeavor to bring this unity and community to their consistent expression in the organic union of the two denominations." The resolution further states, "In order to promote these aims it is indispensable that conference between representatives of the two Churches be increasingly cultivated, and it is advisable that the two Churches consider carefully the establishment of sisterly relations." And, finally, the resolution declares, "It is proper that the Churches consider greater co-operation in the conduct of enterprises which they have in common, such as those in home and foreign missionary work."

Members of the committee representing the Orthodox Presbyterian Church were Ministers Atwell, Murray, and Stonehouse, and Elder Roeber. This is reported from the *Presbyterian Guardian*, July 15, 1957. At the same time the *Bulletin News Supplement*, published in Iowa "by the Department of Publications of the Bible Presbyterian Church," which makes it an official publication of the Bible Presbyterian Church, presents a report of "Fraternal Delegate Jay E. Adams" to the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, July 17-20. The report reads, "A good percentage of the deliberative time was occupied discussing the relationship between the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and Bible Presbyterian Church. From the discussions which were held during portions of the three days the following two significant actions were taken:

"A. 'On amended motion the committee on Correspondence with other Churches was directed to seek to engage in discussion with any similar committee of the Bible Presbyterian Church (Columbus Synod) with respect to the relation between the two communions.' Passed unanimously.

"B. The same committee was directed to appoint a fraternal delegate to the Bible Presbyterian Synod meeting in Lakeland, Florida, in 1958."

A group within the OPC vigorously opposed such a move, and, though Mr. Adams does not report it to the Bible Presbyterians, the *Presbyterian-Guardian* indicates that this group insisted that before relationships

could be restored it would be necessary for the Bible Presbyterians to confess their sins to the Orthodox brethren for the schism of 1937, when leaders of the two groups separated.

Official spokesmen, therefore, for the OPC have now put themselves on record as working toward the organic union of the OPC with the Christian Reformed. This, with the move to unite the Columbus Synod Bible Presbyterian group with the OPC, simply means that all will ultimately go into the much larger Christian Reformed Church, and a distinctive witness to the great historic struggle with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. will have been lost.

It is the Bible Presbyterian Church as represented through the Collingswood Synod which is carrying on, preserving, and maintaining the historic position of the late Dr. J. Gresham Machen, the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, and the testimony of the church in its fellowship and membership in the American and International Councils of Christian Churches.

Surely, with these developments, more of the people in the Bible Presbyterian Church are in a position to realize that that portion of the Church which now recognizes the Collingswood Synod is the true, historic succession of the Synods.

Jay Adams, chairman of the National Missions Committee, has been working on members of the Collingswood Church. Recently he was "caught" as he called at the home of some members. Charles Richter, assistant pastor of the Collingswood Church, was inside of the house at the time, also making a call.

A new Bible Presbyterian Church in Evansville, Ind; which started meetings as a result of contacts through the *Christian Beacon* and which was supplied by a Faith Theological Seminary student this summer, had a visit from Tom Cross when he heard the new group was meeting. He spent considerable time trying to get the group to join the Kentucky Presbytery and has written a three-page letter containing considerable misrepresentation against the independent agencies and Dr. McIntire. A copy of the letter is now in the possession of Dr. McIntire. Shall it be that every time a new church is organized and Mr. Cross hears of it he will consider it his duty to go and try to get it for his Committee?

The Rev. Carl McIntire, D.D., is responsible for this edition of *The Free Press*.

CHRISTIAN BEACON'S MINISTRY COMMENDED

The following comments from Christian people show that not all Christians repudiate the *Christian Beacon* and its ministry.

Just a word of encouragement to you and your staff. I enjoy reading the *Beacon* because of the many articles which are documented and tell the story of apostasy in the larger denominations. Truly God's Word is being fulfilled and Revelation 17 and 18 seem nearer than ever.

"Many feel that your paper and broadcasts are taken up too much with contending for the faith and ought to have more in them of an edifying nature, but there are plenty of papers and magazines that deal only with the Gospel or edification. I, for one, want to know what's going on in the churches that are determined that there shall be a one-world church composed of believers (who are sleeping) and avowed unbelievers (who are wide awake and serving the Devil). The antitype of Israel's mixed multitude is surely here today. Jehoshaphat and Ahab are making compacts and Obadiah's are all over the place."—*Blackwood Terrace, N. J.*

"I do not miss a morning broadcast when I am home and I usually am. A pastor said in my presence he was not called to fight Communism but to preach the Gospel. I believe the Bible teaches us to fight the enemy of our souls in whatever form he appears. I believe you are sounding the warning every Christian should hear and heed and warn those who do not know. Am happy that you do not neglect to proclaim the true Gospel and thus seek the salvation of souls as well as warning of the approach of the enemy. Truly, evil seducers are waxing worse and worse. I am already living on borrowed time, but, if the Lord tarries, what will happen to my children and grandchildren?"—*Camden, N. J.*

"Thank God for the sermon you preached on Sunday [September 8]. How it just lifts you to higher places. Praise God for the truths you send out."—*Lebanon, Pa.*

The subscription price of the *Christian Beacon* is \$2 a year in the U.S.A. and \$3 a year in all other countries, including Canada. Mail subscriptions to *Christian Beacon*, Box 218, Collingswood 7, N. J.

"The *Beacon* has proved such a blessing to us each week for the stand it takes and the insight into what is happening in other parts of the world."—*Medford, N. J.*

"Have been listening to your broadcast on WVCH for some time, and thank God you have the courage to stand against the opposing forces who want to be 'unequally yoked together with unbelievers.'

"May God bless you and give you strength and wisdom to continue in this fight against the powers of spiritual darkness."—*Bethlehem, Pa.*

"Glad to have someone reveal the true facts about world conditions as they are today."—*New Lisbon, N. J.*

WHY INCREASE OF SYNOD-CONTROLLED BOARDS AND AGENCIES IS UNDESIRABLE

1. Such a development was one of the things that led to its becoming necessary for us to separate from the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

2. This development is a definite step in the direction of prelacy, which is the type of church government to which Presbyterians have been most strongly and constantly opposed.

3. This development is contrary to original Presbyterianism, being practically unknown before 1790, and without any real warrant in the Westminster Confession or Form of Government, or in the original Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

4. The Bible nowhere commands such agencies, nor does it give evidence of the existence of similar procedures in apostolic times.

5. Synod-controlled agencies by their very nature tend to inefficiency.

6. This existence of Synod-controlled boards and agencies makes it difficult for the Synod to carry on the work which properly belongs to it.

7. Synod-controlled boards and agencies inevitably lead to the development of harmful ecclesiastical machines.

"We thank the Lord for such a broadcast to tell the people the truth of what is happening in this world of ours. It just seems the people are in blindness just because the ministers in their pulpits do not preach the Gospel. May the Lord give you strength and health to keep on. We are praying for you."—*Perkasie, Pa.*

"I've heard some of your messages on WVCH and they are beginning to sink in. I used to think, 'Oh, he is just stirring up trouble and there is too much about politics,' and I'd turn you off. *But not now.*"—*Penns Park, Pa.*

"I wish to pay a verbal tribute to the whole staff for producing and distributing such a reasonably priced and splendid report [*Christian Beacon*] of the subtle evils that seek to undermine the true church of God."—*Merriam, Kans.*

"Let me state it once again—we who are out in the grass roots sections desperately need the messages, the news, and the facts which are so well furnished in the *Christian Beacon*. We pray for you, brother, that God may continue to richly bless, guide, and use you."—*Georgetown, Texas.*

"It [*Christian Beacon*] is one of the most stimulating magazines published today for anyone who is true to the Christian Gospel."—*Milford, Conn.*

"Undoubtedly, you receive some destructive criticism of your *Beacon* articles, but allow me just a word of commendation for the stand which you have taken in defending the Faith.

"I would say without hesitation that the stand which the *Beacon* takes is one which honors and glorifies the Lord, and this is the standard by which, I believe, we must judge the worthiness of any enterprise. May the *Beacon* ever continue to stand in defense of the Faith once for all delivered."—*New Castle, Pa.*

All communications and requests for extra copies of *The Free Press* may be addressed to the secretary-treasurer of the Committee, the Rev. Arthur G. Slaght, 1630 S. Hanover St., Baltimore 30, Md.