

February 15 1943

The President and
The Trustees of Wheaton College
Wheaton, Illinois.

Gentlemen,

With regard to the adoption, by the Trustees of Wheaton College, of the report concerning the teaching of philosophy and the doctrines that God is a most pure spirit without body, parts, or passions, and that God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, I desire to make the following statements.

In general, the conditions laid down in the report are contrary to the conditions under which I originally accepted employment. The report states, "We do not find that Dr. Clark's opinions differ materially from those which he frankly stated, and which were freely discussed, when he was employed six years ago." I made it clear then that if conditions such as those contained in this report were contemplated, I would not consent to teach here. The present reversal of policy constitutes in my non-legal opinion a breach of the terms of my employment.

The conditions as stated in the report are, "1. That to the largest extent possible he confine his teaching to the stated subjects, without advocating any theological beliefs which are controversial among orthodox Christians; 2. That if asked his personal opinion as to the group of doctrines in question, he be frank but state the belief rather than expounding his reasons, -- being equally frank in admitting his susceptibility to error and that his views in this respect have not been those of most Christian leaders;" My reasons for refusing to accept these conditions are the same now as they were six years ago, and involve both academic and religious principles.

Academically, these two recommendations to the effect that philosophy be taught without stating my reasons for propositions of theodicy is the equivalent of requiring a medical faculty to teach medicine without discussing the cause of typhoid fever or tuberculosis. This is a type of teaching with which I am unfamiliar.

On the ground of religious and moral conviction the following points must be enumerated.

First: I reject the contentions of paragraph six that sound deduction from Scripture is illegitimate, and also that the spirituality of God and his foreordination can be neither supported nor refuted ~~from Scripture.~~

by argument from Scripture.

Second: To comply with recommendation two would be immoral. The effect of compliance would be to persuade students that the two doctrines in question are merely some personal aberration, and would obscure the significant fact that they were the views of the greatest reformers and have been for more than three hundred years the official position of a score of denominations, represented in this country by the following:

The Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.
 The Presbyterian Church in the U. S.
 The United Presbyterian Church of North America
 The Associate Presbyterian Church of North America
 The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church
 The Reformed Presbyterian Church in North
 America, General Synod
 The Orthodox Presbyterian Church
 The Bible Presbyterian Church
 The Bohemian and Moravian Brethren Churches

Third: The Scriptures in many places (e.g. Acts 20:27 and II Tim. 3:16) require the proclamation of the whole gospel. The diluted Christianity and the expurgated Bible contemplated in this report are abhorrent to me.

Fourth: By adopting this report the Trustees of Wheaton College have officially pronounced the two doctrines in question "unsound" and "dangerous." This is an open condemnation of all reformed denominations. Naturally I cannot support an organization that pronounces all the above mentioned Churches unsound and dangerous.

Fifth: To comply with these conditions would be to repudiate my vows of ordination to the eldership. The fact that others, since the growth of modernism in some denominations, neglect to perform their vows does not relieve me of my responsibility to Almighty God.

For these and similar reasons I am unable to comply with the requirements recently enacted by the Trustees, and I hereby present my resignation from the faculty of Wheaton College.

For the reasons that the College has made its plans to have me teach for the current school year and that I have made similar plans, my resignation is effective at the end of the 1942-1943 school year, but my tenure of the position until that time must be subject to the agreement I had on the above matters when I was first employed.

Very truly yours,

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

February 15, 1943

Dr. G. H. Clark
The College

My dear Dr. Clark:

The minutes of the Executive Committee were approved by the Board of Trustees in its regular session on February 13, 1943.

Very sincerely,

V. R. Sturman

VRE:ah

February 15, 1943

The President and
The Trustees of Wheaton College
Wheaton, Illinois

Gentlemen:

With regard to the adoption, by the Trustees of Wheaton College, of the report concerning the teaching of philosophy and the doctrines that God is a most pure spirit without body, parts, or passions, and that God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, I desire to make the following statements.

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of God and his foreordination can be neither supported nor refuted by argument from Scripture.

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Very truly yours,

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

February 26, 1943

Dr. G. H. Clark
The College

My dear Dr. Clark:

Your letter of February fifteen addressed to the Trustees of the College and to me was presented at the latest meeting of the Executive Committee. By vote of that Committee, your resignation to be effective at the end of the 1942-1943 school year (August thirty-one) was accepted. The action of the Committee refers solely to the resignation and does not imply acceptance of the reasons therein stated.

Very sincerely yours,

T. R. Shuman

VRE:ah

C O P Y

March 16, 1943

Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.
340 West Fifty-fifth Street
New York, New York

My dear Dr. Buswell:

Pressure of duties and possibilities of government programs keep me quite largely in this part of the world, so that there has not been opportunity for a visit with you all in your busy part of the world.

Your Ruth is a great joy and delight to us as she is developing into a very excellent and enthusiastic spiritual leader among the girls. You would have rejoiced with us to have heard her testimony during the days of awakening on the campus.

Dr. Clark has raised some questions relative to the conditions under which he was employed by the College. He implied that the material was familiar to me. We have gone into the files to secure such information, but find nothing relative to his coming or conditions of his tenure. We note that in the catalog of personal files that you took in the summer of 1940, there is one on Dr. Clark. Quite possibly that would contain the information that I should have. I should greatly appreciate your considering loaning it to me for the time being.

Mrs. Edman adds her warmest greetings to mine for Mrs. Buswell and you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

(signed) V. R. Edman

VRE:ah

March
eighteen
1943

Dr. V. R. Edman
Wheaton College
Wheaton, Illinois

Dear Dr. Edman

The official record relating to Dr. Clark's appointment to the Wheaton faculty will be found in the minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Trustees held sometime in March, 1937.

As I said in my letter to the Trustees asking for my personal file material, I have a great amount of correspondence with Dr. Clark on various theological questions. You will doubtless remember that he was brought to Wheaton first as a visiting professor for one year. He was not at that time made a regular member of the faculty, since he was not clear about the premillennial point in the platform of the College. Early in the spring of 1937 he had come to the premillennial position, and was then made a regular member of the faculty by vote of the Executive Committee, as indicated above.

As in all such cases, the action recorded in the minutes of the Trustees is the full official record. We never specified terms of tenure when a person was made a permanent member of the faculty. Such terms were quite thoroughly discussed in the various works on college administration, and were generally understood and acted upon as occasion demanded.

Dr. Clark's adherence to the doctrinal platform of the College would be evidenced by copies of the platform signed by him from year to year and filed with other such documents.

Nothing in my files in any way modifies the above-mentioned records.

Thank you for your kind word in regard to Ruth. We are remembering you and the College in prayer.

Sincerely yours in Christ

J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.
President

job/b

THE NATIONAL BIBLE INSTITUTE

340 WEST FIFTY-FIFTH STREET
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

March
twenty-two
1943

Professor Gordon H. Clark, Ph.D.
610 Howard Street
Wheaton, Illinois

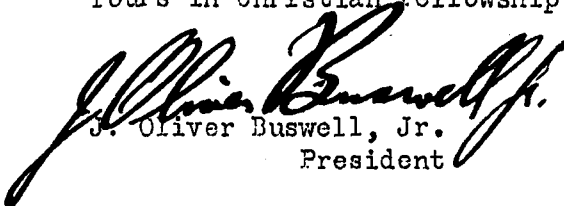
Dear Professor Clark

I am enclosing herewith a copy of a letter received last week from Dr. Edman, together with a copy of my reply. I do not know what it is all about, but I thought you ought to have these copies.

I assume that you have a copy of a memorandum which I sent you in March, 1937, notifying you of the trustees' action. If you would not mind showing that to Dr. Edman, if you have occasion to do so, it would relieve me from any criticism of failing to be businesslike or failing to make adequate records of business transactions.

Mrs. Buswell and I are praying for you and your loved ones. We know that the all sufficient grace of God will always be your strength.

Yours in Christian fellowship


J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.
President

job/vd
Enclosures

March 23 1943

President J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.
The National Bible Institute
New York, N. Y.

Dear Dr. Buswell,

Thank you for your recent letter. As you know (of your letter to me of May 4 1942), trouble for me has been brewing here.

Last August a committee that had investigated me wrote a report with certain recommendations. It lay without any action by the trustees until last December, when the executive committee, taking it up for the first time, adopted the report and fired me. Then after this delicate hint, it withdrew the firing action, reapproved the report, and let me resign. Enclosed is a copy of my letter of resignation.

In it I charge the trustees with a breach of contract because you, Dean Emerson, Mr. Dyrness, and Dr. Thiessen had a session with me discussing the third chapter of the Westminster Confession which explicitly states the doctrine of reprobation. The trustees admit that the matter was thoroughly discussed. At that time I made it clear that I would not consent to accept a position in Wheaton if I could not at the same time be a Presbyterian. In evidence of which I could point to the fact that during your administration no complaint was addressed to me, on this subject or on any other. Now the trustees have altered the doctrinal position of the college by an explicit condemnation of chapters two and three of the Confession, or more exactly an explicit condemnation of the doctrine taught in those chapters, and they tried to compel me to deceive the students as to historical facts, and I have resigned.

Of course Dr. Thiessen, who does not scruple to use quotations that cannot be located and who reverses the order of historical events in order to make a point against Calvinism, and who without departmental meeting, committee meeting, or faculty action, had the philosophy major dropped from the catalog, cannot be expected to remember anything that would favor my position.

I am sensible of your business behavior, of your adequate records of transactions; and I have always appreciated your above-board character - a type of character that Wheaton ought now to have at its head.

Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.

page two.

The present head of the school, under the cover of a carefully prearranged "revival" resembling a Buchmanite confession meeting, a revival that was thoroughly used for publicity, brought in the president of the Omaha U.S.A. seminary to recruit candidates for that church.

I trust that this information will bring you up to the current situation. If it is not sufficiently full; let me know and I shall answer your questions.

Cordially yours,

THE NATIONAL BIBLE INSTITUTE

340 WEST FIFTY-FIFTH STREET
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

March
twenty-six
1943

Dr. Gordon H. Clark
610 Howard Street
Wheaton, Illinois

Dear Dr. Clark

I should have commented on the regrettable visit of the president of Omaha Presbyterian Seminary. I take it you refer to Dr. Denise. I have somewhere a letter from him stating that after having read the Auburn Affirmation he saw nothing objectionable in it. When he said this I refused to permit him again to recruit students on the campus. I do not suppose Dr. Edman knew of his stand on that heretical document.

Yours in Christian fellowship


J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.
President

job/b

THE NATIONAL BIBLE INSTITUTE

340 WEST FIFTY-FIFTH STREET

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

March
twenty-six
1943

Dr. Gordon H. Clark
610 Howard Street
Wheaton, Illinois

Dear Dr. Clark

Thank you for your letter of March twenty-third. I had not read your resignation in the Guardian when I wrote you last. I shall continue to pray for you and your loved ones most earnestly, and I am sure that the grace of the Lord will be poured out for you abundantly.

I have never seen a copy of the trustees' report referred to, and for theological reasons I should like very much to have a copy of it if you could conveniently send me one.

I did not know that the question of discussions prior to the trustees' vote of March, 1937, had been raised. Since it is raised, could you let me know whether any deny that your appointment was upon the unanimous recommendation of the Executive Council (Dyrness, Emerson, Kirk, and I), Dr. Thiessen, chairman of the department, concurring. I am quite certain that this was the case. I feel certain also that the action was taken on unanimous recommendation of the faculty. If this is disputed, you would have a right to ask for copies of the faculty minutes recommending your appointment and the executive committee minutes confirming it.

On March 6, 1937, I wrote you, "Mr. Dyrness, Dean Emerson, and Dr. Thiessen told me late yesterday afternoon that you and they had reached a satisfactory working understanding. This is indeed a great victory. If a misunderstanding had to arise, it is providential that it came up at this stage."

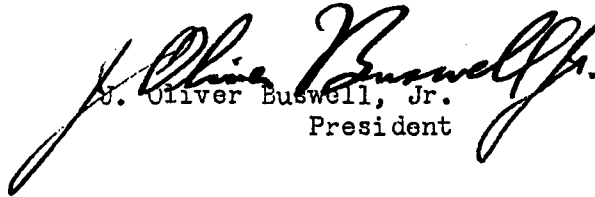
In point of theology, of course I wish you could see that chapter three of the Confession uses the words ordination and predestination to include occurrences of which this chapter specifically denies that God is the "author." This leaves plenty of room for Hodge's teaching of a difference between permissive decrees and compelling decrees.

Dr. Gordon H. Clark - page two

Chapter three really does not teach reprobation, but preterition; for the foreordination to wrath is distinctly stated to be grounded upon the sin of which God is not the author. The foreordination to wrath is never in the Westminster standards said to be grounded directly upon God's authorship.

This is an old discussion between us, but one in which I wish I might have been of help. *I mean, so that the trustees might not have condemned either the Westminster Confession or yourself.*
With earnest prayer for you and all of your activities, I am

Yours in Christian fellowship


J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.
President

job/b

March 29 1943

Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.
The National Bible Institute
New York, N. Y.

Dear Dr. Buswell,

As you request I am sending you a copy of the report of the committee. Kindly return it to me. The college did not furnish me with copies for distribution, in fact Dr. Edman never has shown me a copy as it was finally adopted by the committee and later by the trustees. He only gave me a tentative report. I understand that on the final report one word was changed. Instead of saying that I teach that God is the author of sin, they used the word 'originator' of sin. As you will see by following through the usage of the word 'author' in the Confession, it means 'approver.' Of course I do not hold that God approves sin; on the contrary he punishes sin and makes it the legal basis of condemnation.

Making sin the legal basis of condemnation, however, does not remove from the Confession the doctrine of reprobation. God from all eternity foreordained some to everlasting life and also foreordained some to eternal death. Read carefully chapter three, section three. If that is not reprobation, then you must be using a definition I do not know.

As for permissive decrees, I have never found anyone willing to define permission. And Calvin himself shows the folly of trying to escape the teaching of Scripture by inventing permissive decrees. Cf. Institutes III, xxiii, 8 and II iv, 3.

It is always pleasurable to have a theological discussion with you, but time is short now. The point of the present trouble is that I made my position clear when I came here, even submitting a published article on Determinism and Responsibility, and that no requirements were made of me beyond those published in the catalog. The trustees, at the first meeting in which they discussed my case, altered the doctrinal position of the college and fired me. Then they rescinded the firing and hoped for my resignation. It looks to me like a breach of contract.

Cordially yours,

April 12 1943

Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.
The National Bible Institute
New York, N. Y.

Dear Dr.. Buswell,

I take it that your letter of April 5 is an admission that I was employed on the understanding that my views should have an open hearing in the college, and in particular that I was not employed subject to any such restrictions as those set down in the report of the special committee, later adopted by the executive committee and by the trustees as a whole.

May I merely repeat that I had submitted my article on Determinism and Responsibility before my employment; that I openly advocated Calvinism, both during my year as Visiting Professor and after my election to Associate Professor; that I made clear to you that if Dr. Thiessen's wish to stifle Calvinism were to be granted I would not accept the appointment to Wheaton. Such in my mind were the terms of employment. Of course it was all verbal - I thought I could trust men who were so vocal in their profession of Christianity; if I had suspected the true character of the trustees I would have asked for a written contract. And I am always ready to admit that you kept the terms of the verbal contract. I have no complaint to make against you.

Your letter gives me another complaint against the trustees. If they repudiated the policies under which I was employed by dismissing you, they ought to have made the change of policy known to the faculty. In not doing so, they acted, in my opinion, dishonestly. And I am quite convinced that they are guilty of breach of contract. If our conversations did not constitute a contract, then there has been no contract at all, for I was employed by word of mouth. There was no written document signed by two parties.

Thank you for your kind regards and earnest prayers.

Cordially yours,

Covenant Orthodox Presbyterian Church

OF THE ORANGES
56 SOUTH MUNN AVENUE
EAST ORANGE, N. J.

RICHARD WILLER GRAY
MINISTER

CHARLES A. FREYTAG
CLERK OF SESSION
MATTHEW MCCRODDAN
TREASURER

July 9, 1943

*Ans. sent
at length*

Dear Dr. Clark:

Although I have not written to you before on the subject of your relations to Wheaton, I have been intensely interested in the stand you have taken. I am back of you one hundred percent.

No doubt you have heard of the letter that a number of us at General Assembly sent to the trustees of the college. Perhaps you have not as yet seen the answer. I am enclosing it. I am going to comply to the request not to circulate it. Hence, I should like to have you return it to me. I shall also enclose a copy of the letter we sent. You may keep that if you wish. They enclosed in their reply a copy of the report of the committee who investigated you. Since you have that I will not send it.

My main purpose in writing you is to inquire as to the nature of your criticisms of chapel speakers. I heard some time ago you criticized a speaker who lauded E. Stanley Jones. This would be a little ammunition for a return letter. Perhaps there are some things you might suggest that would be of additional aid.

You no doubt heard that some of the literature of our Christian Education Committee was found in the waste basket of the college post office undelivered. It was in two lots - forty and one hundred.

I regret the stupid action taken by the Philadelphia Presbytery on your request for licenture and ordination. I trust that the situation might be ironed out satisfactorily.

Sincerely,

Richard W. Gray

July 14, 1943

My dear Gray,

First, I want to thank you for your letter of July 9 with its enclosure (which I am returning) and for your interest in the matter. Your letter came while I was away on a speaking trip, and hence the delay in reply.

Perhaps it would be well for me to give you some of the background, even if it requires a lengthy letter. And because I do not like to write long letters, try to give the information to any others who might want me to write it out again.

Dr. Thiessen at the first, when I came here in 1936, tried to have me stopped from preaching Calvinism. He failed. I was employed on the definite understanding that nothing beyond the platform was to be required of me. If you will read over the report of the committee that examined me last June, you will notice that they admit my views had not changed since 1936, and that they were well known then, and had been thoroughly discussed. I claim therefore that their imposition of the very requirements which I rejected in 1936 constitutes a virtual breach of contract. Dr. Buswell holds that legally the trustees have the right to change any requirements and can fire a man for any reason at all. The exact legality of the matter is not the point I am trying to make. It is the fact that they have broken a promise and a business arrangement.

Dr. Thiessen apparently continued to scheme to get me out. But so long as Dr. Buswell remained, he could do nothing. After Buswell was fired (ask the trustees to explain that!)—and ask how it is the two men who were most prominent of all at Wheaton in a fight against modernism have been forced out) Thiessen, Dyrness, and Edman dropped the philosophy major from the catalog without a departmental meeting, without a committee meeting, and without faculty approval. The first I learned of it was from a student who had seen the printed catalog. I tried to bring this matter to the trustees, but they categorically denied me permission to say anything against Thiessen. I had brought the matter to the faculty. Edman put the matter off; and I raised the question three times in faculty, and finally after about three months, Edman allowed the faculty to vote on the matter, and the major was restored to the catalog by faculty vote the very last faculty meeting in June 1942. In the three months no doubt they had decided to put me out.

Glenn Andreas wrote to Dr. Edman and asked what issues were involved. Three days before the trustees committed to examine me on my theological views (and found they were the same as six years before) Edman wrote to Andreas and said "Quite possibly there has gone abroad a misconception of the situation in regard to a philosophy major at Wheaton. For some years there has been a marked decline in the enrollment in that department. Under the uncertain conditions of war days, we are expecting teachers to branch out into other fields familiar to them, if there should be need. At the time the catalog was published, it was uncertain as to just how much philosophy could be offered, in view of the fact that Dr. Clark is helping with elementary Greek. As soon as possible this uncertainty was clarified; and on recommendation of the administration, the philosophy major has been continued."

Note that this was the trouble three days before the trustees met to examine me in theology.

Note further that as a matter of fact there was no marked decline in the enrollment in philosophy. Even the major students numbered twenty when the major was dropped; and yet majors with two or three students were kept in the catalog. And it is distinctly false that it was uncertain how much philosophy could be offered. For at least three months before the catalog was printed, I had submitted a schedule preserving the philosophy major and keeping room for Greek. Well, just think over the facts.

Now perhaps I should take up the letter Edman sent to you in reply to the protest. In its first paragraph it asks you not to circulate it. This is in keeping with the underhanded practices of the college. Circulation would certainly hurt the college among thoughtful people; I do not see that it would hurt me at all.

The second paragraph to my mind is entirely false (except that they know of no other faculty member except O'Brien). The trustees have certainly discriminated against the Reformed faith. And the evidence is that they force me out and keep Thiessen who constantly attacks the Reformed faith. He attacks it even to the extent of making quotation from Calvin which cannot be found in Calvin, and in twisting the sequence of historical facts in Calvin's life; and in giving the impression that supralapsarianism asserts that God foreordains evil but that infralap. does not hold that God foreordains evil. He denies that man is dead in sin, but says that he is sick and must go to the drug store for medicine; ad inf. See Jewett—he knows Thiessen's positions very well. You might ask the trustees why I resigned, if the Reformed faith had the same welcome as Arminianism. And how about the constant stream of Arminian chapel speakers, and the almost complete absence of Calvinists.

Third paragraph: the language of the report definitely requires me to deceive the students. And I wish above all things that you would make a very forceful reply to the charge that I am not in agreement with the ministers of our church on the points involved; I accept thoroughly the third article of the Confession. Read it over again. Then compare it with the summary of my beliefs as worded by my friends the enemy. They asked me if I believed that God foreordains all things, Does He? I said yes. Then does he ordain that someone is born an imbecile etc. The answer is that this is one of the all things and therefore, yes. So they put in the report that God ordains some to be born imbeciles. Is God immutable? I say yes. Are emotions upset in a calm state of mind. I say yes, as you can see in my article on Intellectualism in the Westminster Journal. Does God have emotions? Of course he does not. There is no change in God's mind; no succession of thoughts or states. And so they print that statement. And they say these doctrines are untrue and dangerous. They do not state in words that they reject the Westminster Confession; they merely attack every one of its applications.

Four: no question of classroom procedure was raised in the committee meeting. They wanted my views. How much time I spent on them in the class room was never mentioned. But my support of the Creed Club on Sunday afternoons came in for severe condemnation. And further, since when is the problem of evil not a part of the regular course in philosophy. They asked me to keep to my subject and they order me not to teach my subject.

Paragraph one on page two comes in for the same sort of comment. How can anyone be prepared to meet the unbelieving world without a position of predestination? And the end of the paragraph betrays their insincerity. Free Methodists and others advocate the second blessing. Baptists advocate immersion, and some students from Presbyterian homes are immersed while at college; but more important than these two points is the constant class room attack on Calvinism by Thiessen and his dishonesty in the procedure. He may attack me before the trustees, but I may not complain about him. I must deceive the students on Calvinism to its hurt, and he is free to deceive the students to its hurt. I suppose that gives us equal rights to deception.

The middle paragraph on page two is of course so much twaddle. Evangelistic fervor is the very thing they complain about in my case. I am too interested in

preaching the whole gospel; and so they say I am not interested in preaching the gospel. I am not spiritual because I object to Buchmanite confession meetings, the way Edman has introduced them; and so on.

The next paragraph again shows their unwillingness to come out in the open. They want it all kept secret. So much for their reply to your (may I say) inadequate protest.

Now as for chapel speakers and others who come to talk to the F.M.F. etc. One of the latter, a C & M.A. man, spoke of W. Stanley Jones as a great man of God-- of course we do not agree with his theology, but theology is unimportant. Fully half the chapel speakers stress the fact that theology is unimportant (except Calvinistic theology, which is dangerous); and Edman in a conversation with Elwyn Smith (a former student) asserted that theology and true piety have little to do with ~~spirituality~~ ~~each~~ each other--certainly theology has no more to do with 'spirituality' than does chemistry. Then too the president of the Omaha (USA) seminary was on the campus and furnished with a room to get students to his seminary; though it has since been extinguished or something. Lindsay (instructor in Bible) is a USA man and at least a semi Barthian. But it is hard to get good evidence without taking down stenographically the words of the various speakers, and of course often their words are a little too vague to prove much in court. The drift however is unmistakable. Edman has spent some rather definite effort in cultivating the USA church; and the trustees can hardly deny that Buswell's fight against modernism had a good bit to do with his being fired.

To come back to my own case; they speak of having tried to be helpful to me. The tentative report of the committee was sent me. I wrote a protest against its accuracy. The final committee report to the trustees was never given to me, though I found out what it said from another channel. The first time the report was taken up for action by the trustees, they fired me. Note they terminated my connection with the college before informing me of the contents of the final report and before informing me of their acceptance of the report. Then after firing me, they told me they would rescind the dismissal and expected me to resign. Some of the Westminster men advised me to refuse and be fired over again. Others at Westminster, and a very good friend, a lawyer, said I might as well resign. I did the latter; I may have been wrong, but things were happening fast, and I chose the advice that gave its reasons rather than the advice that was given without reasons.

Mr. Hamilton has been here and has investigated the throwing away of our literature by the post office in the college. There is not sufficient evidence to prove that the girl did it under orders from above; but the postal inspector from Chicago came out and apparently talked turkey to her and maybe her superiors.

As for my application for ordination, I was quite disturbed at the refusal of the committee to bring my case before Presbytery; but I am pursuing the matter on the advice of Presbytery. What disturbs me more now is that Mrs. Kuiper says (to people at Quarryville) that I do not believe in miracles, and therefore do not even believe in God. This, if she said it as reported to me by a person who claims she said it to her, is slander. I not only believe in miracles--I believe that every event in the Scriptures occurred exactly as they say they occurred, but I wrote a defense of miracles in the Evangelical Quarterly some years ago. For the record, I believe that Christ raised Lazarus from the dead by calling out to him and by whatever exercise of power was necessary; and so on with the loaves and fishes, the opening of the eyes of the blind, the Virgin Birth, and all the rest. Now Hamilton believes that Elijah was fed by Arabs instead of ravens. This is a question of what the text says and what pointing is correct. There may be several such doubtful cases; but whatever the Scriptures

mean I believe occurred. Most of the cases are not doubtful. What I refused to admit before the committee was that these miracles which occurred were the acts of creation. The Scripture and the Catechism define creation as the work of the six days; there is no mention of additional acts of creation; therefore I do not see why it is necessary to assert that a miracle is a creative act, calling something into existence ex nihilo. Therefore I classify miracles as works of providence. Now this is in strict conformity with the confession. The Confession does not say that miracles are acts of creation. It speaks first of God's ordinary acts of providence and then continues (chapter five, section three,) "yet God is free to work without, above, and against them (means), at his pleasure." Therefore I would conclude that miracles are extraordinary acts of providence.

There is this further to be said. I am not sure what the framers of the Confession meant by the word 'means'. In the case of the feeding of the five thousand, the five loaves and two fishes were used and they are therefore means. In opening the eyes of the blind man, spittle and mud were used, and are therefore means. In fact, I do not know of a miracle in the Bible where means were not used. Strictly if God does something without any means at all, it is an act of creation for in creation there is absolutely nothing but the word of his power. If on the other hand, means signifies a given law of physics, such as that of the inverse squares, then God can and I believe has accomplished miracles without that means and contrary to it. What the word 'above' in the Confession means, unless it is repititious for 'against' or contrary to or inconsistent with, I do not know. And of course I cannot assert my belief in a phrase whose meaning I do not know.

But it should be abundantly clear from my article published sometime before I applied for ordination that I believe and defend the position that Christ turned five loaves and two fishes into a meal to satisfy a great multitude and that basketfulls were gathered up afterward. ~~YpA~~ And you will note in the article that there is no question of pointing a Hebrew text, and that the modernist idea that the boy brought out his lunch that his act inspired the others to take out their lunches is tawdry dishonesty.

To be perfectly fair, I wish to say that I have not communicated with Mrs. Kuiper to determine whether she said I did not believe in miracles; I learned of this report only today; it comes from the or a person who says she heard her say it. So if you repeat the contents of this letter, make sure that I am not yet at least accusing Mrs. Kuiper of anything.

The committee also judged that I did not have a call to the ministry. Whether they were within their rights in making such a judgment remains to be seen. But I will not discuss the matter, except to say that I have in my own way been preaching the gospel for the past six years at least, and it is that that has got me into trouble. And I shall continue to preach the gospel in the way I can do it best whatever the committee, Presbytery, or General Assembly does or does not do. I feel I could accomplish more if I were ordained.

What a long letter this has turned out to be. You will do me a great favor by giving the facts such publicity as you think they deserve. I have nothing to hide, and while this letter is not composed in a literary style fit for printing, you may quote it, show it around, and do whatever you want to.

Cordially yours,

14
July~~21~~ 1943

My dear Gray,

First, I want to thank you for your letter of July 9 with its enclosure (which I am returning) and for your interest in the matter. Your letter came while I was away on a speaking trip, and hence the delay in reply.

Perhaps it would be well for me to give you some of the background, even if it requires a lengthy letter. And because I do not like to write long letters, try to give the information to any others who might want me to write it out again.

Dr. Thiessen at the first, when I came here in 1936, tried to have me stopped from preaching Calvinism. He failed. I was employed on the definite understanding that nothing beyond the platform was to be required of me. If you will read over the report of the committee that examined me last June, you will notice that they admit my views had not changed since 1936, and that they were well known then, and had been thoroughly discussed. I claim therefore that their imposition of the very requirements which I rejected in 1936 constitutes a virtual breach of contract. Dr. Buswell holds that legally the trustees have the right to change any requirements and can fire a man for any reason at all. The exact legality of the matter is not the point I am trying to make. It is the fact that they have broken a promise and a business arrangement.

Dr. Thiessen apparently continued to scheme to get me out. But so long as Dr. Buswell remained, he could do nothing. After Buswell was fired (ask the trustees to explain that! -- and ask how it is the two men who were most prominent of all at Wheaton in a fight against modernism have been forced out) Thiessen, Dyrness, and Edman dropped the philosophy major from the catalog without a departmental meeting, without a committee meeting, and without faculty approval. The first I learned of it was from a student who had seen the printed catalog. I tried to bring this matter to the trustees, but they categorically denied me permission to say anything against Thiessen. I had brought the matter to the faculty. Edman put the matter off; and I raised the question three times in faculty, and finally after about three months, Edman allowed the faculty to vote on the matter, and the

major was restored to the catalog by faculty vote the very last faculty meeting in June 1942. In the three months no doubt they had decided to put me out.

Glenn Andreas wrote to Dr. Edman and asked what issues were involved. Three days before the trustees committee examined me on my theological views (and found they were the same as six years before) Edman wrote to Andreas and said "Quite possibly there has gone abroad a misconception of the situation in regard to a philosophy major at Wheaton. For some years there has been a marked decline in the enrollment in that department. Under the uncertain conditions of war days, we are expecting teachers to branch out into other fields familiar to them, if there should be need. At the time the catalog was published, it was uncertain as to just how much philosophy could be offered, in view of the fact that Dr. Clark is helping with elementary Greek. As soon as possible this uncertainty was clarified; and on recommendation of the administration, the philosophy major has been continued."

Note that this was the trouble three days before the trustees met to examine me in theology.

Note further that as a matter of fact there was no marked decline in the enrollment in philosophy. Even the major students numbered twenty when the major was dropped; and yet majors with two or three students were kept in the catalog. And it is distinctly false that it was uncertain how much philosophy could be offered. For at least three months before the catalog was printed, I had submitted a schedule preserving the philosophy major and keeping room for Greek. Well, just think over the facts.

Now perhaps I should take up the letter Edman sent to you in reply to the protest. In its first paragraph it asks you not to circulate it. This is in keeping with the underhanded practices of the college. Circulation would certainly hurt the college among thoughtful people; I do not see that it would hurt me at all.

The second paragraph to my mind is entirely false (except that they know of no other faculty member except O'Brien). The trustees have certainly discriminated against the Reformed faith. And the evidence is that they force me out and keep Thiessen who constantly attacks the Reformed faith. He attacks it even to the extent of making quotation from Calvin which cannot be found in Calvin, and in twisting the sequence of historical facts in Calvin's life; and in giving the impression that

supralapsarianism asserts that God foreordains evil but that infralap. does not hold that God foreordains evil. He denies that man is dead in sin, but says that he is sick and must go to the drug store for medicine; ad inf. See Jewett - he knows Thiessen's positions very well. You might ask the trustees why I resigned, if the Reformed faith had the same welcome as Arminianism. And how about the constant stream of Arminian chapel speakers, and the almost complete absence of galvinists.

Third paragraph: the language of the report definite requires me to deceive the students. And I wish above all things that you would make a very forceful reply to the charge that I am not in agreement with the ministers of our church on the points involved. I accept thoroughly the third article of the Confession. Read it over again. Then compare it with the summary of my beliefs as worded by my friends the enemy. They asked me if I believed that God foreordains all things. Does he? I said yes. Then does he ordain that someone is born an imbecile etc. The answer is that this is one of the all things and therefore, yes. So they put in the report that God ordains some to be born imbeciles. Is God immutable? I say yes. Are emotions upsets in a calm state of mind. I say yes, as you can see in my article on Intellectualism in the Westminster Journal. Does God have emotions? Of course he does not. There is no change in God's mind; no succession of thoughts or states. And so they ~~stax~~ print that statement. And they says these doctrines are untrue and dangerous. They do not state in words that they reject the Westminster Confession; they merely attack every one of its applications.

Four: no question of classroom procedure was raised in the committee meeting. They wanted my views. How much time I spent on them in the class room was never mentioned. But my support of the Creed Club on Sunday afternoons came in for severe condemnation. And further, since when is the problem of evil not a part of the regular course in philosophy. They asked me to keep to my subject and they order me not to teach my subject.

Paragraph one on page two comes in for the same sort of comment. How can anyone be prepared to meet the unbelieving world without a position of predestinatioion? And the end of the paragraph betrays their insincerity. Free Methodists and others advocate the second blessing. Baptists advocate immersion, and some students from Presbyterian homes are immersed while at college; but more important than these ~~kx~~ two points is the constant class room attack on Calvinism by Thiessen and his dishonesty in the procedure. He may attack me before the trustees, but I may not complain about him. I must deceive the students on Calvinism to its hurt, and he is free to

deceive the students to its hurt. I suppose that gives us equal rights to deception.

The middle paragraph on page two is of course so much twaddle. Evangelistic fervor is the very thing the complain about in my case. I am too interested in preaching the whole gospel; and so they say I am not interested in preaching the gospel. I am not spiritual because I object to Buchmanite confession meetings, the way Edman has introduced them; and so on.

The next paragraph again shows their unwillingness to come out in the open. They want it all kept secret. So much for their reply to your (may I say) inadequate protest.

Now as for chapel speakers and others who come to talk to the FWF etc. One of the latter, a C & MA man, spoke of F. Stanley Jones as a great man of God - of course we do not agree with his theology, but theology is unimportant. Fully half the chapel speakers stress the fact that theology is unimportant (except Calvinistic theology, which is dangerous); and Edman in a conversation with Elwyn Smith (a former student) asserted that theology and true piety have little to do with each other - certainly theology has no more to do with 'spirituality' than does chemistry. Then too the president of the Omaha (USA) seminary was on the campus and furnished with a room to get students to his seminary; though it has since been extinguished or something. Lindsay (instructor in Bible) is a USA man and at least a ~~most~~ semi Barthian. But it is hard to get good evidence without taking down stenographically the words of the various speakers, and of course often their words are a little too vague to prove much in court. The drift however is unmistakable. Edman has spent some rather definite effort in cultivating the USA church; and the trustees can hardly deny that Buswell's fight against modernism had a good bit to do with his being fired.

To come back to my own case: they speak of having tried to be helpful to me. The tentative report of the committee was sent me. I wrote a protest against its accuracy. The final committee report to the trustees was never given to me, though I found out what it said from another channel. The first time the report was taken up for action by the trustees, they fired me. Note they terminated my connection with the college before informing me of the contents of the final report and before informing me of their acceptance of the report. Then after firing me, they told me they would rescind the dismissal and expected me to resign. Some of the Westminster men advised me to refuse and be fired over again. Others at Westminster,



WHEATON COLLEGE

"For Christ and His Kingdom"

WHEATON, ILLINOIS

OFFICE OF
THE PRESIDENT

August 26, 1943

Dr. Gordon H. Clark
610 Howard Street
Wheaton, Illinois

My dear Dr. Clark:

Mr. James E. Phillips, the Comptroller, has sent me word that he has a fund of seventy-five dollars given by you, to be used for a reward for a short story based on the Reformation. Notice of the competition for the prize will normally be given again in the fall, especially through the English and History Departments. There is the possibility that you would prefer to withdraw the offer, in which case Mr. Phillips' office will refund the money to you. I shall greatly appreciate your advice in this matter.

With every best wish, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Y. R. Edwin

VRE:ah

3552 Elmley Ave.
Baltimore 13, Md.
March 24, 1944

Dr. V. R. Edman, President
Wheaton College
Wheaton, Illinois

Dear Dr. Edman:

Would you do me the favor of allowing me to quote, perhaps in print, from your letters of last September and October? These letters suggested that certain suspicions I had regarding the orthodoxy of Dr. Cairns were unfounded, and that you would be glad to present Dr. Cairns with a list of questions, and forward to me his answers. I would have been only too glad to see Dr. Cairns get a clean bill of health in this matter. When the list arrived, you acknowledged it, but said that the business of Homecoming was pressing, and that things would be delayed somewhat.

If the ASTP program is canceled at Wheaton, would Dr. Cairns be retained? This question is beside the main point, but if he were to leave, no doubt the storm concerning him would blow over. But the real point is this: can Wheaton afford to allow suspicions regarding the soundness of a professor remain unchallenged? The man's case history is all I have to go on right now, but he has taught without apparent friction at an institution where his fellow professors in theology have thrown sound doctrine to the winds. He might be personally sound, but unwilling to speak out for the Lord at Omaha. Again, he might have repented of such a course since coming to Wheaton. If so, I would like to hear about it. A history professor is not a neutral somebody. Nor are soldiers to be regarded as beyond the reach of the gospel in a history classroom.

There is an unhealthy fog over the East wing which I would like to see dispelled. You are in excellent position either to anoint my eyes or dispel this. The panoply of Ephesians is equal to this task. We should have no zeal but that which is founded on the Word. What is the good name of the college compared to this? A curriculum which has a strange foundation should not be eyed with complacency.

In 1837 there was a split in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. Two churches of the same name continued side by side until 1870. One was the "Old School", and the other was the "New School". Both churches had the same constitution, and the same subscription formula. But there was a huge difference. The men in the Old School actually meant it when they subscribed to the confessional statement. This was not always true in the New School. After the Southern church split off from the Old School, the two Northern Schools of thought made the mistake of uniting. *Hinc illae lacrimae*. The New School, further corrupted into modernism, captured the church, and their method of subscription is now the rule. It takes close questioning to observe a man's position. Of what school is Dr. Cairns? And what if he did subscribe to Wheaton's standards? He has subscribed even to better standards, doubtless. Can you clear this matter?

Sincerely yours,

DR. CLARK RESIGNS FROM WHEATON COLLEGE FACULTY

RULING Elder Gordon H. Clark, Ph.D., for six years professor of philosophy at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, has resigned from that position. The resignation has been accepted by the executive committee of Wheaton's board of trustees, and will take effect at the end of the current school year.

Dr. Clark's letter of resignation, in which he discusses the grounds of his action, follows:

February 15, 1943

The President and
The Trustees of Wheaton College,
Wheaton, Illinois.
Gentlemen:

With regard to the adoption, by the Trustees of Wheaton College, of the report concerning the teaching of philosophy and the doctrines that God is a most pure spirit without body, parts, or passions, and that God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, I desire to make the following statements.

In general, the conditions laid down in the report are contrary to the conditions under which I originally accepted employment. The report states, "We do not find that Dr. Clark's opinions differ materially from those which he frankly stated, and which were freely discussed, when he was employed six years ago." I made it clear then that if conditions such as those contained in this report were contemplated, I would not consent to teach here. The present reversal of policy constitutes in my non-legal opinion a breach of the terms of my employment.

The conditions as stated in the report are, "1. That to the largest extent possible he confine his teaching to the stated subjects, without advocating any theological beliefs which are controversial among orthodox Christians; 2. That if asked his personal opinion as to the group of doctrines in question, he be frank but state the belief rather than expounding his reasons,—being equally frank in ad-

mitting his susceptibility to error and that his views in this respect have not been those of most Christian leaders;" My reasons for refusing to accept these conditions are the same now as they were six years ago, and involve both academic and religious principles.

Academically, these two recommendations to the effect that philosophy be taught without stating my reasons for propositions of theodicy is the equivalent of requiring a medical faculty to teach medicine without discussing the cause of typhoid fever or tuberculosis. This is a type of teaching with which I am unfamiliar.

On the ground of religious and moral conviction the following points must be enumerated.

First: I reject the contentions of paragraph six that sound deduction from Scripture is illegitimate, and also that the spirituality of God and his foreordination can be neither supported nor refuted by argument from Scripture.

Second: To comply with recommendation two would be immoral. The effect of compliance would be to persuade students that the two doctrines in question are merely some personal aberration, and would obscure the significant fact that they were the views of the greatest reformers and have been for more than three hundred years the official position of a score of denominations, represented in this country by the following:

The Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.
The Presbyterian Church in the U. S.
The United Presbyterian Church of North America
The Associate Presbyterian Church of North America
The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church
The Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America, General Synod
The Orthodox Presbyterian Church
The Bible Presbyterian Church
The Bohemian and Moravian Brethren Churches

Third: The Scriptures in many places (e.g., Acts 20:27 and II Tim. 3:16) require the proclamation of the whole gospel. The diluted Christianity and the expurgated Bible contemplated in this report are abhorrent to me.

Fourth: By adopting this report the Trustees of Wheaton College have officially pronounced the two doctrines in question "unsound" and "dangerous." This is an open condemnation of all reformed denominations. Naturally I cannot support an organization that pronounces all the above mentioned Churches unsound and dangerous.

Fifth: To comply with these conditions would be to repudiate my vows of ordination to the eldership. The fact that others, since the growth of modernism in some denominations, neglect to perform their vows does not relieve me of my responsibility to Almighty God.

For these and similar reasons I am unable to comply with the requirements recently enacted by the Trustees, and I hereby present my resignation from the faculty of Wheaton College.

For the reasons that the College has made its plans to have me teach for the current school year and that I have made similar plans, my resignation is effective at the end of the 1942-1943 school year, but my tenure of the position until that time must be subject to the agreement I had on the above matters when I was first employed.

Very truly yours,

GORDON H. CLARK

The following is the reply of the board of trustees, accepting Dr. Clark's resignation.

Your letter of February 15th addressed to the Trustees of the College and to me [Dr. V. R. Edman, President] was presented at the last meeting of the Executive Committee. By vote of that Committee your resignation to be effective at the end of the 1942-1943 school year [August 31, 1943] was accepted. The action of the Committee refers solely to the resignation and does not imply acceptance of the reasons therein stated.

Dr. Clark is a ruling elder and member of Redeemer Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia.

It is expected that THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN will in the near future publish further comment on the important issues that forced Dr. Clark's action.

Philosophy.

delete 221, 222, 403, 404.

insert

~~301, 302~~

301, 302 History of Modern and

Contemporary Philosophy. The first semester, from Descartes to Kant, treats of Rationalism, Empiricism, and criticism.

The second semester is a study of the relation ~~to~~ of Idealism, Realism, and Pragmatism to the Christian faith.

each semester.

Credit, three hours

Dr. Clark.

The requirements for a major are hours,

including 201, 202, 301, 302, 341, 342, and
two years of German ~~or~~ French.

Salaries	1	@	3000	3000
	2 men	@	2500 =	5000
	2	@	2000 =	4000
	1	@	1800 =	1800
				<u>11,300</u>

Tuition in Zoo & Phys. (?) 1,000

Building = (?)

Dr. H. A. Ironside
Mordy Church,
1609 N. La Salle
Chicago, Ill

Mr. L. L. McShane
2 Glen Road
Springfield,
Mass.

Dr. Wm. R. McCarrell,
334 S. Grove Ave,
Oak Park
Illinois