

ROBERT H. COUNTERS  
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April 6, 1985

Dear Dr. Clark:

Thank you for your quick response to my letter.

I have misplaced my notes and your letter but can remember most of what you wrote and, therefore, I would like to explore this matter of the sinfulness of emotions (your view).

First, your taking πάθος in Col. 3:5 in a context of sins of a sexual nature (thus: pathos = passion, lustful deviance) is perhaps consistent with the two other NT uses of this word (Rom. 1:26 & 1 Th.4:5 (also by Paul)). But this does not justify your inference--for there is no deductive syllogism here--that pathos applies to human "emotions" in Scripture.

Is not "compassion" an emotion? Is compassion sinful? This word alone as a noun is used at least nine times in a positive way for God, Jesus, Paul and believers as an emotion they display and/or are encouraged to display. (Lk 1:78; 2 Cor 7:15; Philipp 1:8; Col 3:12; Philemon 7,12,20; 1 Joh 3:17.)

Surely you are aware of the implications of your assertions that the emotions are in fact sinful. When Jesus is moved with emotional compassion in Mat 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 18:27; and 20:34--just to begin the listing--what sort of sinful activity was he displaying? How can you possibly define away on paper or in rationalistic fashion the emotions of Jesus?

Are you also attacking Warfield's "The Emotional Life of Our Lord"? Was he also negatively influenced by psychology?

When Jesus wept over Jerusalem, being obviously moved with compassion for destruction, death, suffering, sorrow, anxiety, bewilderment etc., etc., etc., of the people and the ultimate terribleness of the lostness of those who end up in Hell, was HE displaying an emotional life which is inappropriate for you and me to emulate? Are you incapable of weeping etc. over the lost?

I must ask: are you not taking the personality of your own physical constitution and making it into the standard for hermeneutics? Your selecting of pathos in Col 3:5 seems to be a special selectivity of that which comports with your own unemotional makeup but which ignores the vast array of emotions displayed in Scripture.

When your wife of so many years died, surely you must have wept and shown emotional responses? Are you really going to assert that these were sinful? Surely, to deny one's emotional life a fundamental vitality of validity is a distortion on your part stemming from, perhaps, a radicalized interpretation of the deterministic principle of divine decrees. I have never heard you preach, Dr. Clark, but I can only imagine a sermon of cold or detached factual content lacking in challenges to the volitions to love, to show compassion, to display mercy, to engage in exuberant joy, etc. What sort of unbiblical character must that sort of preaching be?

I can only wonder--if your views on the sinfulness of the emotions were known to Reformed Presbyterians--how you were not charged with offenses against the Scriptures and secondary standards of the Church, because the implications of your position are enormous.

I must stop so as not to ask you too many questions. But I am most interested in your response to those I have raised. I had my difficulties with the OPC over Sabbath keeping and was finally suspended for my theology. I can imagine the OPC accepting both your Sabbath keeping and your view of emotions--and that, frankly, boggles my mind, not to say, strains my emotions. For, as an OP, I sought to show emotional concern for the lost, for the saved. I was apparently sinning if your view is correct. Mirabile dictu!

Sincerely,  
Bob Counters

345 Buckingham Drive  
Indianapolis, Ind. 46208  
August 27 1973

Mr. James L. Cochran, Editor  
The Presbyterian Lay Committee  
1727 Delancy Place, Phila. Pa. 19103

Dear Mr. Cochran,

After I had received your unsolicited paper for a long while, I wrote you my opinion. You professed in your reply of August 20 that you could hardly tell what I was driving at. You also question my knowledge of the facts.

I am well aware of your claims to be defending the original standards of what is now the UPCUSA. But I think your claims are empty, for in estimating a movement such as yours, one must consider actions as well as printed claims.

This leads to a question of facts. It is a fact that the Layman's Committee is an independent corporation; but it is also a fact that you personally and your friends are members of the UPUSA. Hence you are part of that church. To understand the word "you" as applying only to a corporation, and not to individuals, is a tawdry device.

The reasons I regard your claims as empty and futile are these (among others). Fr. Preuss has just made a decisive break through in restructuring Concordia Seminary. Presumably its President will leave and its heretical professors. Have you ever tried to remove the President of Princeton Seminary and its professors? Did you try to remove Dr. Ross Stevenson and the board of Trustees while the Auburn Affirmationists were gaining control before 1929? Have you ever since attempted to try in the church courts the many men who openly deny the Virgin Birth, the Resurrection, and other essential parts of Christianity? I take it as a fact that you and your friends have not done so.

In 1934 your General Assembly enacted a law that members of your church were under exactly the same obligation to support the boards and agencies of the church as they were to participate in the Lord's Supper. And seminary graduates applying for ordination were asked to support the boards regardless of what the boards might do. This is a fact, for I was personally present when these questions were asked. Have you ever tried to repeal this legislation? If so, have you succeeded? If not, then you must acknowledge, you do acknowledge by your personal membership in that denomination that Christ's command to celebrate the Lord's Supper is not more binding than the denomination's demand and action in helping to finance Angela Davis. To continue your membership is to acknowledge its jurisdiction. And this you do. This is a fact.

You state that you opposed the confession of 1967 and the new ordination vows. I acknowledge that this statement is true. But I also remember that Dr. John Gerstner, about 1965, in working for amendments to the proposed confession, made no effort to preserve the doctrine of the infallibility of Scripture. He contented himself with trying to effect subsidiary changes.

With the 1967 Assembly the new confession was adopted and the ordination vows changed. These vows result in the fact that the new confession is not a confession at all, for no one confesses it. You cannot now try anyone for heresy because there is no such thing as heresy in your church. The vows do not commit a minister to any doctrine. Your church therefore believes nothing. It is therefore not a church at all. But you continue your personal membership in it. You submit to its jurisdiction. This is a fact. You are by the act of 1934 compelled to support that organization and all the policies of its boards and agencies.

How then can you seriously claim to be "preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and motivating laymen to practice Christ's teachings in every area of life" ? Your conduct makes your claim empty, futile, and false.

Very truly yours,

Gordon H. Clark

# The Presbyterian Lay Committee, Inc.

1727 Delancey Place, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103 • Telephone 215-KI 5-3308

August 20, 1973

Mr. S. H. Clark  
Butler University  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Department of Philosophy  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46208

Dear Mr. Clark:

It is hard to tell from your letter of July 18, just what you are driving at.

You charge us with being a pagan organization. You must have some basis for this charge, otherwise, you would not make it.

Enclosed is a statement of our purpose, our objectives. I would appreciate your indicating which of these you consider pagan.

Perhaps you mistakenly consider us a part of the United Presbyterian Church since you state: "Your 'church' is not a church." We are not a part of the church. We receive no financial support from the church. We are "an independently supported organization of United Presbyterian men and women dedicated to the adherence of our church to its primary mission: preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and motivating laymen to practice Christ's teachings in every area of life." We have printed this statement on the mast-head of the Layman for years. Maybe you have overlooked it.

We have opposed the confession of 1967 from the beginning as being counter to the Westminster Confession of Faith.

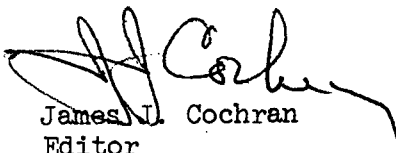
We even ran newspaper advertisements in 1966 opposing the Confession of 1967 and upholding the Westminster Confession (see Layman, January 1969, p. 1).

We have run articles opposing the new ordination vows (see Layman, March 1969, p. 5; December-January 1973, p. 4 re: Overture E on the new doctrine of ordination and ministry).

When you state "I can't tell what you stand for" my only reply is that you must not read the Layman very carefully.

And, it would seem to me, that a member of the faculty of College of Liberal Arts and Sciences of a respected University like Butler, would be more careful about his facts before he made the judgements and charges you made in your letter.

Very truly yours,

  
James I. Cochran  
Editor

JJC:th

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P.S. I can't resist the opportunity of making reference to the fact that when I was President of the Sons of Indiana of New York in 1953, I was privileged to introduce at our annual banquet, Dr. Hilton U. Brown, President Emeritus of Butler University - age 83

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H. U. Brown', written in a cursive style.

# INSTITUTES OF EXPERIMENTAL METHOD

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February 3, 1949

Dear Gordon,

Many thanks for your kind letter about Theory of Experimental Inference. Such kind comments as I have gotten to date come from my scientific rather than my philosophical friends, but to date I have seen only one review, in Ethics, which, being written by a man with positivist leanings, was what you might expect. According to his view, I had underemphasized the role of observation in science. Since it is my contention that modern analyses of scientific method over-emphasize the role of "direct" observation, at least, I suppose his comment is bound to leave me cold.

Your point on "presupposition" is a good one. I had meant statement C. to represent a partial definition of "presupposition" the defense of which would certainly have to be found in the historical (and present) intentions with respect to the use of the term. I'm not sure that I would agree with your translation, since you seem to equate "presupposes" with "contains within itself". I had meant that if a question is unanswerable, then all attempts to answer it would require knowledge of all things, and a lot else besides. In a sense, all such frustrated attempts would presuppose the answers to all questions; in an analogous manner all self-contradictory assertions imply all assertions.

But a later reconsideration has shown me that I did not have to bother with C. at all, if the four assertions on p. 51 are translated as follows, using for the moment Principia Mathematica notation and material implication:

Let:

$F(x)$   $\Rightarrow$  x is a factual question.  
 $L(x)$   $\Rightarrow$  x is a legal question  
 $A(x)$   $\Rightarrow$  x is answerable (i.e., answers to x "exist")  
 $P(xy)$   $\Rightarrow$  the answering of x presupposes the answering of y.

The assertions on p. 51 may now be translated as follows:

1.  $(x) L(x) A(x) \supset (Ey) F(y) P(xy)$
2.  $(Ex) L(x) A(x)$

Assertion 3. and 4. are obviously the same as 1. and 2. with F and L interchanged.

Now if 2. is false, then for every x  $[L(x) A(x)]$  is false and hence 1. becomes true (it is also true even if we use a non-material system of implication like Smith's or Lewis's). Hence C. is not required to obtain the result which eliminates so many of the possibilities from the list.

Presupposition D. on the other hand, is still required. This now reads

D.  $(x) (y) [-A(y) \cdot P(xy)] \supset -A(x)$ ,  
or, by what we Pennsylvanians call "contradiction and interchange":

$$D. (x) (y) [A(x) \cdot P(xy)] \supset A(y),$$

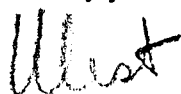
which certainly seems "reasonable."

If your group gets the chance, I hope they'll go over this re-formulation, since it certainly may have its flaws.

I hope you'll remember me to Gregory if he's still at Butler; I remember with pleasure his attendance in my classes. With regard to your last question, I left Penn for two reasons, better pay (which I might have gotten at Penn with the other offer in hand), and a real dissatisfaction with the way things were going in the department under the eye of Glenn Morrow. In addition, Tom Cowan had come out here, and Russ Ackoff had just recently been appointed, so that there was a real chance for renewing old collaborations.

Many thanks again, Gordon, for writing, and let me know what other flaws you unearth. The stimulus is most gratifying.

Cordially,

  
C. West Churchman