

CHRISTIANITY TODAY



||| A PRESBYTERIAN JOURNAL DEVOTED TO STATING, DEFENDING
AND FURTHERING THE GOSPEL IN THE MODERN WORLD |||

SAMUEL G. CRAIG, Editor

H. McALLISTER GRIFFITHS, Managing Editor

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What Is a Christian?

A DEFINITION to have value must be exclusive as well as inclusive. It must tell what a thing is not as well as what it is. We do not expect, therefore, that our attempt to define a Christian will add to our popularity. No doubt if we could content ourselves with some definition inclusive of practically all those who are called Christians, whether by themselves or by others, we would offend some who belong to the religious minority but hardly any who belong to the religious majority at the present time. And yet despite the fact that there are few things more calculated to make a man unpopular in the sphere of religious discussion today we are going to answer the question, "What is a Christian?", in a way that will necessarily imply that many who are called Christians are not such at all. It seems to us highly important that this be done; because while we regard it as a matter of no special moment whether a man be a Christian in the loose sense in which the word is often employed—a sense that often means little more than that the man is not a Jew or that he regards JESUS as the ideal man—we regard it a matter of eternal significance whether he is a Christian in the restricted sense in which it is employed in the New Testament and which it has all but universally borne throughout the Christian centuries, at least until the rise of Modernism.

What is needed is a definition that will enable us to distinguish between the Christian and the non-Christian; more particularly, since it is often true that God alone is capable of doing this, a definition that will enable us to determine

whether we ourselves are Christians and as such heirs according to the promise. Obviously there is a close connection between the questions, "What is a Christian?" and "What is Christianity?" (cf. our June issue) inasmuch as the answer we give to the latter necessarily determines the answer we give to the former. None the less the two questions should not be confused. It is one thing to say what Christianity is and another thing to say what a Christian is. The former assertion moves in the sphere of the objective, the latter in the sphere of the subjective. While there could be no such thing as a Christian if there were no such thing as Christianity, it is conceivable that Christianity should exist even if there were no Christians. And even if it be maintained that in view of the promises of God it is not even conceivable that Christianity should exist without

there being some Christians, it will at least be confessed that the fact that Christianity exists carries with it no assurance that we ourselves are Christians. What we are concerned to point out now are those marks or characteristics lacking which a man is not a Christian but possessing which a man is a Christian no matter how lacking he may be in other respects.

In approaching this question it is of first importance that we realize that it is an historical question, and that history alone can furnish us with the right answer. Many, for instance, seem to assume that this question is more or less synonymous with the question, What is the ideal man? Now we are not all disposed to deny that men are moved by a true impulse when they assume that the terms "Christian man" and "ideal man" are more or less interchangeable, at least when we have in mind what the Christian man is to become rather than what he is. It does not follow, however, that these two questions can rightly be treated as synonymous. The first is primarily an historical question; the second is primarily an ethical or philosophical question. Conceivably history may give such an answer to the question, What is a Christian? that we will have no inclination to look upon the Christian man as the ideal man—witness NIETZSCHE. Be this as it may, we have no right to assume, prior to investigation, that the full-grown Christian man and the ideal man are one and the same person. Moreover if we ignore the fact that this question is first, last and always an historical question, it will be hardly possible to justify one

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Dr. Machen Surveys Dr. Speer's New Book

(The review appearing below concerns Dr. Robert E. Speer's most recent book, and was written especially for "Christianity Today" by Dr. J. Gresham Machen.)

SOME LIVING ISSUES. By Robert E. Speer. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, Chicago, London and Edinburgh, 1930. Pp. 280.

THE author of this book has been for many years one of the most distinguished missionary leaders in the world. As a secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., he has wielded an influence that extends far beyond the bounds of any one church or any one country, but rather is in the truest sense world-wide.

This world-wide influence has been due not merely to administrative experience and to a wide acquaintance with the mission fields, but also, and primarily, to spiritual gifts of a high order. Dr. Robert E. Speer is a truly eloquent man. Though quiet and restrained in the manner of his public address, he yet exerts an extraordinary power over his hearers. What sympathetic hearer does not fall under his spell? For nearly forty years Dr. Speer has been a real leader of men.

It cannot be an event without importance when such a leader, at a time of uncertainty and transition in the Church, publishes a book which sets forth in something like comprehensive form his position with regard to the issues of the day. Such a book is the one now under review. The book is not, indeed, intended to be comprehensive; it is in part made up of addresses delivered at various times, and it deals with somewhat disconnected subjects. Yet, when it is taken as a whole, it does serve to indicate fairly well the general trend of the teaching of its distinguished author.

With that general trend we find ourselves, if we may speak plainly and briefly, in disagreement. There are, indeed, many things in the book with which we heartily agree. We do not mean the general declaration on p. 136 that the author "accepts the whole of Christianity as set forth in the New Testament," and that he accepts the doctrine of the Westminster Confession as to the Bible. Such general declarations are constantly being interpreted in so many diverse ways at the present time that in themselves they mean almost nothing. But, as will appear in what we shall say presently, there are many points at which our agreement becomes far more specific.

Nevertheless, when the book is taken as a whole, our general attitude toward it is one not of agreement but of disagreement. The disagreement is due to the fact that Dr. Robert E. Speer shows himself in this book to be, as indeed he has with increasing clearness become,

a representative of that tendency in the Church which seeks to mediate and obscure an issue about which we think that a man must definitely take sides.

That issue is the issue between Christianity as set forth in the Bible and in the great creeds of the Church and a non-doctrinal or indifferentist Modernism that is represented in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. by the "Auburn Affirmation" and that is really more or less dominant in most of the large Protestant churches of the world.

With regard to that issue, three positions are possible and are actually being taken today. In the first place, one may stand unreservedly for the old Faith and unreservedly against the indifferentist tendency in the modern Church; in the second place, one may stand unreservedly for Modernism and against the old Faith; and in the third place, one may ignore the seriousness of the issue and seek, without bringing it to a head, to preserve the undisturbed control of the present organization in the Church. It is this last attitude that is represented by the book now under review. Dr. Robert E. Speer certainly presents himself not as a Modernist but as an adherent of the historic Christian Faith; yet he takes no clear stand in the great issue of the day, but rather adopts an attitude of reassurance and palliation, according high praise and apparently far-reaching agreement to men of very destructive views.

It is this palliative or reassuring attitude which, we are almost inclined to think, constitutes the most serious menace to the life of the Church today; it is in some ways doing more harm than clear-sighted Modernism can do. The representatives of it are often much farther from the Faith than they themselves know; and they are leading others much farther away than they have been led themselves. Obviously such a tendency in the Church deserves very careful attention from thoughtful men.

But when it is considered, fairness demands that it should be considered not in its poorest, but in its best, representatives. That is our justification for occupying so much space with the present review. Dr. Robert E. Speer is perhaps the most distinguished and eloquent popular representative of what is commonly called the "middle-of-the-road" or pacifist position with regard to the great religious issue of the day. As such, he is certainly worthy of a careful hearing by those who differ from him in the Church.

The first chapter of the book deals with "The Place of Christ in the World Today." That

chapter begins well. Dr. Speer refers with evident condemnation to the common view that Jesus had a religion which was "the religion of Jesus" and not "a religion about Jesus that made Him its object and elevated Him to the place of God to be regarded and worshipped as God," a religion about Jesus which "was the doing of His disciples in later years." Surely, we may be inclined to say, a book that states the issue so well on its first page and evidently rejects the prevailing non-redemptive view of Christianity will be a book that evangelical Christians can heartily commend.

But we are not left very long in this state of favorable anticipation. On the very next page, we find Dr. Speer actually appealing to the late A. von Harnack of Berlin in support of "the historic judgment of the Church" regarding Jesus' "character and significance." Now we share to the full Dr. Speer's admiration of Harnack's intellectual ability. We will not, indeed, call him, as Dr. Speer does, not only the ablest but the "most authoritative" of the critics; for we do not think that any critic is "authoritative," the plain man having an inalienable right to make up his own mind regarding the credentials of the New Testament books. But certainly Harnack was an exceedingly able scholar. Who would not admire such prodigious learning, such limpid clearness of expression, such earnestness in the search for truth? Yet, after all, Harnack, with all his extraordinary gifts, was a representative of just that view of Christianity as "the religion of Jesus," just that view that regards as later accretions the whole redemptive content of Christianity, which Dr. Speer has apparently rejected. What possible comfort can the evangelical Christian obtain from being told that Harnack regarded the Gospels as being essentially true? The plain fact is that Harnack removed from the pages of history those things in the Gospels that are dear to the Christian's heart—namely, their whole supernatural and redemptive content. Yet we are told by Dr. Speer that the Christian need not fear New Testament criticism because Harnack, "the ablest and most authoritative of all the critics," has assured us that New Testament criticism has resulted in a confirmation of the plain man's reading of some, at least, of the New Testament books!

Does Dr. Speer mean that we are to accept Harnack's historical criticism, or at least regard as essential no more of the Biblical account of Jesus than Harnack retains? Does he mean that the plain man is well enough off if he contents himself with that reading of

the New Testament which Harnack thinks modern criticism confirms? Or is the reference to Harnack due only to unawareness of what Harnack's real position is? We should like to think that the latter is the case. It seems, indeed, almost incredible that such unawareness of Harnack's position should exist in the mind of any modern educated man who has ever dealt with these questions at all, especially in the mind of one who pronounces Harnack's book on "The Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries" to be "one of the greatest missionary books ever written" (p. 96); but on the other hand the other explanation of Dr. Speer's attitude toward Harnack seems to be excluded by the fact that Dr. Speer does believe in the virgin birth and no doubt in the true, bodily resurrection of Jesus, which, with all the other miracles of the New Testament, Harnack rejects. A middle position, we surmise, is correct—Dr. Speer no doubt affirms many things that Harnack denies, but we hardly think he could speak of Harnack as he does unless he had gone much farther with Harnack, and much farther away from clear-cut evangelicalism than a careless reader of his book might suppose. One thing at least is plain—there can be no real compromise between the naturalism of Harnack and the supernaturalism of the Bible and of the Christian Faith. Was the real Jesus the Jesus reconstructed by Harnack or was He the stupendous Redeemer whom the Bible presents—that question ought never to be trifled with, but must be resolutely and clearly faced.

In the facing of the question, the reader obtains no help in the rest of Dr. Speer's first chapter. A considerable amount of space is occupied by testimony from non-Christians in support of the thesis that "Christ is more looked up to today throughout the whole world as the supreme moral authority and the ultimate and absolute ethical ideal than ever before in human history." We confess that sadness comes over us as we read these testimonies. If the true Jesus, with His stupendous claims, had always been presented in mission lands, would there ever have been this polite recognition of Him as a moral leader by those who have not been born again and are not willing to desert all other saviours and endure the offence of His name? Dr. Speer does recognize, indeed, the inadequacy of these testimonies in themselves. Jesus Christ, he observes, claimed to be more than the moral Lord of life; He claimed also to be "the unique Son of God." But even with regard to this claim, he continues, important acknowledgments have been obtained from adherents of non-Christian faiths. Here again, however, we are filled with little but sadness as we read. The testimonies cited here do not really go beyond those cited under the other head; and it seems very sad that a great missionary leader should regard such testimonies as these as in any sense testimonies to the Christian view of Christ. But, says Dr. Speer in the same chapter, modern ideas of development and personality have "helped many minds toward faith in the Incarnation." Then follows a long quotation from

Dr. George A. Gordon, of the Old South Church in Boston, in the course of which it is said that "the true relation of mankind to the Lord Jesus is not grasped until He is regarded as the Incarnation of the Eternal Humanity in which the race is constituted." We can only say that if it is easier for the modern world to accept an incarnation like that, it is no doubt correspondingly harder to accept the incarnation spoken of in the fourteenth verse of the first chapter of John. Here, as always, a minimizing apologetic ends logically in the loss of everything distinctive of the Christian Faith.

Finally, in the same chapter, Dr. Speer points out that "the Church's claim for Christ has involved not only His moral authority and His Deity, but also His Saviourhood." Is Christ "any nearer His rightful place in these regards in the life and thought of the world"? Here again Dr. Speer appeals to the testimony of non-Christian men—particularly to one who "was, at the time of his death in 1923, the leading Indian in eastern India." This leading Indian said: "I am a Hindu, but I believe in Christ as the highest fulfilment of Hinduism." And more in that vein. Dr. Speer can see in such testimonies "the evidence of Christ's steady advance toward His sovereignty as moral ideal, as Son of God, as Saviour of mankind." We, however, can see little in them but evidence that the visible Church has mitigated the true offence of Christ's words and has lowered His lofty claims. The true and stupendous Lord and Saviour presented in God's Word could hardly thus be treated with complacent admiration by those who will not bear His name. God keep us in the Church from seeking testimonies such as these! The world will never be saved by "the mind of Christ" becoming in this manner supreme; it will only be saved when men and women lost in sin are begotten again by God's Spirit and have their sin washed away in the blood of the Lamb. If missionaries always proclaimed that message in all its poignancy and offence, no doubt fewer distinguished Hindus would testify to the value of Christ's moral ideals. But, on the other hand, more precious souls would be saved.

The second chapter deals with "The Grounds for Belief in the Deity of Christ." The essential and conclusive ground, Dr. Speer says, is to be found not in the inimitable uniqueness of Christ's moral character, not in his "unique character and message as a teacher," not in the miracle of His "spiritual consciousness, His sense of perfect harmony with God," not in His "central place in history," not in the miracles of His ministry, but rather in His resurrection from the dead. So thought Paul, says Dr. Speer, and so we ought to think. "So today the Resurrection ought to be conceived by us as the demonstration of our Lord's deity, and the power and principle of the Resurrection as the central essence of Christianity."

Here, as so often in connection with the book, agreement is mingled with disagreement as we read. Certainly we agree with the author's attribution of importance to the resurrection of Christ. We do not, indeed, think that the

resurrection of itself would be sufficient to establish the deity of our Lord. Lazarus was raised from the dead; yet he was not God. But when taken in connection with the whole New Testament account of Jesus, above all when taken in connection with Jesus' own stupendous claims, the resurrection does set the seal upon the testimony. We confess, further, that we do not know what Dr. Speer means by "the power and principle of the Resurrection" as being "the central essence of Christianity." To us, the really essential thing to say about the resurrection of Christ seems to be not that it was a principle or possessed a principle, but that it was a fact. By it our Lord completed the redeeming work that He had come into the world to do. At any rate, however, we do not think that we attribute less importance to it than does Dr. Speer.

The third chapter, entitled "The Son of God is the Son of Man," deals largely with the significance of the title "Son of Man" as it appears in our Saviour's words. Here the author, as is unfortunately very common, has missed the origin and significance of the term with which the chapter deals. The true key to the term is almost certainly to be found in the stupendous vision of the seventh chapter of Daniel, where "one like unto a son of man" appears in the presence of the Ancient of days. The title "Son of Man" in the Gospels is not a designation of our Lord's humanity as distinguished from His deity, still less a designation of any real or supposed character of His as a summation or recapitulation of humanity as a whole, but rather is expressive of His supernatural office as heavenly Messiah. Dr. Speer regrets the avoidance of the title in the usage of the Church. Yet he himself admits that in the New Testament the title occurs almost exclusively in the words of Jesus Himself. Apparently the only exception is found in Acts 7:55f., where the ultimate origin of the title is particularly plain. The dying martyr, Stephen, like Daniel, saw the heavenly Messiah in the presence of God. We must say plainly that in our judgment the Church would do well to imitate the reserve of the New Testament writers in the use of this title in referring to Christ. Certainly the use of the title would be very unfortunate if it led to any confusion between the humanity and the deity of our Lord. Dr. Speer, in this chapter which deals with "the Son of Man," actually quotes from Myers' "St. Paul," which he calls "one of the most nobly Christian of all the poems of the centuries," a passage ending with the line:

"Jesus, divinest when Thou most art man!"

That line, from the Christian point of view, is little short of blasphemous. Never should we forget that our Lord is "God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person, forever." A supremely important truth is involved in that word, "distinct." It was well worth the theological conflict that led to its inclusion in the creeds of the Church.

In connection with the fourth chapter, which deals with "The Virgin Birth," our agreement with Dr. Speer is probably as great as it is at any other point in the book. The author ac-

cepts the virgin birth of Christ and so do we; and in that agreement we greatly rejoice. But then, in the next chapter, entitled "Why Was Christ Crucified?", our disagreement becomes particularly acute, and it is a disagreement not only of the head but also of the heart. Dr. Speer, like so many other modern men, seems to linger at the threshold of the great truth of the atonement without ever really entering in: he says many fine and true things about the Cross of Christ; but neither here nor in any other of his recent books, so far as we have been able to observe, does he give any clear expression to that which seems to us to lie at the inmost heart of Christianity—the true substitutionary death of our Lord as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God. He comes near to the great doctrine; he quotes on page 79 a passage of Scripture which implies it: but he himself somehow always stops short at the really decisive point. After quoting the words, "Unto him that loveth us and loosed us from our sins by his blood," and a verse from an old gospel hymn, he says:

"We do not know how. We only know that nineteen hundred years ago a tragedy had to be wrought to cure the tragedy of the sin of mankind."

And then he trails off, in the customary way, about "the illustration of God's absolute and utter faithfulness and His willingness to pay the price, even with His own life, for the failure of man." Thus the true and blessed doctrine of the Cross is passed by.

Here our disagreement, we must say frankly, concerns the very heart of the Christian faith and life. Dr. Speer says with regard to salvation by the Cross of Christ: "We do not know how." We say, on the contrary: "Praise be to God, we do know how." There are many things that we do not know. But one thing, thank God, we do know; we do know that the Lord Jesus took upon Himself the just penalty of our sins and bare it in our stead upon the cross. We do not know it by any wisdom of our own. Indeed, all the wisdom of all the philosophers, all the insight of all the poets, all the experience of all the ages were quite powerless to discover it. But it can be well known to every simple reader of God's holy Book. This mystery at least God has forever hidden from the wise and prudent; but, thank God, He has revealed it unto babes.

In the sixth chapter, which deals with "The Resurrection—The Centre of Christianity," we agree with much that is said. Certainly we agree as to the supreme importance of the resurrection in the Christian Faith. But we cannot see why the resurrection should be used, as Dr. Speer uses it, to belittle the Cross. Dr. Speer says with regard to Paul: "In some of his Epistles he says nothing of the Cross, but in almost every one he makes much of the Resurrection." To our mind, that is a very unfortunate assertion. The fact seems to be that the death of Christ, in one way or another, is mentioned in every one of the Pauline Epistles except II Thessalonians and Philemon, while the resurrection is not mentioned in II Thessalonians or in Philemon or in Titus. But how utterly useless is such a calculation!

It is perfectly clear, when Paul's teaching is taken as a whole, that both the Cross and the resurrection were quite fundamental to everything that he said, being presupposed even where they are not mentioned. Why should the one be pitted against the other?

We cannot pass the other chapters of the book in any sort of detailed review. They contain many things with which we heartily agree, many things, too, which are eloquently and finely said. Thus, on page 118, Dr. Speer points out well and forcibly the unfairness of the charge of narrowness which is so often brought against evangelical Christianity:

"Men will speak tolerantly of liberalistic Christianity or of institutional or sacerdotal or prelatical or Papal religion, or of the use of religion as a force to control the ignorant, but evangelical Christianity, with its clear doctrinal convictions and its warm religious experience, is narrow."

"Now let us at once recognize that there is an element of truth in this view. Truth is narrow and exclusive. All truth is so. The search for it, whether in science or religion, involves the rejection of every false and untenable hypothesis."

That is well said indeed. Our central criticism of Dr. Speer is that he does not apply it in his own teaching and in his own attitude in the Church. Certainly he does not apply it in the present book. Particularly does he fail to apply it in what he says, on pp. 141ff., with regard to "the limits of tolerance." What becomes of the Christian message if "the possession of Christian spirit ["spirit" being spelled with a small letter] is the essential and sufficient credential" (p. 142)? Dr. Speer seems to forget, here and at other places, that which he himself recognizes (see, for example, p. 227), that the world cannot be saved by the loveliness of Christians or by any human goodness, but only by the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Certainly the New Testament passages cited in such profusion on page 144 do not at all warrant the inclusiveness for which Dr. Speer seems to plead.

Finally, we come to the last chapter, on "Returning to Jesus." The title is somewhat ominous. It recalls the famous shibboleth of modern Liberalism, "Back to Christ," by which the followers of Harnack and of others of his way of thinking sought to justify their rejection of the way of salvation as it is set forth, in particular, in the Epistles of Paul. Here, indeed, as at other places in the book, Dr. Speer detects the lurking danger; he shrinks back from the apparent implications of his words. He says (p. 258):

"There is a second sense in which the conception of returning to Jerusalem to find Jesus is inadequate and untrue. It is inadequate and untrue if it is a proposal to go back of John's Gospel and Paul's Epistles and to eliminate the miracle and mystery from the Synoptic Gospels and to reduce Jesus to the naturalistic figure of a good man who taught nobly but was self-deceived, and around whom delusion soon grew up which transformed the simple, human teacher of Galilee into a supernatural Saviour and a dying God."

And again (p. 260):

"The Jesus we return to Jerusalem to find is the full Jesus of the New Testament, of Matthew and Mark and Luke, of John and Peter and Paul."

These are salutary words. But the trouble is that they have little influence upon the main current of the book. Only a few pages after

the words that we have just quoted, we find the author saying (pp. 263f.):

"Jesus only is the fundamental and adequate theology. What was enough for Peter and James and John, when Jesus was transfigured before them, is enough for us."

What becomes, then, of the Cross; what becomes of Pentecost? What becomes of that which Christ *did* for us once for all, as distinguished from that which He *was* and *is*? It is all pushed, as non-essential, aside. We can return without essential loss, according to Dr. Speer, to the experience of Peter and James and John, in the days before Jesus had yet died for men's sins.*

The truth is that in this book we have two distinct strains. We have, in the first place, elements of evangelical conviction; and we have, in the second place, a type of religious faith and life in which those elements have no logical place. This latter type has exerted a large influence upon Dr. Speer's book. The author does manfully strive, indeed, to hold on to elements of the former type. We do not for a moment mean to imply that the evangelical utterances in the book are put there by the author merely in order to quiet the fears of evangelicals in the Church. Rather is Dr. Speer, in those utterances, really striving to be conservative; he is really striving to avoid the radicalism that is so prevalent in the religious world today. But the trouble is that logic is a great dynamic, and that things contradictory to each other cannot permanently exist side by side. Whether or not Dr. Speer ever draws the full logical conclusions from the erroneous elements in his thinking, many of those who are influenced by him will probably draw those conclusions only too well. Indeed, we find even Dr. Speer himself, almost at the very end of his book, quoting with the utmost enthusiasm vague and verbose utterances of the Lausanne and Jerusalem Conferences. That is surely a sad ending for a book that contains so many things that are true. It is as though the verbiage of church-unionism had at last swept away as in a mighty flood the elements of the historic Faith that Dr. Speer had tried so manfully to maintain.

Dr. Speer pleads, in his last chapter, for simplicity. But we venture to think that in doing so he is confusing very different things. He is confusing simplicity with vagueness, and the two are really quite distinct. Dr. Speer's teaching is often vague; but is it really simple? We venture to think that it is not. We venture to think that in its combination of tendencies really opposite, in its attempt to be evangelical and yet make common cause with profoundly anti-evangelical tendencies in the Church, it is a highly subtle, a painfully labored, thing, that the plain man can never really grasp. Many great theologians, on the other hand—perhaps all really great Christian theologians—possess a true simplicity which comes straight from God's Word. And that

(Concluded on page 15)

*We cannot think that this objection is removed by the fact that Dr. Speer himself, almost in the same breath with the passage just quoted, mentions the Cross and the empty tomb among the things that designate the Christ who is sufficient for us.

faith. How can they claim to be Presbyterians when they question (1) A truthful Bible, (2) The miracles of the Bible, (3) The Virgin Birth of Christ, (4) Christ's giving of Himself as a substitute for us in His death on the cross, and (5) His bodily resurrection? My hope is that the public is thoroughly aware of the difference existing between genuine Presbyterians and the radical wing of the Church which apparently predominated in the Cincinnati General Assembly.

Enclosed herewith are subscriptions for your paper to twenty-five college libraries. Assuring you of the great satisfaction derived from reading CHRISTIANITY TODAY which is the best publication of its kind, I am

Cordially yours,

BEATRICE SHILLITO.

Cincinnati, Ohio.

To the Editor of CHRISTIANITY TODAY:

SIR: Some one has kindly sent me a copy of your noble new venture for God, CHRISTIANITY TODAY. I hail it and hasten to send you my subscription for one year. If in addition to this—together with the New Westminster Seminary there now could be started a daily newspaper with the Bible as its standard, there might be among us, as Dr. Kuyper did in the Netherlands, an atmosphere created and a sphere where Christ would be honored and which the God of the Scriptures could bless.

Assuring you of hearty sympathy in the noble work you are doing through this venture of your new monthly, I am in Our Blessed Savior,

Yours faithfully,

The REV. JOHN H. DE VRIES.

(Translator of Kuyper's Works.)

Daybrook, Conn.

To the Editor of CHRISTIANITY TODAY:

SIR: I have read the first issue of my subscription from cover to cover including the covers. I must say that I have thoroughly enjoyed its contents.

If I understand the policy of the editors of CHRISTIANITY TODAY, we adherents of "historic and scriptural Christianity" must follow the example of Paul in "contending" for the Faith.

Tolerance has its virtues, but it also has its limits. The Christian without backbone and loyalty to convictions is worth about two cents, in my estimation, to Christianity. Those "yes" and "no" men from "anywhere" have put a monkey wrench in the cogs of pure Christian thought and practice, as it were. Is it any wonder that the nation is breeding a generation of citizens who have no moral standards, no principles of conduct and no God in Whom they can trust?

So, hew to the line, my Christian brethren, and let the chips fall where they may.

My subscription has already been placed with you, but I would like that the enclosed names should be mailed a copy of "that standard bearer," CHRISTIANITY TODAY.

Fraternally in Christ,

WILLIAM O. MILLER.

First Reformed Church, Tamm, Ill.

To the Editor of CHRISTIANITY TODAY:

SIR: I write to thank you for that most excellent and timely article by Rev. F. H. Stevenson, D.D. It ought to be placed in the hands of every member of our Presbyterian Church to inform them of what is going on in the high places (and in the places not so high) of the Church. How can a Minister boost the offerings for the work at home and abroad when at 156 in New York, and in the Wither- spoon Building in Philadelphia, Pa., there are those in official positions that are fitly labelled as the "Yes and No" men. How can we Ministers who still are loyal to "Christ and the Church" enthuse over the appeals, the Pentecostal suggestions, and of other "You Ought To Do" say so's of the powers that be when they treat so indifferently the tragic facts of the "Auburn Affirmation."

Very recently a dodger has been sent abroad "to the clerks of our Church sessions" urging them to boost *The Presbyterian Magazine*, when the editor is an avowed modernist and one of the 1300 signers of the Apostate Auburn Declaration! Much stress is put upon the fact, by this letter to the sessions, and a special reason why we are to enlarge its circulation in this, it is "Our Official Magazine." So there is an "Official" backing of the editor and those associated with him in its management—most of them modernists.

Surely no pastor who is anxious to keep his people in touch with "The Gospel of Christ" as set forth in the New Testament, can put into the homes of his people a paper whose "Official" people are hostile to the Virgin Birth of our Lord, His diety, His bodily resurrection, His atoning sacrifice, His second coming, and deny the trustworthiness of God's Holy Word.

So long then as the "Magazine" is in the hands that it now is, not many loyal-to-Christ pastors will wear their shoes out running about their parishes seeking new subscribers to *The Presbyterian Magazine*.

Sincerely yours,

G. WILLIAMSON.

Binghamton, N. Y.

To the Editor of CHRISTIANITY TODAY:

SIR: Your paper is most refreshing. I rejoice that there are able editors and profound scholars who are among the seven thousand who have not yet bowed the knee to the Baal of liberalism, but, as Elijah, militantly champion the cause of the living God and "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints." May you long continue to do so.

It is my hope that CHRISTIANITY TODAY may become closely linked with that well-nigh impregnable fortress of Fundamentalism in the South—Hampden-Sydney College. As an alumnus of that institution I wish to do all that I can to help cement this bond. Your readers in the North and West, for I believe that your circulation is largely in these sections, who do not know of Hampden-Sydney, should certainly know how faithfully the administration and faculty of this college stand

by the "faith of our fathers." They will rejoice that Hampden-Sydney is such a place that one need have no fears in sending his or her son there. For wise advice and scholarly attainments her faculty cannot be equalled; and in genuinely Christian atmosphere I have never heard of a place which was (or could be) her superior. CHRISTIANITY TODAY stands in the world of religious journalism as Hampden-Sydney stands in the world of religious education.

Yours very truly,

Richmond, Va.

H. C. BRADSHAW.

To the Editor of CHRISTIANITY TODAY:

SIR: I inclose my subscription, and also a list of names representing families in our Church.

I was a Commissioner to the General Assembly, and fully agreed with Dr. Craig's position, both as to Princeton Seminary and as to the "Auburn Affirmation." I do not see how any man who subscribed to the "Auburn Affirmation" could qualify as a Minister of the Gospel.

Yours very truly,

CHAS. M. CALDWELL.

Waverly, Ohio.

Dr. Machen Surveys Dr. Speer's New Book

(Concluded)

true simplicity can be the possession of every humble Christian as well. "How can I learn about God and my relation to Him?", says the truly simple-minded man. "I can learn it in God's holy Book. What does that Book tell me about the present state of my soul? It tells me that I am a transgressor of God's law and under its wrath and curse. Is there, then, for me no hope? Oh, yes, the Book tells me that God sent His own Son to be my Saviour. What, then, did He do to wash away my sin? He took my place and died in my stead upon the cross. But how can I, who am dead in trespasses and sins, ever lay hold upon the benefit of Christ's death? The Holy Spirit can make me alive by the new birth. How, then, when I am born again, am I justified before God? Not by good works, not by love, but by faith alone. What, then, must I do henceforth, with my new life in Christ, and with the guilt of my sins washed away? I must use the weapons that God has given me in the battle of this world; I must read His holy Word, I must partake of the sacraments that Christ instituted, I must pray in Christ's name. How then shall I show that I am truly Christ's? By living a life of love and by telling others the blessed story of God's grace."

Such is the simplicity that is found in the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church; such is the simplicity that is found in God's Word. Those who hold to that simplicity are at present undergoing hardship and reviling in the Church. But it is worth all that it costs. Those who possess it would not exchange it for all the favor of all the churches or for all the kingdoms of all the world.