

REDEEMING THE TIME

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16).

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GOD AND THE COURT: WHO REIGNS SUPREME?

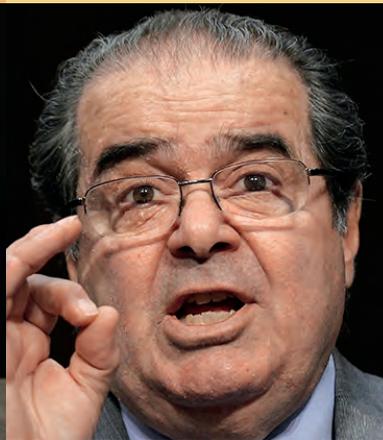
On June 26, 2015, the United States Supreme Court handed down its infamous decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges* and declared same-sex marriage to be the law of the land. Not only did the Court overturn the understanding of marriage held in virtually every culture for thousands of years, it trampled on the U.S. Constitution and set the stage for real persecution against Christians — which has already begun. We present here excerpts from the dissenting opinions of the four justices in the minority:



CHIEF JUSTICE JOHN ROBERTS

... This Court is not a legislature. Whether same-sex marriage is a good idea should be of no concern to us. Under the Constitution, judges have power to say what the law is, not what it should be. **The people who ratified the Constitution authorized courts to exercise "neither force nor will but merely judgment"** (The Federalist No. 78) (A. Hamilton)....

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JUSTICE ANTONIN SCALIA

Today's decree says that my Ruler, and the Ruler of 320 million Americans coast-to-coast, is a majority of the nine lawyers on the Supreme Court. The opinion in these cases is the furthest extension in fact — and the furthest extension one can even imagine — of the Court's claimed power to create "liberties" that the Constitution and its Amendments neglect to men-

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JUSTICE CLARENCE THOMAS

The Court's decision today is at odds not only with the Constitution, but with the principles upon which our Nation was built. Since well before 1787, liberty has been understood as freedom from government action, not entitlement to government benefits. **The Framers created our Constitution to preserve that understanding of liberty. Yet the majority invokes our Con-**

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JUSTICE SAMUEL ALITO

Today's decision usurps the constitutional right of the people to decide whether to keep or alter the traditional understanding of marriage. The decision will also have other important consequences.

It will be used to vilify Americans who are unwilling to assent to the new orthodoxy. In the course of its opinion, the majority compares traditional marriage laws to

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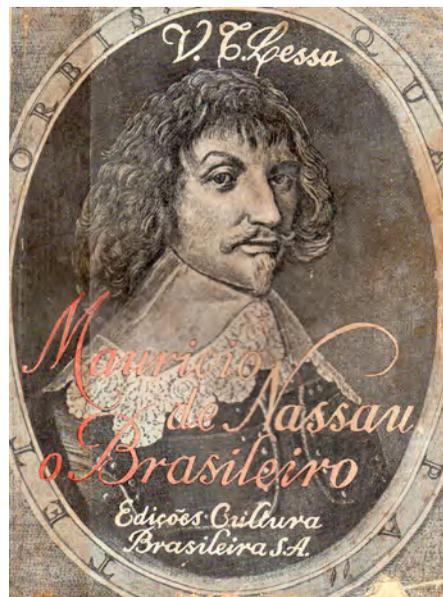
The First Great Coming of the Gospel to Brazil

A note from the Rev. Ken Olson, missionary to Brazil under The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions: *This article is translated practically word for word from the book Maurice of Nassau, the Brazilian, written in 1937, by Vicente Themudo Lessa. He wrote this book to commemorate 300 years since the coming to Brazil of Maurice of Nassau, the prince of the Dutch, who deserved the title of “Maurice, the Brazilian.” Lessa wrote from the Portuguese standpoint, and not as a Protestant Christian, but he did a good job of writing history without partiality in which the arrival of the pure Gospel of Christ can be seen. Also, it must be noted that the Gospel did come, although not substantially, with some French Huguenots, before the Dutch.*

When the [Protestant] Reformation first was introduced into the Low Countries [including Holland], Lutheran theologians were the first there. After this the doctrines of Zwingli and finally those of Calvin became popular. The thing that is certain is that, as it did in other places, Calvinism won the day over the other Reformation teachings and the Netherlands church became Calvinistic in its doctrine and practice. The discipline of the Dutch Reformed Church is rigid and its government is not far from Presbyterian.

Even before the rising against Spain, Dutch ships already were plowing the seas in all directions. But the inclination of these modern Phoenicians was accentuated after attaining liberty from the Spanish

yoke. The sea was the natural element for them. Tenacious in their combats on land, they were invincible on the sea. The commercial and maritime expansion of the Netherlanders was sobering. Dr. José Hygino of the Archaeological Institute



of Pernambuco [the region of Brazil with the capital in Recife] said:

“... These foreigners, who came from so far to found a new Holland in this part of America, were superior in civilization to the Portuguese. They were educated in the school of free men, were ruled by a legislation already penetrated by the liberal spirit of modern times, entirely foreign to the inflexible legislation of Portugal ... they used largely the right of representation, they knew how to defend firmly their rights in the courts and resist the tyranny of the authorities.... The Portuguese colony, on the contrary, had lived until then in the most complete obscurantism, under the rule of the land grant holders, and this obscurantism continued after the Dutch rule, submitted to the

yoke of the governors, proconsuls of the Portuguese Caesarism.”

The Conquest of Brazil

The Thirty Years War [1618-1648] was the last great effort of the Catholic Church to subjugate the Protestants. This was the time of the conquests and commercial expansion of Holland. In this world war “the Dutch audacity” took the Northeast of Brazil from the hands of the Catholic Portuguese. The people oppressed by the Spanish soon constituted itself into a respectable power. The supremacy of the seas passed from the hands of the Portuguese and Spanish to the Dutch....

Holland equipped a great squadron for the invasion of Brazil. In the words of John Baers, “a fleet so large and powerful had never left from the ports of Holland.” The Dutch managed to take Recife, Pernambuco, and Paraíba at the start [1630]. Later they took most of the rest of the Northeast. The news of the taking of Recife arrived in Lisbon and the government of Portugal was much afflicted. The reigning Philip ordered that prayers be made and that the guilty should be punished by the Inquisitor General. Do not be indignant or laugh. These were the ideas of the time in the city and in the court, and we should be very glad that we did not come to the world in the time in which our land was subject to such influences. The king himself was the submissive slave of the Inquisition.

The Protestant Church in Brazil

When the Dutch established themselves in Pernambuco they did not neglect the religious aspect. To there went various ministers of the Reformed church, who took care of the religious discipline of the metropolis. In October of 1641, taking into account the growing number of preachers and the going forward of

the Reformed work, they resolved to create a Synod in Brazil. The Calvinist assemblies were constituted with two classes of delegates: preachers and elders, which correspond in Presbyterianism to teaching and ruling elders. There were 27 ministers cited in the registers in Brazil. Besides the pastors, there were a certain number of exhorters or comforters of the sick, whose service was well accepted. It can be ascertained that in Recife, besides the Dutch church, there were English and French churches, served by Reformed preachers.

The principal service of the Dutch preachers was among the adherents of the Reformed religion. They did not neglect the catechism and the work of education. They occupied themselves with the conversion of the Indians, having preachers for the tribes in the various regions of the Northeast. Schools were created for the Indians. They were instructed in Portuguese and Dutch, learning to read and write. The preachers among the Indians gave good reports. There were Indians instructed in Christian doctrine and reading and writing to the point of serving as instructors. There were measures taken for the printing in Recife of a catechism in three languages — Portuguese, Dutch, and Tupy. The Dutch paid the professors and ministers of religion who taught the Indians of Christianity. Above all the others was a young English minister who having been sent to the University of Leyden and returning to Brazil, translated the Holy Scriptures into the Brazilian [Indian] language, so that the Indians could read and understand.

As far as the education of the Negros, the Synod of 1644 sent a proposal to the Supreme Council for the naming of a headmaster to teach for free the sons of the Negros employed by the Dutch. As to the zeal for religion, it can be seen in the Acts of the Assemblies that the President made investigations into the state of the churches of the country, as to

prayers, service of communion, exercise of church discipline, registers of acts, number of members, and other relevant matters.

The Dutch were very rigorous in church discipline. Even preachers were admonished and censured with severe penalties. They were very zealous in the sanctification of Sunday. It was noted that the people bought and sold on these days, involving themselves in games and drunkenness, did public work, and committed other abuses. Some Dutch owners of sugar refineries, in the imitation of the Portuguese, started working on Sundays, alleging this to be the custom of the land. Against this abuse the ministers called the attention of the authorities. From the pulpit they censured the practice of swearing and cursing, so common among the young and old, especially among soldiers and sailors.

The Count Maurice of Nassau

Maurice of Nassau was the governor of Dutch Brazil from 1637 to 1644. In spite of affirmations to the contrary, the bad faith of certain writers, and prejudice of race and religion, the era of Nassau in Pernambuco is enshrined as the Golden Age of colonial times in Brazil. Rocha Pomba has said:

“The Count of Nassau, by his pacifying nature, by his feelings of

The First Great Coming of the Gospel to Brazil was from 1630 to 1654 with the Dutch. Brazil would have to wait another 200 years for the Gospel to come again with American Protestant missionaries in the nineteenth century.

justice, tolerance, and clemency, by other virtues public and private, so rare in those times — is a figure



who is uniquely distinguished in his epoch ... of a scrupulous moral correctness, irreproachable — only he did not compromise with crime; only he could not tolerate error which showed itself incapable of correcting itself. His was a nature highly sympathetic, given to love, to piety, to pardon when he could do it with magnanimity and without the sacrifice of his duty. Know that his name, after a time, was highly esteemed even by the Portuguese who resigned themselves to accept his government. Know also that among the Indians themselves his name was surrounded with great admiration, and was always pronounced with sympathy and respect.”

For eight years the land of Pernambuco would have a liberal and enlightened government, wise as had not been seen before in Brazil. It has been said that a new Joseph of Egypt had appeared. It is this Golden Age that, three centuries after, 1937, Pernambuco is remembering. Maurice corrected abuses and established order and discipline in everything, governing with equity. Sometimes he had to act with severity among his own compatriots who gave him more trouble, surprisingly, than the Portuguese. He used rigor, removing abuses among government officials. Even the military had to suffer. People had to be deported. The punishment was hard for the guilty, attaining even to the death penalty. To the Catholics was guaranteed the

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THE FIRST GREAT COMING OF THE GOSPEL TO BRAZIL

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free exercise of religion in all public and private acts, even in processions on the streets.

The Palace of Friburg [of Nassau] was a marvel for its time. The edifice was raised in the midst of parks and gardens. Everything was done with much art. The Dutch architecture did so entering in a country where art, directed by the Jesuits, always testified the lack of the esthetic sense of order. Nassau was the military commander of the Dutch as well. The soldiers followed the brilliant sword of their commander, who at their front fought as a regular infantryman, risking heroically his life in an orgy of individualism. He distinguished himself in the spots where the fighting was fiercest, giving blows worthy of a medieval Paladin. Games of chance were prohibited. The slaves reposed on Sunday. In sum, in the words of Barlaeus, "Nassau made more men good than he had found when he arrived in Pernambuco."

A Religious War in Brazil

It is known how much can be done by prejudice of race and religion. Maurice and the Dutch were of the Germanic race and of the Protestant religion. From there came the terrible sermons of Father Vieira against the heretic invaders. In vehement oration, he went to the point of employing daring hyperboles, showing that the Divine tolerance would lead the heretics to imagine that even God would be "turning Dutch." Under this hypothesis, said the preacher, "Deliver Brazil to the Dutch, deliver them the Indies, deliver them the Spanish." And prophesying dark days, he threatened in this form:

"There will be no more masses, nor altars, nor priests. Catholics will

die without confession, without sacraments. Heresies will be preached in these same pulpits, and in the place of Saint Jerome and Saint Augustine, the infamous names of Calvin and Luther will be heard. The innocents which remain, relics of the Portuguese, will drink false doctrine and will arrive to the point that, if they ask the sons and grandsons of those here: Child, of what sect are you? One will respond, I am a Calvinist; the other, I am a Lutheran."

In one battle between the Portuguese and Dutch, a Catholic bishop started to preach against the heretics and to excite religious hate. The prelate offered the church treasury and fathers and monks enlisted in the army. In another battle, Fernandes Vieira jumped up from his hammock in the early hours of the morning, saying that he had had a vision of Saint Anthony who upbraided him for sleeping at such a critical hour. An old inhabitant of Varzea then presented him and the others with an image of the Virgin mutilated by the Dutch. Superstition came in aid. The image sweated, they said, and flowed from it drops of water and the people cried, "Miracle, miracle." After the restoration of the Portuguese in Recife, Pope Innocent X gave Fernandes Vieira the

title of "Restorer of the Catholic religion in Brazil."

The End of Dutch Brazil

A combination of circumstances contributed to the Pernambucano rising against the Dutch. One of them was the confrontation between Nassau and his successors in the administration. The Count was the embodiment of the true nobleman. Of noble birth, he showed forth the traces of a fine statesman and diplomat. He had turned into the Saint Anthony of the Portuguese and all regarded him as if he was the legitimate ruler who had come from them. Very different were the bourgeois to whom he had conferred the government, very inferior in their moral and administrative qualities. The contrast did much to prejudice them in the popular mind. The indirect culprit of all came to be Cromwell [Lord Protector of England], declaring war on Holland and thus making it impossible for Holland to come in aid to Dutch Brazil.

The Indians

Of the foreigners with whom were put in contact most our indigenous population — Portuguese, French, and Dutch — it was the first with which they had the most antipathy. Our first colonizers did not treat them with due benevolence. Their women and daughters were dishonored. Many times they came to be obligated to serve as slaves and were pursued like wild animals. The French and Dutch treated them with more humanity. They allied themselves with the French and Dutch frequently to combat the Portuguese. With them the Dutch entered in intimate alliance and in its forces it counted many indigenous contingents.

The number of the indigenous population which embraced Protestantism was much more than one

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REDEEMING THE TIME

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THE DIVISION OF 1937

Between the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Bible Presbyterian Church

PART 6

“The True Spiritual Succession of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.”

BY BRAD K. GSELL

It is important to have read Parts 1 through 5 of this series, which have been published in successive issues since the winter 2014 issue of Redeeming the Time. They serve as the general background for understanding this segment and those to come. These may be found on our website (www.rttpublications.org), or we would be glad to mail copies to you.

On the afternoon of Thursday, June 11, 1936, the Rev. H. McAllister Griffiths rose to the floor of the meeting of the Presbyterian Constitutional Covenant Union and read two articles as part of an act of association. The first article stated in part: “In order to continue what we believe to be the true spiritual succession of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., which we hold to have been abandoned by the present organization of that body ... [we] do hereby associate ourselves together ... in a body to be known and styled as the Presbyterian Church of America” [later renamed Orthodox Presbyterian Church].¹ Following this reading, Griffiths called on all those wishing to join the new church, based upon this premise, to stand. With nearly 200 men on their feet, Griffiths declared the new denomination to be officially constituted.

This was the course that Dr. J. Gresham Machen vigorously promoted. Charles Dennison (OPC historian from 1981-1999) writes: “His [Machen’s] strategy had been to build on the message that Westminster Seminary and the OPC were the true spiritual descendants of Princeton Seminary and PCUSA....”²

It soon became apparent that there was a move underfoot to shift the church away from this found-

“It was now apparent that the OPC was not the continuation of the old church....”

Charles Dennison
OPC Historian

ing premise. The concerns expressed by Carl McIntire on the floor of the Third General Assembly of the OPC, on June 1, 1937, proved to be well founded. McIntire stated: “We would point out that, in view of the issues which have been raised in the Presbyterian Church of America, many have hesitated and are hesitating to unite with the Church until they are assured of the way it is to take; as to whether it is to be the true spiritual successor of the Presbyter-

ian Church in the U.S.A. or some other kind of a body....”³

Dennison on Spiritual Succession of PCUSA

Charles Dennison confirms that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church became “some other kind of body,” to borrow McIntire’s phrase. He writes: “It was now apparent that the OPC was not the continuation of the old church, at least to the extent that the fundamentalists, who were at one time comfortable with the old church, were not comfortable in the new. But, as Machen himself must have realized before his death, the OPC was turning out to be at odds with the old church in a far deeper sense.”⁴

Although Machen only lived for a few months after the founding of the OPC, many OPC leaders have tried to claim him as being in total agreement with their position of being “at odds with the old church.” Is this claim accurate?

The “Re-education” of Dr. Machen

The writings of OPC Historian Dennison are quite revealing. He

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studied under some of the Westminster professors mentioned in these articles. While Charles Hodge's grandson, theologian Caspar Wister Hodge, Jr., called Machen "the greatest theologian in the English-speaking world,"⁵ Dennison presents to us a Machen who had his theological eyes opened, and his course corrected, in the last years of his life. This supposedly occurred due to his good fortune of having been "re-educated" as a "student" of these Westminster professors, with their supposedly superior theological proficiencies.

Dennison writes: "The truth of the matter most likely has much to do with Machen's 're-education' and with his loyalty to the seminary. Regarding his 're-education,' Machen had become, in many ways, the student to the faculty he had assembled in Philadelphia. His re-education began with the organization of Westminster Seminary in 1929. Here was a man in transition, moving from an evangelical presbyterianism of his earlier years to a more thoroughly confessionally Reformed presbyterianism, learning that being Reformed meant more than he dreamed.

"Machen's re-education was theological in the deepest sense. Looking at his works prior to 1929, we find few references to distinctive Reformed doctrines. There are general references to the Reformed faith or to a general presbyterianism but no substantive treatment of the doctrines of historic Calvinism. After 1929, specifics surface about the covenant, predestination, limited atonement, eschatology, and the active obedience of Christ."⁶

Machen, Van Til and Apologetics

Dennison's portrayal of Machen continues as he discusses the subject

of apologetics. Simply put, apologetics is the field of Christian theology that defends the truths of God's Word against false teachings and philosophies. Dr. J. Oliver Buswell had expressed his concern to Dr. Machen in the last letter he wrote to him on December 4, 1936. He stated: "I believe, however, that the emphasis upon historical apologetics and Biblical exegesis which characterizes the works of James Orr, Robert Dick Wilson, and your great works on the origin of Paul's religion, the virgin birth, and other subjects, ought to be retained. The apparent tendency in Westminster to substitute what your faculty would call a theological but what I sincerely believe is a philosophical type of apologetics seems to me a tendency in the wrong direction."⁷

Buswell's concern undoubtedly was largely aimed at the teaching of Professor Cornelius Van Til. Rather than denying the differences between Machen and Van Til on this matter, Dennison offers excuses for Machen not 'yet' seeing the light, and presents him basically as being out of his depth. This is the same Dr. Machen who had been extended a call by the board of directors of Princeton Seminary in 1926 to the Stuart Professorship of Apologetics and Christian Ethics. Machen eventually declined the offer,⁸ with Van Til taking his place, but it shows that Machen was considered eminently qualified in this field.

Dennison writes further: "The most difficult area was apologetics. Machen had been devoted to the Princeton apologetic as represented by B.B. Warfield. Given the fact that Van Til's position was no 'quick study,' Machen found himself listening and weighing. However, he was a popular speaker, much in demand, this adding burdens to his already over-full schedule, hardly allowing him the leisure to revamp his apologetical method. Therefore, when he spoke along apologetical lines, even into the last year of his life, he did

so in keeping with his past commitment to evidentialism' and natural theology.¹⁰ This is clear from his 1936 radio speech, "How May God Be Known?" which is included in *The Christian Faith in the Modern World*.¹¹

Continuing, Dennison states: "Of course, there is another aspect to Machen's response to Buswell. Because Machen lacked facility with Van Til's method, because he was so much the student to Van Til in the situation, he probably did not know what to say to Buswell."¹²

Professor Allen MacRae gives a different perspective. It was reported that Van Til feared that MacRae was following the apologetical method advanced by Warfield, rather than Van Til's method. MacRae asked Machen if it was impermissible for a Westminster professor to hold the old Princeton Seminary view. Machen replied: "Absolutely not. I would stand with Warfield one hundred percent of the time." MacRae qualified this quotation: "That was the gist of what he said to me; I do not remember the exact words."¹³

Following Machen's death, a number of Bible Presbyterian men founded Faith Theological Seminary, headed by Dr. MacRae. Carl McIntire made clear that "Faith Seminary would continue the defense of the faith represented by Dr. Machen in his celebrated works, such as *What Is Faith?*, *Christianity and Liberalism*, *The Origin of Paul's Religion*, and *The Virgin Birth*. It would sound the call to a consistent Calvinism, to an appreciation of the Reformed Faith in the warmth and zeal for the salvation of the lost, its implicit reliance on the sovereignty of God, and its full honoring of the grace of God."¹⁴

One would wonder if the men in control of the OPC would have welcomed even Machen in their midst had the new denomination started a few years earlier! Charles Dennison stated concerning Machen that in the years leading up to the formation of

the OPC, he “appealed to a general Presbyterian population for sympathy and support, hoping that some would join the OPC in order to remain with the true Presbyterian line.” But Dennison states that “This placed Machen in a difficult position.” The reason: “If Van Til was right, some radical rethinking would have to be done about the Princeton apologetics and his [Machen’s] own view of American Presbyterianism.”¹⁵

These observations by the official OPC historian appear to this writer to sell Machen quite short, and almost seem to present a man who was having his errant ways corrected and was being led from a mistaken path onto one that would make him “truly Reformed.”

“Truly Reformed”?

Through the years, such phrases as “self-consciously Reformed” and “truly Reformed,” have been frequently used by men in the OPC to show that they or others have been deemed to have received the equivalent of a seal of approval. In fact the latter phrase has been used so frequently that it is sometimes shortened to “TR.” Doctrinal precision is certainly crucial, and it is quite appropriate to state that someone believes the system of doctrine taught in the Scriptures, but these designations have — rightly or wrongly — been seen on occasion as a display of arrogance or exclusivity. Some have shown either their displeasure or at least mild ridicule by adding an extra “T” — “truly, truly Reformed.” Only God knows the intentions and motives of the heart, but it is easy to see why this perception has been off-putting to so many through the decades.

Carl McIntire stated in 1941 his belief that these men “seemed to make their emphasis on the ‘Reformed Faith’ almost a fetish...”¹⁶ McIntire did not hesitate from saying that he and the Bible Presbyterian Church were “strictly Reformed,”¹⁷

but he had an aversion to the Reformed “clique” or “club” mentality which he sensed. Interestingly enough, OPC Historian D.G. Hart has used similar terminology, sometimes referring to the “Westminster clique.”¹⁸

H. McAllister Griffiths also became alarmed at this spirit. He wrote: “The Westminster group seems to feel that whatever they declare to be ‘Reformed’ is *ipso facto* essential to the system. They have distinguished between men who are declared Calvinists and those whom they say are ‘Calvinists at heart.’ ... It is this attitude as much as anything else that has caused their undoing. Its exercise verges close to unconscious blasphemy, for only God has the right or the power to distinguish between a false and true theological profession. To many, remaining in the Presbyterian Church of America (OPC) was like being a Soviet citizen and trying to follow the party line. Soviet citizens do not always know what it is, or what it may be next, but if they do not adhere to it they are enemies of the state. That psychology was being reproduced in the Presbyterian Church of America on a scale so intense that you who have been absent from it could hardly be expected to envisage it.”¹⁹

Mirroring McIntire’s sentiments above, Griffiths wrote elsewhere: “This system is sometimes called ‘The Reformed Faith.’ But the churches of the Reformation did not invent it. They found it in the Word. It is sometimes called ‘Calvinism.’ But Calvin did not originate it. He, too, found it in the Word. Others describe it as ‘Augustinianism.’ But the great Augustine, who had been for a millennium and a half with his Lord, did not conceive it. He, also, found it in the Word. For myself, I do not care what men call it, or whether they give it a name at all, so long as they get a glimpse of its glorious mountain-tops, its fertile valleys, and its infinite distances.

“Sometimes I feel that many who sincerely love the truth of God in all its wholeness do an unconscious and unintended disservice to it when they too-often call it by the name of any of its human exponents. They do not mean, nor do they suspect, that by the continual iteration and reiteration of the names ‘Reformed Faith’ or ‘Calvinism’ they create popularly the impression that they are advocating something merely human, something man-made. They give the inadvertent impression of being sectarian, whereas this Divine System is not sectarian at all.”²⁰

Professor MacRae displayed some of this same sentiment when he wrote concerning his method of teaching: “I have never been anxious to train people to follow a party line and quote uncritically the view of particular human leaders. I would like to see men who are able to examine the Scripture for themselves and to determine the Divine teaching on each point under discussion.... It is a common human failing to try to fit everything into complete human systems and to fill in the gaps in our knowledge with guesses and deductions. One thing that I particularly like about John Calvin is his insistence on standing squarely on whatever he found clearly in Scripture and his refusal to go beyond it. When a man would take two clear teachings of Scripture and use them as a basis from which to infer a third, Calvin would always insist that the third point be considered as merely conjectural, unless and until it was found specifically taught somewhere in the Bible. I fear not all of his followers have observed the same care in their study.”²¹

This aversion to a “party spirit” undoubtedly was in play when the name “Bible Presbyterian Church” was chosen. These men were “strictly Reformed,” but their emphasis was more focused on the language

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of the Scriptures, than on man-made designations.

The Amendments of 1903

When the Presbyterian Church of America (OPC) was founded, one of the first controversies surrounded the form in which the Westminster Standards would be adopted. In 1903, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. had added two chapters to the Confession of Faith and made several other changes, including the addition of a "Declaratory Statement." It was widely believed that these amendments had been advanced by those seeking to water down some of the Confession's Scriptural teachings. It is said to have played a large role in effecting the reunion of the PCUSA with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1906. This latter denomination was started in 1810 by those who were heavily affected with Arminianism. The fact that this 1906 reunion took place was seen as a clear sign of a doctrinal downgrade in the PCUSA.

The new Presbyterian Church of America (OPC) had men of two persuasions. Some believed that with the denomination's founding declaration that it intended to be the "true spiritual successor" of the PCUSA, the OPC should immediately adopt the Standards as they existed when they left the PCUSA. The excision of the 1903 amendments — in part or *in toto* — could then be considered. After all, many had taken their ministerial oaths in the PCUSA and had served for many years under that Constitution which contained the 1903 amendments. There is evidence that Dr. Machen himself held this position at some point before the new denomination was founded. Dr. J. Oli-

ver Buswell writes: "In the months preceding May, 1936, Dr. Machen explained to me that he did not wish to take his stand as contending for any change in the constitution of the Church (Presbyterian, U.S.A.) as it then existed, though he hoped that the amendments of 1903 might sometime be eliminated."²²

Some pastors whose churches had been forced into litigation in the secular courts with the PCUSA also felt, as a practical matter, that making changes immediately would unnecessarily complicate their court cases. The PCUSA could use the fact of even slight changes to say that the new church was indeed departing from the PCUSA's standards.

Others felt that the new church should immediately establish the Con-

"I believe thoroughly in the system of doctrine taught in the Scripture as set forth in the Westminster Standards as they existed before 1903"
[emphasis ours].

J. Oliver Buswell

in a letter to J. Gresham Machen

fession without the 1903 Amendments. Many who became Bible Presbyterians preferred the former approach. This position has been used through the years to unfairly and inaccurately paint them as weak on Reformed doctrine.

The truth of the matter is that ALL of these men favored the Confession before the Amendments of 1903 were added. J. Oliver Buswell had written to Machen on December 4, 1936: "I believe thoroughly in the system of doctrine taught in the Scripture as set forth in the Westminster Standards *as they existed before 1903* [emphasis ours]. I believe that that system of doctrine is supremely important."²³ These men at Westminster stated that Machen had

showed them Buswell's letter before his death, so they certainly knew Buswell's position, as well as that of other Bible Presbyterians — before they began to seek to wrongly discredit them on this account. When the *Presbyterian Guardian* wrote concerning this issue, editor Ned B. Stonehouse omitted this clear fact, of which he was then aware.^{24,25} Even if it had slipped his mind, the other Westminster professors who saw that letter could have reminded him that that important fact, by obligation to truth and fairness, should be reported in a later edition.

This untrue campaign against Bible Presbyterians, concerning these Amendments of 1903, continued on. Well over a decade later, Dr. J. Oliver Buswell wrote: "I should never had referred to the matter again had I not been informed rather recently that some sound Calvinistic bodies overseas have been told that 'the Bible Presbyterian Church is un-Calvinistic, since one of the leaders of the Bible Presbyterian Church, moderator of the Second General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America, actually spoke in defense of the weak and misleading 1903 amendments of the Westminster Confession'! I did not at any time speak in defense of the 1903 amendments. When the Bible Presbyterian Church was formed, it adopted The Westminster Confession, without the objectionable 1903 amendments."²⁶

The issue had more to do with timing, than any difference of doctrine. Even Professor Stonehouse, a staunch opponent of including these amendments in the OPC Constitution, had conceded that "After the deed had been done [passage of the 1903 amendments by the PCUSA], it is true, the Princeton professors who had been so active in opposing revision ... contended that the document still presented a Calvinistic system of doctrine."²⁷ He further stated: "So even if the system of doctrine was in fact still essentially Calvinis-

tic, a thoroughly unwholesome and confusing situation had been created....”²⁸

Indeed, Princeton theologian Benjamin B. Warfield had stood against the passage of these amendments in the PCUSA at the dawn of the 20th century. However, after they were passed, he wrote a defense of them against things being said at the time which he found to be “in the highest degree astonishing, not to say gravely misleading.”²⁹

Concerning the first part of the Declaratory Statement, Warfield stated that it was “nothing other than a sharp repudiation of the ordinary Arminian assault on the doctrine of the Decree, as set forth in the Third Chapter of the Confession, and puts in a brief assertory form the common Calvinistic response to this assault.”³⁰

Giving due recognition to the fact that Christian organizations are not the same as an official church body, it remains difficult to take seriously these criticisms against the men who founded the Bible Presbyterian Church. Some of the same men charging the Bible Presbyterians with a supposed weakness concerning Arminianism, on account of this issue, were founders of both Westminster Seminary and The Independent Board.

The official Charter of The Independent Board, the application of which was filed with the Court of Common Pleas No. 1 for Philadelphia County, December Term, 1933, states: “Being convinced that the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., in the form which they possessed in 1933, contain the system of doctrine taught in the Bible, the corporation is to encourage the work of all missionaries who shall truly believe and cordially love and therefore endeavor to propagate and defend, in its genuineness, simplicity and fullness, that system of religious belief and practice which is

now set forth in the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A....”

In addition to Dr. Machen, Merrill T. MacPherson, H. McAllister Griffiths and several others, the incorporators also included such Westminster Seminary men as Paul Woolley, Murray Forst Thompson and Edwin H. Rian. All Board members had to take an oath that they accepted this. Ned B. Stonehouse took this oath when he later joined the Board. The Westminster Seminary Charter had a similar requirement (with the Confession as it existed in 1929), and was agreed to by Professors R.B. Kuiper and John Murray, in addition to some of the same men on The Independent Board.

The one great problem for these Westminster men is that the Westminster Confession of Faith held by the PCUSA in 1929 (Westminster Seminary) and 1933 (The Independent Board), included these amendments from 1903! For Woolley, Murray, Kuiper, Stonehouse, Thompson and Rian to have been among those who actively placed these statements in the charters of these organizations, or at least signed their names to these pledges, appears to show a stark inconsistency. Charles Denison writes that “Kuiper was convinced that Arminianism was not merely in the 1903 amendments but in the fundamentalists themselves and that the battle for the church posed a grave theological threat along these lines.”³¹ Yet Kuiper was pledged to uphold the Westminster Confession, with these amendments intact!

Did these men not really agree with these statements when they repeatedly signed their names to them, or were their attacks on the Bible Presbyterians more politically motivated than real? Some of these men were pledged as members of The Independent Board and Westminster Seminary to uphold the Confession with the 1903 Amendments right up

to the time they made it an issue on the floor of the OPC General Assembly!

The Bible Presbyterian Church and the 1903 Amendments

When the First General Synod of the Bible Presbyterian Church was held in September 1938, one of the first actions taken was to adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms as its subordinate standards. It must be well noted that the objectionable 1903 amendments were NOT included. After rejecting them outright (as well as the 1903 Declaratory Statement), a brief Declaratory Statement was added, which did not contain the statements on which most of the objections to the 1903 wording had centered. Modifications were also made so that Premillennialism would be the preferred view. This matter will be discussed in a later installment.

The First statement of the Bible Presbyterian Declaratory Statement reads: “In adopting the Confession of Faith this General Synod declares: First: its firm and glad belief in the reality and universality of the offer of the Gospel to mankind. We believe that Christ’s atonement is sufficient for the sins of all, adapted to all, and is freely offered to all men in the Gospel. We believe that no man will be condemned except upon the ground of his sin.”

This statement reflects very closely the views of many venerable Presbyterian theologians. In fact some of the statements almost appear to have been borrowed from them. It in no way does violence to the doctrine of “particular redemption,” but does answer mischaracterizations often offered in criticism of this doctrine. The following examples were given by B.B. Warfield in his discussion of the PCUSA Declaratory Statement³²:

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Charles Hodge wrote in his *Systematic Theology*: "Augustinianism teaches that a plan of salvation adapted to all men and adequate for the salvation of all is freely offered to the acceptance of all."³³

A.A. Hodge similarly writes: "In the general offers of the gospel, God exhibits a salvation sufficient for and exactly adapted to all, and sincerely offered to every one without exception."³⁴

Robert Dabney states: "... we know that He [God] did not purposely design Christ's sacrifice to effect the redemption of any others than the elect. But we hold it perfectly consistent with this truth, that the expiation of Christ for sin — expiation of infinite value and universal fitness — should be held forth to the whole world, elect and non-elect, as a manifestation of the benevolence of God's nature."³⁵

John L. Girardeau notes: "God ordains none to wrath or punishment except on account of their sin."³⁶

Again, from Robert Dabney: "Everywhere it is sin which excludes from his favor, and sin alone."³⁷

In fact, the main objection to this portion of the 1903 Declaratory Statement was not to the elements retained in the Bible Presbyterian statement. Westminster Professor John Murray stated concerning these elements: "It is true, of course, that there is an important sense, in which we may speak of God's love to all mankind. It is true also that we must speak in the language of I John 2:2 of Christ as the propitiation for the sins of the whole world."³⁸

The second point of the Bible Presbyterian Declaratory Statement reads: "with regard to the salvation of those dying in infancy we do not regard our Confession as teaching or implying that any who die in infancy are lost."

This was pulled directly from the first part of the 1903 statement, but removes the second part which declared, as a matter of doctrine, that all children dying in infancy WOULD be saved. This view was and still is widely held by many to be Biblical. Charles Hodge wrote: "It is, therefore, the general belief of Protestants ... that all who die in infancy are saved."³⁹ However, the Bible Presbyterian Church removed this part of the 1903 Declaratory Statement so as not to bind consciences further than what the Bible and the Confession stated, particularly since the Declaratory Statement was only for the purpose of clarification.

In this matter, the OPC men should have found no fault with the Bible Presbyterians. In fact, Professor John Murray declared this part of the 1903 Declaratory Statement, retained by the Bible Presbyterian Church, to be "perfectly correct."⁴⁰

All this must draw one to the conclusion that this Declaratory Statement no more shows Bible Presbyterians to be tainted with Arminianism than do the public statements of Dr. Murray or a host of other theological giants in the history of Presbyterianism.

"A Tenuous Emphasis on Reformed Doctrine"?

All through the many years since 1937, leaders of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church have attempted to disparage the Bible Presbyterian Church and The Independent Board by claiming they are not "truly Reformed." Decades after the founding, men such as Paul Woolley were still carrying on this unfair attack. Woolley wrote in 1977 concerning Carl McIntire that "the tenuous emphasis on Reformed doctrine [has] severely limited his support." With McIntire and the Bible Presbyterian Church as the clear antecedents, he continues in the same paragraph: "Fundamentalism continues on its way, and the

doctrines of grace, or the Reformed faith, are supported outside the bosom of Fundamentalism by those who have a heartfelt commitment to the Scriptures and the Westminster standards."⁴¹ (Compare Woolley's statement with the comments about "Calvinists at heart" written 40 years previously by H. McAllister Griffiths [quoted in the third paragraph under the subheading "'Truly Reformed?'" on page 7 of this article]).

A recent pamphlet entitled "What Is the OPC?," published by The Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, states: "The first major question facing the new church [OPC] was whether it would be a typically American fundamentalist and evangelical church, or whether it would follow its confession and be biblically Reformed in character. Many who favored the former path left in 1937 to form a different church. That left the OPC with a more clear-cut commitment to the Reformed Faith."⁴² Such general statements have been made repeatedly, but do not hold up under careful scrutiny.

What did the Bible Presbyterian Church Believe?

We begin this section on a personal note. This writer remembers, as a teenager, struggling with some of the very issues we have been discussing in this article. I called Carl McIntire at home one Sunday afternoon, when he undoubtedly needed to be resting between services. He virtually preached a personal sermon to me on the phone, going through each of the five points of Calvinism, explaining them clearly. I have little doubt that these Westminster professors, whom we have been discussing, could have said nothing but "Amen!" Before the 1937 division, and before he was ever welcomed into the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, these men knew McIntire's position, but they and other writers have contin-



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Bible Synod Adopts Historic Westminster Confession; Form of Government Determined

LOCAL CONGREGATIONS GIVEN PROPERTY RIGHTS

Representation in Churches Made More Democratic; High Standard of Ministry Maintained

The Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, without the amendments of 1903 and with two alterations, were adopted by the Bible Presbyterian Church as its subordinate standards during its sessions held in the Bible Presbyterian Church of Collingswood, September 6, 7, and 8. More men took part in the erection of these standards than participated in the Synod of 1729 which started the Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A.

MARRIAGE IS STATE RIGHT, NAZIS CLAIM

At the tenth annual Nazi congress held this week in Nurnberg, it was declared that Nazism has "raised matrimony to an institution standing under the highest authority of the State and no longer under that of the Church." This declaration was made by Hans Frank, German Minister Without Portfolio and head of

IMPRESSIONS OF THE FIRST GENERAL SYNOD

Synod United in Testimony to Truth of Gospel; Bible Study and Fellowship Emphasized

By the Rev. H. McAllister Griffiths, D.D.

For the first time in many years of published reports of the highest courts of ecclesiastical bodies I am happy to be able to record, at last, impressions of one that was completely satisfying. In our modern world most professedly Christian bodies are

ued the myth that he was somehow "tainted" by Arminianism.

Charles Finney, the Presbyterian minister of the previous century, who was heavily compromised with Arminianism, had stated: "The elect were chosen to eternal life, because God foresaw that in the perfect exercise of their freedom they could be induced to repent and embrace the gospel."⁴³ This was anathetical to the belief of McIntire and other Bible Presbyterians

Someone who heard one of McIntire's sermons on the radio wrote a letter asking him: "Who are the elect?" The response in the *Christian Beacon*, just days after Dr. Machen's untimely death, quoted largely from Reformed theologian Louis Berkhof. It should have left no one in doubt as to his position: "The term 'elect' refers to that great group of people from Adam on, whom God has chosen to be saved, and thus who are predestinated to eternal life through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Pre-

destination is simply — to put it in general terms — the purpose of God respecting his moral creatures. There are two parts to predestination: (1) Election, which is God's eternal purpose to save some of the human race in and by Jesus Christ; (2) Reprobation. The word 'election' naturally implies that some of [the] human race were not saved. Thus, reprobation may be defined as that decree of God whereby He has determined to pass some men by with the operation of His special grace, and to punish them for their sin to the manifestation of His justice.

"The objection is sometimes raised that this doctrine of reprobation exposes God to the charge of injustice. But this is hardly correct. We can speak of injustice only when one party has a claim on another. If God owed forgiveness of sin and eternal life to all men, it would be an injustice if He saved only a limited number of them. But the situation is quite different, for all have forfeited

the blessings of God. No one has a right to call God to account for electing some and passing by others. He would have been perfectly just if He had not saved any (Matt. 20:14,15; Rom. 9:14,15). We must always remember, the question is not, 'Why are some lost?' but rather, 'Why are any saved?' ... The Judge of all the earth will do right, and will extend His saving grace to multitudes who are undeserving...."⁴⁴

McIntire loved and promoted the Westminster Confession of Faith and held to it strongly as a Presbyterian. However, his vision of fellowship and cooperation with Bible-believers of various denominations — following in the path of Hodge, Machen and other giants of Presbyterianism — did not sit well with some. As the charge of "independency," discussed in a previous issue, was viewed by many to be "manufactured," we cannot help but conclude that this

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"THE TRUE SPIRITUAL SUCCESSION ..."

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charge falls equally within that category.

When I attended Shelton College and Faith Theological Seminary (approved agencies of the Bible Presbyterian Church), years after these events, I was presented a thoroughgoing Calvinism by the instructors. At the time I attended, Carl McIntire served as Chancellor and President, respectively. Louis Berkhof was our main theological text at Shelton, taught by long-time Bible Presbyterian minister Clyde Field. At Faith Seminary, Charles Hodge's three-volume *Systematic Theology* became well worn under the teaching of Bible Presbyterian founder A. Franklin Faucette. There was certainly no Arminianism there!

The founders of Faith Theological Seminary placed in its charter that: "The system of doctrine contained in the Scriptures, and expounded in the historic Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, shall form the basis of the instruction. True piety is to be nourished, and an attitude of devotion and constant prayerfulness inculcated."⁴⁵ Advertisements for the Seminary from the beginning contained this declaration.⁴⁶

Through the years, some have changed membership between the two denominations. It is interesting that some who have come to the Bible Presbyterian Church had previously been extolled by the OPC for their Reformed credentials. One example is Dr. Malcolm St. C. Frehn. He joined the Orthodox Presbyterian Church after the Bible Presbyterian Synod had been founded and was commissioned as a missionary under the denominational Board. When he was received into the OPC, the *Guardian* reported: "Apparently the [OPC] presbytery gave Mr. Frehn a rigid and comprehensive ex-

amination in the Reformed theology, which he passed to the complete satisfaction of everyone."⁴⁷ However, some time later, the Frehns joined the Bible Presbyterian Church, feeling very much at home with their Reformed convictions. They continued their missionary service to Japan and Korea for many years under The Independent Board.

Even one OPC minister gave a presentation in 2007 in which he declared it a "myth" that the Bible Presbyterian Church did not follow in the train of "Old School" Presbyterianism. The Rev. Peter J. Wallace stated: "What about the 36

"... Princeton graduates who were not on the faculty of Westminster [Seminary] would then vote with their feet 2-1 in favor of the Bible Presbyterians (15 to the Bible Presbyterians, and only 8 to the OPC)."

Peter J. Wallace
OPC Minister

Princeton Seminary graduates who helped found the OPC? If you want to trace Old School influence, Princeton is the place to start! Princeton had remained the bastion of orthodoxy in the Presbyterian Church — a place where Old School theology was inculcated by B.B. Warfield and Caspar Wistar Hodge. But of the 36 Princeton graduates, only 14 remained in the OPC (6 of whom were WTS faculty), while 15 went to the BPC.... Of the 31 who attended other seminaries, seven remained in the OPC while 18 went to the BPC....

"The most interesting statistic is that more Princeton graduates went BP than OP. And if you consider the WTS faculty to be more Westminster than Princeton, then it gets downright startling — because Princeton graduates who were not on the faculty of

Westminster would then vote with their feet 2-1 in favor of the Bible Presbyterians (15 to the Bible Presbyterians, and only 8 to the OPC)."⁴⁸

The Bible Presbyterian Church from the beginning has been a solidly Reformed denomination. It is a confessional church, adhering to the Westminster Confession of Faith. All ministers and elders are required to agree to the following questions, among others: "(1) Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice? (2) Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?"

In a sermon, Dr. H. McAllister Griffiths gave a brief summary of what is involved in this "system of doctrine": "... It is that fabric of related and interdependent truth called 'Calvinism,' or the 'Reformed Faith.' It is more than mere evangelicalism, although Calvinism is evangelical. It is a systematized statement of the teaching of Holy Scripture concerning God, His nature, His purposes, His decrees, His methods and His revelation, concerning man as he was in creation, as he is in sin and as he becomes by grace; concerning redemption by Jesus Christ crucified and risen; concerning the ultimate destiny of man and the ends of his being — all this and more."⁴⁹

J. Oliver Buswell, a theologian in his own right, stated in early 1937: "Now to me Charles Hodge's *Systematic Theology* is the very best statement of the Reformed Faith."⁵⁰

Francis Schaeffer⁵¹, a young Bible Presbyterian pastor, who was the first graduate of Faith Theological Seminary, delivered a message entitled "Our System of Doctrine" at the Fifth General Synod of the Bible Presbyterian Church, which met November 5-10, 1942, in St. Louis. It was put into a pamphlet by the Publication Committee of the Bible

Presbyterian Church, which had its offices at The Independent Board headquarters.

Schaeffer stated: “We have established our Church upon the System of Doctrine of the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms as that which is Biblical, and this System is doctrinally definite and solid.... Let us not forget that our heritage is the rich doctrinal position of old Princeton. Princeton has brought forth the best of doctrinal studies and students this country has known. While the modern world counts doctrine, and the study of doctrine, a thing of little importance, we remember the exacting studies of Hodge, Warfield and Vos.... We must not forget that this strong doctrinal heritage is not a thing to be kept merely by wish. It, like all other things of value, must be kept by vigilance. It must soon be forgotten. It will pass away, unless we continue to be determined that it shall be ours as long as God gives us the grace to have a part in this Bible Presbyterian Church.”⁵²

While Dr. Machen was still alive, Dr. Griffiths, as editor of the *Presbyterian Guardian*, defended a series of articles printed in that publication by Westminster Professor John Murray entitled: “The Reformed Faith and Modern Substitutes.” He closed the article by stating: “With doctrines repugnant to the Reformed, Biblical Faith, no compromise. With differences within the area of the Reformed system and concerning matters not essential to it, absolute liberty.”⁵³ Sadly, with Dr. Griffiths leaving as editor, and the passing of Machen, that sound principle used by Griffiths to close this article appeared to many to have been abandoned by the *Guardian*, Westminster Seminary and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. ●

¹“The Covenant Union Convention and the First General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America,” *The Presbyterian Guardian*, June 22, 1936, p. 114.

²Charles G. Dennison, *History for a Pilgrim People* (Willow Grove, PA: Committee for the Historian of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 2002), p. 115.

³“The Third General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America,” *The Presbyterian Guardian*, June 26, 1937, p. 89.

⁴Dennison, p. 120.

⁵“Recent Tributes to Dr. Machen,” *The Presbyterian Guardian*, February 13, 1937, p. 189.

⁶Dennison, p. 113.

⁷Letter from J. Oliver Buswell to J. Gresham Machen, December 4, 1936 (Archives of the PCA Historical Center).

⁸Greg Bahnsen, “Machen, Van Til, and the Apologetical Tradition of the OPC” (Philadelphia: Article distributed by permission of The Committee for the Historian of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1986).

⁹“Evidentialism seeks to ground the Christian faith primarily on empirically and historically verifiable facts. Evidentialists often draw a parallel between the scientific method of testing theories and theological verifications” (Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman, Jr., *Faith Has Its Reasons: Integrative Approaches to Defending the Christian Faith*, Second Edition (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2005), p. 34.

¹⁰“Natural theology [is] the construction of arguments defending or proving a theistic worldview on the basis of rational considerations apart from divine revelation ...” (*Ibid.*, p. 51).

¹¹Dennison, p. 114. (See J. Gresham Machen, Chapter 2: “How May God Be Known?” *The Christian Faith in the Modern World.*)

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 115.

¹³Typewritten document by Allan A. MacRae, “My Experiences at Westminster Seminary,” January 24, 1983, p. 19.

¹⁴Carl McIntire, *Christian Beacon*, October 2, 1941.

¹⁵Dennison, p. 115-116.

¹⁶Carl McIntire, *Christian Beacon*, October 2, 1941.

¹⁷Letter from Carl McIntire to Brad Gsell, June 6, 1995.

¹⁸D.G. Hart, “The Danger of a Drunken Ministry: The Division of 1937 and Its Colonial Antecedents,” *Mid-America Reformed Journal*, Volume 8, 2007, p. 181.

¹⁹H. McAllister Griffiths, “Memorandum” (Philadelphia: The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, 1937), p. 7.

²⁰H. McAllister Griffiths, “J. Gresham Machen: Unreconstructed Christian” (an essay written in 1940).

²¹Letter From Allan A. MacRae to Alan R. Heinlein, November 1962.

²²J. Oliver Buswell, *Christian Beacon*, June 5, 1952, pp. 2,4.

²³Letter from Buswell to Machen, December 4, 1936.

²⁴“The Presbyterian Church of America,” *The Presbyterian Guardian* (Ned B. Stonehouse, editor), June 26, 1937, p. 85.

²⁵“‘Bible Presbyterian Synod’ Organized by Members Withdrawing From Presbyterian Church of America,” *Presbyterian Guardian*, June 26, 1937, p.100.

²⁶J. Oliver Buswell, *Christian Beacon*, June 5, 1952, pp. 2,4.

²⁷Ned B. Stonehouse, “What Was Back of the Revision of 1903?,” *The Presbyterian Guardian*, September 26, 1936, pp. 248-249.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 249.

²⁹Benjamin B. Warfield, “The Confession of Faith as Revised in 1903,” *The Selected Shorter Writings of Benjamin B. Warfield Vol. II* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1970), p. 370.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 377.

³¹Dennison, p. 117.

³²Warfield, pp. 378-380.

³³Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Reprinted 1981), p. 644.

³⁴A.A. Hodge, *Outlines of Theology*, Chapter X, ed. William H. Goold (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1863), p. 229.

³⁵Robert L. Dabney, *Systematic Theology: Syllabus and Notes of the Course of Systematic and Polemic Theology, Taught in Union Theological Seminary, Virginia*, Chapter 35 — “The Nature of Christ’s Sacrifice” (Richmond: Union Theological Seminary, 1878), p. 533.

³⁶John L. Girardeau [professor at Columbia Theological Seminary, a prominent Presbyterian seminary], *Calvinism and Evangelical Arminianism: Compared as to Election, Reprobation, Justification and Related Doctrines* (New York: The Baker and Taylor Company, 1890), p. 188.

³⁷Dabney, Chapter 18 — “Predestination.”

³⁸John Murray, “Shall We Include the Revision of 1903 in Our Creed?,” *The Presbyterian Guardian*, September 26, 1936, p. 251.

³⁹Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981), pp. 26-27.

⁴⁰Murray.

⁴¹Paul Woolley, *The Significance of J. Gresham Machen Today* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyte-

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rian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1977), p. 46.

⁴²"What Is the OPC?" (Willow Grove, PA: The Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church), July 2013, p. 8.

⁴³Charles G. Finney, *Sermons on Important Subjects* (London: Printed for Thomas Tegg by Bradbury and Evans, Printers, 1839), p. 259.

⁴⁴Carl McIntire, *Christian Beacon*, January 7, 1937, p. 4.

⁴⁵"Charter of Faith Seminary Adopted," *Christian Beacon*, December 9, 1937, p. 1.

⁴⁶*Christian Beacon*, July 15, 1937.

⁴⁷"Matters Ecclesiastical," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, August 1937, p. 136.

⁴⁸Peter J. Wallace, "The Myth of Old School Presbyterianism," *Mid-America Journal of Theology*, Vol 18, 2007, pp. 193-197. From a Symposium on "Revisiting the Division of 1937 — The Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Its American Ecclesiastical Context."

⁴⁹H. McAllister Griffiths, Sermon delivered at the Holland Memorial Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, PA, February 21, 1932.

⁵⁰Letter from J. Oliver Buswell to Harold S. Laird, January 30, 1937.

⁵¹Francis Schaeffer went on to international prominence in the evangelical and Presbyterian world, eventually breaking with what is now the Bible Presbyterian Church. He established the L'Abri Fellowship in Switzerland and wrote a number of best-selling books. He and Dr. C. Everett Koop (surgeon general of the United States under Ronald Reagan), joined in standing against abortion and other evils in our society. At the time of his death, he was a leader in the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) (not to be confused with the Presbyterian Church of America (which became the OPC).

⁵²Francis A. Schaeffer, "Our System of Doctrine" (Philadelphia: The Publication Committee of the Bible Presbyterian Church, 1942), pp. 2-3.

⁵³H. McAllister Griffiths, "Eschatological Freedom," *Presbyterian Guardian*, June 4, 1936, pp. 44,52.



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THE FIRST GREAT COMING OF THE GOSPEL TO BRAZIL

Continued from page 4

can imagine. At the front of them are found two chiefs sincerely converted, Pedro Poty and Antonio Paraupaba, who had been educated in Holland, adhering there to Calvinism. Pedro Poty was a close relative of the famous chief, Camarão. A contrast: One a Protestant and Dutch ally and the other a Catholic and Portuguese ally. In the findings of Souto Maior are found some letters of Pedro Poty and Camarão. Camarão insists with his relative that he leave the heresy and the Dutch side: "Leave that place, which is as the fire of Hell." Poty responds with nobility: "Do not believe that we are blind and that we cannot recognize the advantages that we enjoy with the Dutch, among whom I was educated.... I believe only in Christ, without mixing religion with idolatry as you do with yours. I learned the Christian religion and practice it daily."

Let us see the fortunes of the two aboriginal chiefs, Protestants and allied to the Dutch. Pedro Poty had the misfortune to fall prisoner in the Second Battle of Guararapes. Paraupaba was more fortunate. After the retreat of the Dutch he had to hide himself with his in the wilderness of Ceará to escape the vengeance of the victors. Paraupaba wrote a letter to the Dutch that his people were "as good subjects and firm in their faithfulness to the State and the Reformed religion in Christ, the only true one in which they have lived and persevered until now." He proceeds with the same language manifesting sincere faith in the religion which they had adopted and asking protection from the wrath of the Portuguese. The message ends sadly, "And as the supplicant, leaving father and mother, wife, sons, and relatives, bringing only with him to comfort him in his sadness, two sons who are still chil-

dren, has arrived here almost nude and without resources...."

Paraupaba, in 1656, wrote a report that gives the sad end of Pedro Poty, prisoner of the Portuguese: "who was barbarously treated by those beasts, exceeding that which has been perpetuated in cruelties the most inhuman which one can imagine. He was shot, imprisoned by bands of iron on his feet and hands, in total darkness, receiving only for sustenance, bread and water, and relieving himself there during six long months of his natural necessities."

They let him out sometimes for a little, only to be assailed by religious authorities and by his own countrymen, not only to recant his heresy, but also to induce the others of his race who were faithful to the Dutch, that they would pass to the Portuguese; promising him the rank of Captain. He proceeded then as a true martyr of his faith, preferring death to recanting and disloyalty. In the testimony of Paraupaba, "the great God wanted, by his special grace, to make of that fragile stick a strong pillar of faith. Being invited to recant, he responded, 'that he, unworthy, having, by a mercy not deserved and beyond comprehension, recognized by God, the Father of all the graces, been in the true religion, the Reformed ... was resolved to not abandon it in life and in death.'"

He also said that he was prepared to confront all the torments, thanking God for having considered him, the most unworthy of all creatures, having merit to suffer in the name of Christ, his Savior. His tormenters, seeing the firmness of his faith and loyalty, took him out from underground on a pretext ... when the plan was to kill him cruelly, which they then did.

The First Great Coming of the Gospel to Brazil was from 1630 to 1654 with the Dutch. Brazil would have to wait another 200 years for the Gospel to come again with American Protestant missionaries in the nineteenth century. •

CHIEF JUSTICE JOHN ROBERTS

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The majority's decision is an act of will, not legal judgment. The right it announces has no basis in the Constitution or this Court's precedent. The majority expressly disclaims judicial "caution" and omits even a pretense of humility, openly relying on its desire to remake society according to its own "new insight" into the "nature of injustice."

As a result, the Court invalidates the marriage laws of more than half the States and orders the transformation of a social institution that has formed the basis of human society for millennia.... Just who do we think we are?...

One immediate question invited by the majority's position is whether States may retain the definition of marriage as a union of two people. Although the majority randomly inserts the adjective "two" in various places, it offers no reason at all why the two-person element of the core definition of marriage may be preserved while the man-woman element may not....

Those who founded our country would not recognize the majority's conception of the judicial role. They after all risked their lives and fortunes for the precious right to govern themselves....

Today's decision ... creates serious questions about religious liberty. Many good and decent people oppose same-sex marriage as a tenet of faith, and their freedom to exercise religion is — unlike the right imagined by the majority — actually spelled out in the Constitution. Amdt. 1.

Respect for sincere religious conviction has led voters and legislators in every State that has adopted same-sex marriage democratically to in-

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tion. This practice of constitutional revision by an unelected committee of nine, always accompanied (as it is today) by extravagant praise of liberty, robs the People of the most important liberty they asserted in the Declaration of Independence and won in the Revolution of 1776: the freedom to govern themselves....

A system of government that makes the People subordinate to a committee of nine unelected lawyers does not deserve to be called a democracy....

And to allow the policy question of same-sex marriage to be considered and resolved by a select, patrician, highly unrepresentative panel of nine is to violate a principle even more fundamental than no taxation without representation: no social transformation without representation....

Hubris is sometimes defined as o'erweening pride; and pride, we know, goeth before a fall. The Judiciary is the "least dangerous" of the federal branches because it has "neither Force nor Will, but merely judgment; and must ultimately depend upon the aid of the executive arm" and the States, "even for the efficacy of its judgments." With each decision of ours that takes from the People a question properly left to them — with each decision that is unabashedly based not on law, but on the "reasoned judgment" of a bare majority of this Court — we move one step closer to being reminded of our impotence.

To read the entire Supreme Court decision and the dissents of the four Justices quoted here, you can download the complete document at: http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/14pdf/14-556_3204.pdf

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stitution in the name of a "liberty" that the Framers would not have recognized, to the detriment of the liberty they sought to protect. Along the way, it rejects the idea — captured in our Declaration of Independence — that human dignity is innate and suggests instead that it comes from the Government....

The majority's inversion of the original meaning of liberty will likely cause collateral damage to other aspects of our constitutional order that protect liberty....

... The majority's decision threatens the religious liberty our Nation has long sought to protect.

The history of religious liberty in our country is familiar: Many of the earliest immigrants to America came seeking freedom to practice their religion without restraint. When they arrived, they created their own havens for religious practice. Many of these havens were initially homogeneous communities with established religions. By the 1780's, however, "America was in the wake of a great religious revival" marked by a move toward free exercise of religion. Every State save Connecticut adopted protections for religious freedom in their State Constitutions by 1789, and, of course, the First Amendment enshrined protection for the free exercise of religion in the U.S. Constitution. But that protection was far from the last word on religious liberty in this country, as the Federal Government and the States have reaffirmed their commitment to religious liberty by codifying protections for religious practice. See, e.g., Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, 107 Stat. 1488,

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laws that denied equal treatment for African-Americans and women. The implications of this analogy will be exploited by those who are determined to stamp out every vestige of dissent.

Perhaps recognizing how its reasoning may be used, the majority attempts, toward the end of its opinion, to reassure those who oppose same-sex marriage that their rights of conscience will be protected. We will soon see whether this proves to be true. **I assume that those who cling to old beliefs will be able to whisper their thoughts in the recesses of their homes, but if they repeat those views in public, they will risk being labeled as bigots and treated as such by governments, employers, and schools.**

The system of federalism established by our Constitution provides a way for people with different beliefs to live together in a single nation. If the issue of same-sex marriage had been left to the people of the States, it is ... possible that some States would tie recognition to protection for conscience rights. The majority today makes that impossible. By imposing its own views on the entire country, the majority facilitates the marginalization of the many Americans who have traditional ideas. Recalling the harsh treatment of gays and lesbians in the past, some may think that turn-about is fair play. But if that sentiment prevails, the Nation will experience bitter and lasting wounds....

I do not doubt that my colleagues in the majority sincerely see in the Constitution a vision of liberty that happens to coincide with their own. But this sincerity is cause for concern, not com-

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marriage cannot, of course, create any such accommodations.

The majority graciously suggests that religious believers may continue to “advocate” and “teach” their views of marriage. The First Amendment guarantees, however, the freedom to “exercise” religion. Ominously, that is not a word the majority uses.

Hard questions arise when people of faith exercise religion in ways that may be seen to conflict with the new right to same-sex marriage — when, for example, a religious college provides married student housing only to opposite-sex married couples, or a religious adoption agency declines to place children with same-sex married couples. Indeed, the Solicitor General candidly acknowledged that the tax exemptions of some religious institutions would be in question if they opposed same-sex marriage. There is little doubt that these and similar questions will soon be before this Court. Unfortunately, people of faith can take no comfort in the treatment they receive from the majority today....

Perhaps the most discouraging aspect of today’s decision is the extent to which the majority feels compelled to sully those on the other side of the debate. The majority offers a cursory assurance that it does not intend to disparage people who, as a matter of conscience, cannot accept same-sex marriage. That disclaimer is hard to square with the very next sentence, in which the majority explains that “the necessary consequence” of laws codifying the traditional definition of marriage is to “demea[n] or stigmatiz[e]” same-sex couples. The majority reiterates such characterizations over and over. By the majority’s account, Americans who did nothing more than follow the understanding of marriage that has existed for our entire history — in particular, the tens of millions of people who voted to reaffirm their States’ enduring definition of marriage — have acted to “lock ... out,” “disparage,” “disrespect and subordinate,” and inflict “[d]ignitary wounds” upon their gay and lesbian neighbors. These apparent assaults on the character of fairminded people will have an effect, in society and in court. Moreover, they are entirely gratuitous. It is one thing for the majority to conclude that the Constitution protects a right to same-sex marriage; it is something else to portray everyone who does not share the majority’s “better informed understanding” as bigoted.

In the face of all this, a much different view of the Court’s role is possible. That view is more modest and restrained. It is more skeptical that the legal abilities of judges also reflect insight into moral and philosophical issues.... It is less pretentious than to suppose that while people around the world have viewed an institution in a particular way for thousands of years, the present generation and the present Court are the ones chosen to burst the bonds of that history and tradition.

If you are among the many Americans ... who favor expanding same-sex marriage ... do not celebrate the Constitution. It had nothing to do with it. I respectfully dissent.

clude accommodations for religious practice. The majority’s decision imposing same-sex

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42 U. S. C. §2000bb et seq.; Conn. Gen. Stat. §52–571b (2015). Numerous amici —

even some not supporting the States — have cautioned the Court that its decision here will “have unavoidable and wide-ranging implications for religious liberty.” Brief for General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists et al. as *Amici Curiae* 5. In our society, marriage is not simply a governmental institution; it is a religious institution as well. Today’s decision might change the former, but it cannot change the latter. **It appears all but inevitable that the two will come into conflict, particularly as individuals and churches are confronted with demands to participate in and endorse civil marriages between same-sex couples.**

The majority appears unmoved by that inevitability. It makes only a weak gesture toward religious liberty in a single paragraph. And even that gesture indicates a misunderstanding of religious liberty in our Nation’s tradition. Religious liberty is about more than just the protection for “religious organizations and persons ... as they seek to teach the principles that are so fulfilling and so central to their lives and faiths.” Religious liberty is about freedom of action in matters of religion generally, and the scope of that liberty is directly correlated to the civil restraints placed upon religious practice.

Although our Constitution provides some protection against such governmental restrictions on religious practices, the People have long elected to afford broader protections than this Court’s constitutional precedents mandate. Had the majority allowed the definition of marriage to be left to the political process — as the Constitution requires — the People could have considered the religious liberty implications of deviating from the traditional definition as part of their deliberative process. Instead, **the majority’s decision short-circuits that process, with potentially ruinous consequences for religious liberty....**

Human dignity has long been understood in this country to be innate. **When the Framers proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence that “all men are created equal” and “endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights,” they referred to a vision of mankind in which all humans are created in the image of God and therefore of inherent worth. That vision is the foundation upon which this Nation was built.**

The corollary of that principle is that human dignity cannot be taken away by the government.... And its [the Court’s] disdain for the understandings of liberty and dignity upon which this Nation was founded can have no effect on the dignity of Americans who continue to believe in them.

Our Constitution — like the Declaration of Independence before it — was predicated on a simple truth: One’s liberty, not to mention one’s dignity, was something to be shielded from — not provided by — the State. Today’s decision casts that truth aside. **In its haste to reach a desired result, the majority ... distorts the principles on which this Nation was founded. Its decision will have inestimable consequences for our Constitution and our society.** I respectfully dissent....

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fort. What it evidences is the deep and perhaps irremediable corruption of our legal culture’s conception of constitutional interpretation....

Most Americans — understandably — will cheer or lament today’s decision because of their views on the issue of same-sex marriage. But all Americans, whatever their thinking on that issue, should worry about what the majority’s claim of power portends....