

REDEEMING THE TIME

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

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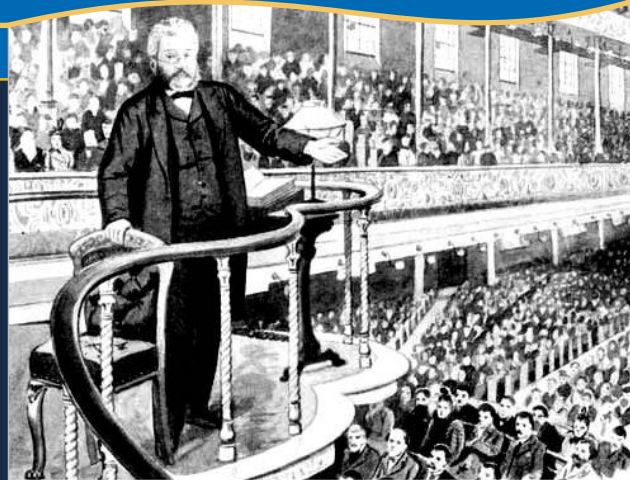
WINTER 2017

"Elect From Ev'ry Nation, Yet One O'er All the Earth"

I recently had the privilege of attending the 19th World Congress of the International Council of Christian Churches in Coatzacoalcos, Mexico. With the mainstream media seeking at every turn to portray increasing enmity between the United States and Mexico, we wondered a little just how we would be received.

It was a joy to be welcomed with the greatest of hospitality by the Mexican believers and churches. Even though we came from different countries, different cultures and different languages, the great "fellowship one with another" of which the Bible speaks, was on full display. These were believers who have taken a stand against apostasy at great personal sacrifice. Although many did not have much in the way of worldly goods, they cheerfully gave us their best with much enthusiasm and joy.

There were delegates there from various parts of South America and the far reaches of the world, all showing the love of Christ in their hearts. I could not help but think of how every time we turn on the news we see those who do not know the Lord publicly displaying anger, hatred, and a plethora of vile actions. May we as Christians show the love of Christ in our lives and appreciate the wonderful Christian fellowship we share with other believers. —Brad Gsell



Following *the* Lamb

BY MARK W. EVANS

In the late 1880s, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the godly Baptist preacher of London, protested the presence of heresy in the membership of the Baptist Union of London. This association of ministers and churches had grown in number and influence, chiefly through Spurgeon's ministry. Yet, a compromise had threatened the purity and peace of the organization. England, as well as other nations, was under theological assault through atheistic Darwinism and Germany's higher criticism — which denied the inerrancy and authority of Scripture along with many fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. Spurgeon's biographer, Arnold Dallimore, wrote: "By 1880 much of England was stirred by the change that was thus being made in Christian be-

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Some of the Mexican church members who attended the ICCC Congress.
See more photos on pages 13-16 of this issue.

— THE DIVISION OF 1937 BETWEEN THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AND THE BIBLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH —

"The Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace"

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FOLLOWING THE LAMB

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liefs. The new ideas were reported in both the secular and the religious press, and several books appeared by a number of very able men. Several ministers likewise supported it and also endorsed the claim of the higher critics. This departure from the fundamentals of Christianity was evident in every denomination and to some extent was to be found in various men of the Baptist Union.”¹

The secretary of the Baptist Union, Dr. S.H. Booth, alerted Spurgeon to the danger and provided him names and statements to substantiate his concerns. When the Union was first established, the founders had no doctrinal statement other than a requirement of adherence to the Baptist teaching concerning baptism. Spurgeon zealously pressed the leaders to correct this error and adopt a clearly enunciated doctrinal statement which would eliminate the heretics and identify the faithful. The proposal was received with coolness and eventually rejected.

Prior to this event, Spurgeon expressed an important principle of faithfulness to duty rather than yielding to expediency: “But what have you and I to do with maintaining our influence and position at the expense of truth? It is never right to do a little wrong to obtain the greatest possible good.... Your duty is to do the right; consequences are with God.”²

Spurgeon began a series of articles in his monthly publication, *The Sword and Trowel*, in which he detailed the “Down Grade” that opened the door to doctrinal error. He wrote: “In proportion as the ministers seceded from the old Puritan godliness of life, and the old Calvinistic form of doctrine, they commonly became less earnest and less simple in their preaching, more speculative and less spiritual in the matter of their discourses, and dwelt

more on the moral teachings of the New Testament, than on the great central truths of revelation. Natural theology frequently took the place which the great truths of the gospel

“Believers in Christ’s atonement are now in declared union with those who make light of it; believers in Holy Scripture are in confederacy with those who deny plenary inspiration; those who hold evangelical doctrine are in open alliance with those who call the fall a fable, who deny the personality of the Holy Ghost, who call justification by faith immoral, and hold that there is another probation after death.... Yes, we have before us the wretched spectacle of professedly orthodox Christians publicly avowing their union with those who deny the faith, and scarcely concealing their contempt for those who cannot be guilty of such gross disloyalty to Christ. To be very plain, we are unable to call these things Christian Unions; they begin to look like Confederacies in Evil....”

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

ought to have held, and the sermons became more and more Christless.”³

Once Christ’s doctrines and commandments are neglected, the leaven of corrupt doctrine begins its sinister

work. Spurgeon explained a remedy used by the Lord’s people throughout history: “Separation from such as connive at fundamental error, or withhold the ‘Bread of life’ from perishing souls, is not schism, but only what truth, conscience, and God require of all who would be faithful.”⁴

Because the Union officials refused to act, Spurgeon separated from the Baptist Union. He wrote in the November 1887 issue of the *Sword and Trowel*: “Believers in Christ’s atonement are now in declared union with those who make light of it; believers in Holy Scripture are in confederacy with those who deny plenary inspiration; those who hold evangelical doctrine are in open alliance with those who call the fall a fable, who deny the personality of the Holy Ghost, who call justification by faith immoral, and hold that there is another probation after death.... Yes, we have before us the wretched spectacle of professedly orthodox Christians publicly avowing their union with those who deny the faith, and scarcely concealing their contempt for those who cannot be guilty of such gross disloyalty to Christ. To be very plain, we are unable to call these things Christian Unions; they begin to look like Confederacies in Evil....”⁵

Baptist Union leaders sought to counter Spurgeon’s bold stand. Dalimore wrote: “[T]hey determined that when the matter was introduced they would reply that since Spurgeon had failed to mention the names of the men whom he assumed had departed from the faith, his assertions were too flimsy to be considered by the assembly. They would state that until he provided such evidence there was nothing they could do in the matter.”⁶ Spurgeon informed Dr. S.H. Booth that he would provide the evidence the secretary had given. Booth replied: “My letters to you were not official, but in confidence. As a matter of honour you cannot use them.”⁷ Spurgeon acquiesced, but

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looked to Booth to do the right thing in presenting the evidence himself. Dallimore wrote, "But when the matter of the correspondence was mentioned to the meeting, Booth began to hedge and implied he had never brought the subject of the New Theology and the holders of it to Spurgeon's attention and that Spurgeon had never complained about the unbelief."⁸ Spurgeon wrote: "For Dr. Booth to say I never complained is amazing. God knows all about it and He will see me righted."⁹

When the Union assembled in April 1888, a resolution concerning doctrine was presented for approval. The wording of the document was sufficiently ambivalent to allow both evangelicals and heretics to approve it. Sadly, 2,000 members were in favor of the resolution and seven members were opposed. The decision was declared a "vote of censure" against Spurgeon.

A flood of fierce criticism fell upon the Lord's servant. The problem was no longer the heresies in faith and practice but the voice of the one declaring the truth. The unwavering preacher said: "The Lord knoweth the way that I take, and to his divine arbitration I leave the matter.... I have borne my protest and suffered the loss of friendships and reputation, and the infliction of pecuniary withdrawments and bitter reproach; I can do no more. My way is henceforth far removed from their way.

"But the pain it has cost me none can measure. I can never compromise the truth of God.... It is not a matter of personalities, but

of principles. And where two sets of men are diametrically opposite in their opinions upon vital points no form of words can make them one."¹⁰

The Lord's servant soon entered glory. His battle is still our battle today. Heretical teachers would have failed without the help of compromising Christians. It is our privilege to stand for the truth as given to us in the sacred Scriptures. Purity should always precede peace. When peace is sought at the expense of truth the foundations crumble. Our Lord is the King of kings who promised: "I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." Spurgeon well said: "Whether it be the Baptist Church, or Episcopalian, or the Presbyterian Church which errs from Christ's way, it is nothing to any one of us which it may be; it is Christ we are to care for, and Christ's truth, and this we are to follow over all the hedges and ditches of men's making."¹¹ •

¹Arnold Dallimore, *Spurgeon* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), p. 204.

²C.H. Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Pulpit*, Vol. IV, p. 331.

³C.H. Spurgeon, *The "Down Grade" Controversy* (Pasadena, Texas: Pilgrim Publications, n.d.), p. 4.

⁴C.H. Spurgeon, 1888, *The Sword and Trowel*, p. 127.



The Rev. Mark Evans is pastor of Hope Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC.

⁵Quoted by Iain H. Murray, *The Forgotten Spurgeon* (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1966), p. 150.

⁶Dallimore, p. 207.

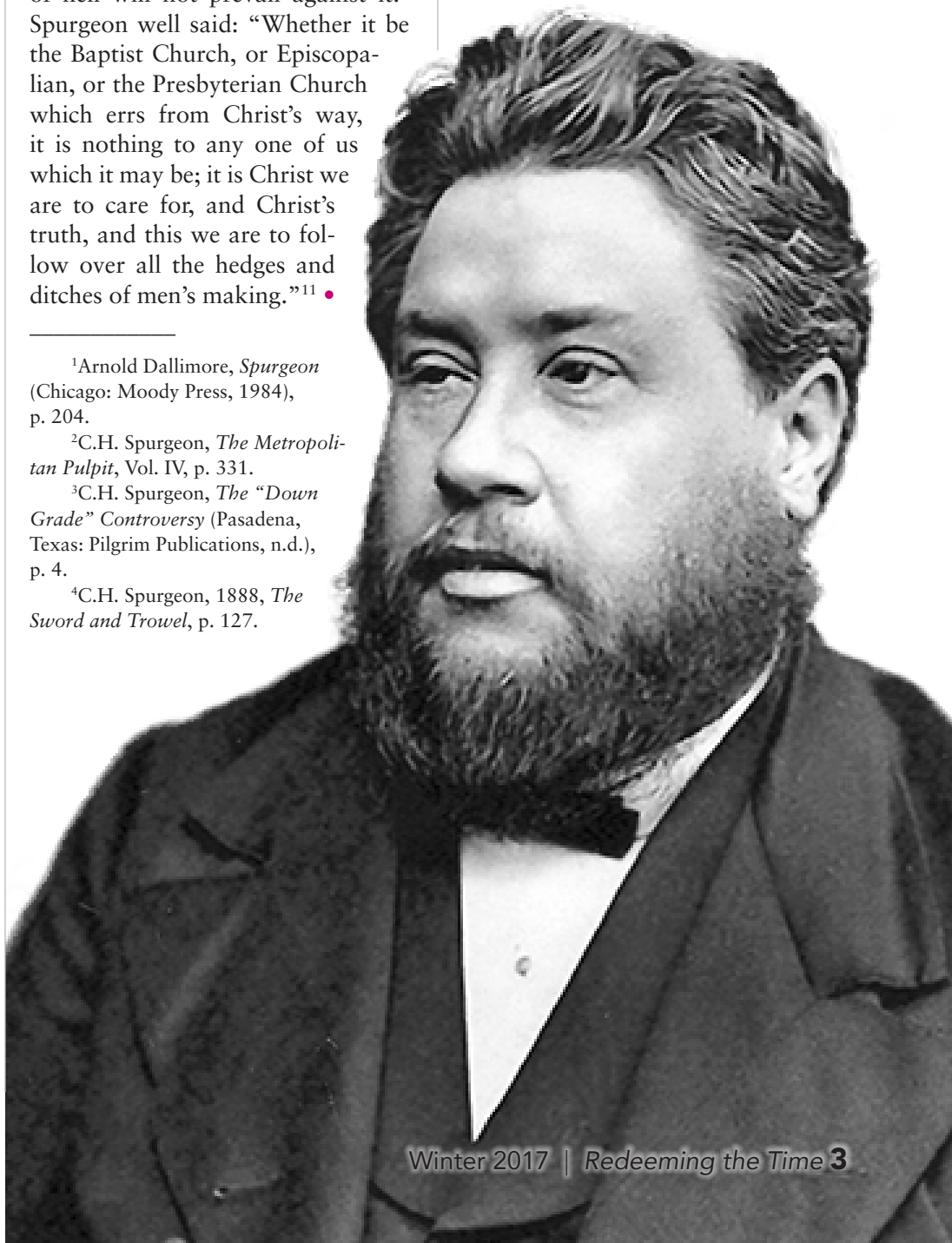
⁷*Ibid.*, p. 210.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰Dallimore, p. 211, quoting H.L. Wayland, *Charles H. Spurgeon, His Faith and Works* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1892), p. 223.

¹¹Murray, p. 159.



THE DIVISION OF 1937

Between the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Bible Presbyterian Church

PART 10

“The Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace”

BY BRAD K. GSELL

It is important to have read Parts 1 through 9 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. Within a few years of its founding, the Presbyterian Church of America changed its name to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Therefore, you will see these names used interchangeably in these articles.

“The Whole Body Fitly Joined Together ...”

Both the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Bible Presbyterian Church have sought throughout their histories to maintain cooperation and relationships with those of other denominations. These two churches, while agreeing on many Biblical principles, have nonetheless taken distinctly different paths as it relates to this matter. Because of the Bible Presbyterian Church’s active cooperation in such organizations as the American Council of Christian Churches and the International Council of Chris-

tian Churches, some in the OPC have questioned its “Reformed” credentials.

The Scriptures speak of the universal church as one, and unity is constantly set before us throughout the Scriptures. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 tells us: “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being

“Does that mean that we cannot have Christian fellowship with our Methodist or our Lutheran brethren? It means nothing of the kind. On the contrary, we can have very precious Christian fellowship with them.”

J. Gresham Machen

many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

Paul wrote to the Ephesian Church: “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith

ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.... From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:1-6,16).

In Christ’s high priestly prayer, He beseeches the Father: “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:21).

Indeed John tells us: “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35).

The Westminster Confession of Faith

Both of these denominations have from their inceptions held to the

Westminster Confession of Faith, which lays forth these principles in great clarity. Chapter XXV, “Of the Church,” states:

“I. The catholic or universal Church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

“II. The visible Church, which is also catholic or universal under the gospel, (not confined to one nation, as before under the law,) consists of all those throughout the world, that profess the true religion, together with their children; and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.

“III. Unto this catholic visible Church Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life, to the end of the world; and doth by his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto.

“IV. This catholic Church hath been sometimes more, sometimes less visible. And particular Churches, which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them.

“V. The purest Churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error; and some have so degenerated as to become no Churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless, there shall be always a Church on earth to worship God according to his will.

“VI. The Lord Jesus Christ is the only head of the Church, and the claim of any man to be the vicar of Christ and the head of the Church, is unscriptural, without warrant in

fact, and is a usurpation dishonoring to the Lord Jesus Christ.”

In keeping with these teachings, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church Form of Government, Chapter 4, “The Unity of the Church,” states in part that “all of these [denominations and churches] which maintain through a sufficient discipline the Word and sacraments in their fundamental integrity are to be recognized as true manifestations of the church of Jesus Christ. All such churches should seek a closer fellowship...”

Similarly, the Bible Presbyterian Church Form of Government, Chapter 2, “Of the Church,” states: “The Bible Presbyterian Church declares itself to be a branch of the catholic visible Church of Christ and further declares its willingness to hold Christian fellowship with all other such branches of the Church.”

These chapters in the Form of Government of each denomination are excellent and worth reading.

Likewise, both denominations hold that this unity is not to be had with all who declare themselves to be a church. As the Confession states, some groups have apostasized and are no longer churches. Many have become “synagogues of Satan.” It would be unscriptural to have fellowship with such groups.

Cooperation Throughout American Presbyterian History

Presbyterians in America had always had some level of cooperation with those in other Protestant denominations. As we chronicled in Part 9 (*Redeeming the Time*, Summer 2016, p. 11), there was great cooperation between the Presbyterians and Congregationalists in the early 1800s with their mission work. Many strict Presbyterians were only too glad to participate in such parachurch organizations as the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the American Bible Society, and so forth. There was

particular cooperation with the Dutch Reformed groups and other Presbyterians. The theme of Christian unity was habitually emphasized.

Princeton Seminary Professor Samuel Miller wrote: “... When we speak of the Episcopal sect, the Methodist sect, or the Baptist sect — we mean — without the smallest disrespect — simply to designate the different bodies of professing Christians known by those names respectively.

“It is indeed, not only a misfortune, but a sin, that the Church of Christ which ought to be one in name, and in profession, as well as in fact, is divided into so many different denominations. But so the melancholy fact is. Now each of these divisions is a sect or section of the general visible Church. And yet the individuals who adhere to these several bodies, provided their adherence be characterized by a truly Christian spirit, may still be considered in an important sense, one in Christ. A man may be a member, and a very devoted, zealous member of a sect, and yet not deserve to be stigmatized as a sectarian in the common and unfavourable sense of that word....

“The writer of this humble essay thinks he cannot be mistaken in believing, as he most sincerely and deliberately does believe, that of real sectarianism — in the sense which he has defined — there is less, much less in the Presbyterian Church than in any other body of professing Christians in the United States....

“Let no Presbyterian, then, be reluctant or afraid to manifest a warm attachment to his own church.... But, while he prefers his own church to any and every other ... let him see to it that he rejoices in the prosperity of all who manifest the spirit of the gospel; and that much as he loves and prefers his own church, he never allows himself to imagine that she

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has no defects; and that there is no good out of her pale. In *fine* [conclusion], let him do all he can to show by his own spirit and conduct, that the Presbyterian church is a liberal church¹; that its whole spirit and structure admit of free intercourse with sister churches on just principles; and that it is much more anxious to see the world converted to the holiness and happiness with which Christ came to bless mankind, than to see the peculiarities of its own body gaining universal dominion."²

Presbyterian cooperation was not only with other Reformed groups. The venerable Charles Hodge participated in the Evangelical Alliance, a broad coalition of Protestant groups. The stated purpose of the organization was "to manifest and strengthen Christian unity, and to promote religious liberty and co-operation in Christian work, without interfering with the internal affairs of different denominations."³

At the 1873 Convention, Hodge spoke on "The Unity of the Church Based on Personal Union With Christ." He began: "The Church of Christ is one. There is one fold and one Shepherd; one King and one kingdom; one Father and one family. In this sense the Church includes all the redeemed — those now in heaven, those now on earth, and those who are hereafter to be born."⁴ In the speech, Hodge stated that Protestant denominations had the "duty" of "mutual recognition," "intercommunion," a "recognition of each other's sacraments and orders," "non-interference," and "cooperation." He stated that "the different denominations" should combine "their efforts for the overthrow of the kingdom of darkness."⁵

In conclusion, he stated: "Instead of rivalry and opposition we

should have cordial cooperation. The whole visible Church would then present an undivided front against infidelity and every form of Antichristian error, and the sacramental host of God, though divided into different corps, would constitute one army glorious and invincible."⁶

It should be noted that virtually all of the Protestant denominations in Hodge's day firmly adhered to the inerrancy of the Scriptures. The Evangelical Alliance was for the purpose

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Charles Hodge

of cooperation, but it specifically was not seeking organic union of denominations. In fact, the same Charles Hodge who gave these imperatives in his speech, just four years earlier had publicly opposed the organic reunion of the New School and Old School Presbyterians — not in any way wanting to compromise the strict standards of the Old School Church. Of course, Hodge did not win that battle, and the resulting decision had much to do with the apostasy which enveloped the beloved Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. over the next 60 years.

In the Southern Presbyterian Church, the great theologian Robert Lewis Dabney wrote concerning the desirability of fellowship with "the German Reformed, the Lutheran, the

Moravian, the Protestant Episcopal, the Methodist, the Immersionist [Baptist] branches of the visible church catholic," and stated that the Presbyterian assemblies always maintained brotherly relations with these groups.⁷ Dabney made a distinct difference between these relations and those where delegates were exchanged with other Reformed bodies. He also warned against exchanging delegates even with churches with similar doctrine, who nonetheless had questionable practices or beliefs.⁸

As Modernism slowly crept into the church, ecumenism increased in destructive ways, leading to the formation of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America in 1908 at the Academy of Music — the Grand Old Lady of Locust Street — in Philadelphia. Two years later, in the Assembly Hall of the United Free Church of Scotland, in Edinburgh, the World Missionary Conference was held. These two events are seen as the inception of the modern Ecumenical Movement, leading to the founding of the World Council of Churches in 1948 and the National Council of Churches in 1950. Men who denied the main teachings of the Scriptures were gladly included in these two organizations. Instead of each denomination holding its distinct beliefs, the lack of Biblical moorings often led to a leveling of these beliefs into a very generic gospel of social good.

Early Tensions Between Fellowship and Separation

In the years following the reorganization of Princeton Seminary in 1929, Dr. J. Gresham Machen and other Bible-believing Presbyterians vigorously opposed the Federal Council of Churches, insisting that the Presbyterian Church needed to withdraw if the Council refused to depart from the Modernism which had infected it since its founding.⁹

Machen also opposed the "Plan of Union," which would bring or-

ganic union to the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the United Presbyterian Church. Machen did not oppose union *per se*, but believed the joint “Plan of Union” would water down the official creed of the Presbyterian Church and its stand for the Word of God.

Conversely, during those years, the men who were to form the OPC were quite active in cooperation with those in other denominations who upheld the inerrancy of the Scriptures. Machen maintained a vigorous speaking schedule, often bringing encouragement to various non-Presbyterian Fundamentalist groups. As a great friend of J. Oliver Buswell, he was a frequent speaker at the non-denominational Wheaton College. In June 1927, Machen delivered three speeches at King’s Hall, London, under the auspices of the Bible League of Great Britain. He edited these for publication in *The Evangelical Student*.¹¹ Such non-Reformed speakers as Methodist evangelist and educator Bob Jones, Sr., were invited by Machen to speak at the Westminster Seminary Chapel.

Machen was particularly fond of the League of Evangelical Students, which included Christian students from various denominations.¹² Westminster Seminary had a chapter of the organization for its students and a number of Westminster professors spoke at its conferences, together with those of other denominations — including Fundamentalists and Dispensationalists.¹³ Machen likewise spoke at the Metropolitan Tabernacle (Baptist) in London on June 30, 1932.

The founding of *Christianity Today*¹⁴ magazine in 1930 was actively supported by Machen. It reported on events conducted by a wide range of Fundamentalist groups. Machen wrote in the inaugural issue: “Let us support our new evangelical organ with all our might and main. It certainly deserves our support.”¹⁵ He then proceeded to extol its virtues.

In his 1923 book *Christianity and Liberalism*, Machen had written: “... true evangelical fellowship is possible between those who hold, with regard to some exceedingly important matters, sharply opposing views.”¹⁶

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J. Gresham Machen

Oswald T. Allis (professor at Westminster Seminary) and Charles Woodbridge (General Secretary of The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions) spoke at the Moody Bible Institute Founder’s Week Conference from February 4-8, 1934.¹⁷ Allis also spoke at the 1932 meeting of the Philadelphia Fundamentalists¹⁸ and at the Summer School of Theology in Winona Lake, Indiana.¹⁹ Numerous members of the Westminster faculty and Board of Trustees spoke at Fundamentalist conferences sponsored by various groups, a few of which include: Moody Bible Institute, the Montrose Bible Conference, Calvary Baptist Church in New York City, the Bible League, the Bible Standards League of Northern Ireland, South Wales Bible Training Institute, the Irish Evangelical Church, the Union des Chrétiens Évangéliques, and the Philadelphia Fundamentalists.

Cooperative Efforts in the OPC and BPC

Machen stood strongly for his Reformed convictions without compromise. He wrote concerning ministerial candidates in the Presbyterian Church: “The ordination pledge requires the candidates to hold distinctly the Reformed or Calvinistic

system. That is the system which is set forth with a clearness which surely leaves nothing to be desired in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, which are the Standards of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

“Be it noticed that the candidates do not subscribe to the Reformed system of doctrine merely as one allowable system among many allowable systems. They do not even merely subscribe to it as the best system. But they subscribe to it as the system that is true.

“Being true, it is true for everyone. It is true for Methodists and Lutherans just as much as Presbyterians, and we cannot treat as of no moment the differences which separate us from Methodists and Lutherans without being unfaithful to the Word of God.”²⁰

If this were all Machen wrote on this subject and he had ended his article there, some who later looked askance at relations with non-Reformed churches might be able to claim Machen to their defense. However, Machen continued: “Does that mean that we cannot have Christian fellowship with our Methodist or our Lutheran brethren? It means nothing of the kind. On the contrary, we can have very precious Christian fellowship with them.”²¹

Later in this same article, Machen writes: “Will those brethren be offended if they read what I have written regarding my devotion to the Reformed Faith and my belief that it is a system of doctrine taught in God’s Word?

“I feel rather sure that they will not. You see, one of the things that unites me so closely to them is that they are not indifferentists or interdenominationalists, but are profoundly convinced that it is necessary to hold with all our souls to whatever system of doctrine God’s Word teaches.

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"I wish indeed that they were adherents of the Reformed Faith, as they no doubt wish that I were a Lutheran. But I stand far closer to them than I should stand if they held the differences between the Reformed and the Lutheran system to be matters of no moment, so that we could proceed at once to form an 'organic union' based upon some vague common measure between the two great historic branches of the Protestant Church.

"No, my brethren, we do not risk losing our Christian fellowship with our true brethren in other communions if we hold honestly to our ordination pledge...."²²

Fundamentalism

Instead of continuing to focus their attacks on the poison of Modernism, some in the leadership of the OPC began increasingly to assail those who were commonly called "Fundamentalists." Following Machen's death, they sought to claim that he was in support of their position — but this was a position quite foreign to his. Machen was not fond of the term "Fundamentalism" and cautioned that belief in the full-orbed system of doctrine found in the Scriptures should not be diluted for acceptance of a looser, generic creed. He believed the Westminster Confession of Faith to be the finest expression of the Biblical system.

There certainly were those who held to very brief and generic doctrinal statements, and then there were those who championed the position of "No creed but Christ." Statements of some who used the name Fundamentalist occasionally were found to be theologically imprecise and possibly could be viewed as error, but this was largely through ignorance and a lack of theological

training. Because Fundamentalism was not a structured organization, but rather a term used to define those who believed in the inerrancy of the Scriptures, any such statements should be viewed more as an anomaly rather than an indictment of the whole movement.

The name "Fundamentalist" had arisen over the prior decades after the publication of *The Fundamentals* by the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. Several leaders in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. had contributed thoughtful essays to this compendium, including Benjamin B. Warfield, Charles Erdman and Robert E. Speer, among others.

Machen discussed his view of Fundamentalism in *The Presbyterian Guardian*. He wrote: "For my part, I cannot say that I like the term 'Fundamentalism.' I am not inclined, indeed, to quibble about these important matters. If an inquirer asks me whether I am a Fundamentalist or a Modernist, I do not say, 'Neither.' Instead, I say: 'Well, you are using terminology that I do not like, but if I may for the moment use your terminology, in order that you may get plainly what I mean, I just want to say, when you ask me whether I am a Fundamentalist or a Modernist, that I am a Fundamentalist from the word go!'"²³

Machen proceeded to explain why he was not fond of the term. "The term 'Fundamentalism' seems to represent the Christian religion as though it had suddenly become an 'ism' and needed to be called by some strange new name. I cannot see why that should be done. The term seems to me to be particularly inadequate as applied to us conservative Presbyterians. We have a great heritage. We are standing in what we hold to be the great central current of the Church's life — the great tradition that comes down through Augustine and Calvin to the Westminster Confession of Faith. That we hold to be the high straight road of truth as opposed to vagaries on one side or on

the other. Why then should we be so prone to adopt some strange new term?" As we see above, Machen did not totally distance himself from the term. It is of note that in this article he also qualifies his reservations. He states his main issue was not with others calling him a Fundamentalist, but not believing it to be the best choice when *choosing a term for oneself*. He also softened his disapproval with a qualifier, by saying "If we do not *altogether* like the term...."²⁴

This one editorial had great influence on the later choosing of names for both the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Bible Presbyterian Church. Machen discussed such other words as "evangelical" and "conservative," expressing the shortcomings he saw in using those descriptions. Then, he wrote: "I think we might do far worse than revive the good old word 'orthodoxy' as a designation of our position. 'Orthodoxy' means, as we have seen, 'straight doxy.' Well, how do we tell whether a thing is straight or not? The answer is plain. By comparing it with a rule or plumb-line. Our rule or plumb-line is the Bible. A thing is 'orthodox' if it is in accordance with the Bible. I think we might well revive the word."²⁵ Machen had begun the whole section by asking: "What term shall we who stand for the Bible in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. use to designate our position?"²⁶ Thus two good words were later used as defining adjectives in the names of these two denominations!

Although Bible Presbyterians did openly use the term "Fundamentalism," their viewpoint was not in any real substance different from that of Dr. Machen. Carl McIntire, in his 1944 book *Twentieth Century Reformation*, entitled the first chapter "Redeeming the Word 'Christian.'" Concerning the Modernists, he writes: "Simply because the robbers have come in and stolen our possessions, must we sit calmly back and let them have them? No...."



Delegates to the Second World Congress of the International Council of Christian Churches in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1950.

“The word ‘Christian’ is basic and glorious. We cannot surrender it without putting ourselves in a ruinous position. Those who have usurped the word want to keep it, and already they label those who hold to its historic meaning with other names. The temptation to accept other words, however, abounds, not only because of the confusion and pressure that exists, but because of other reasons.

“There is what is called the modernist and fundamentalist groups and the modernist-fundamentalist controversy. We are a fundamentalist. We are not ashamed of that word, and when people speak of us as a fundamentalist we own the word. Nevertheless, the very use of the word recognizes a retreat.... Here is where the terminology is disastrous. A man who calls himself a modernist is not a Christian.... In like manner, there is no such thing as

a fundamentalist Christian, though men use the term. The fundamentalist is the Christian, and to call a man a fundamentalist Christian implies that there is some other kind of Christian, which there is not.

“‘I am a Christian’ ought to be all that any man should have to say.... We do not take the position of the man who says, ‘I am neither a fundamentalist nor a modernist. I am a Christian.’ Beware of such a man. We say, ‘Yes, I am a fundamentalist; yes, I am a Christian.’ A fundamentalist is a Christian. He believes in the fundamentals of the faith which are under attack in this hour and have been for the last fifty years.”²⁷

If some were to mistakenly think that McIntire was espousing a generic Fundamentalism while neglecting the historic Reformed Faith, he writes later in the same chapter: “If the Presbyterians do not believe their faith well enough to want to propagate it,

to bring men into an understanding of the position that they have stood for historically, then they have departed from their position.”²⁸ He then criticizes those denominations which have “sufficiently departed from their own written creeds to ignore the reality of the various doctrines that have developed and separated them historically.”²⁹ McIntire further explains that for these reasons, the American Council of Christian Churches chose the word Christian, rather than some other substitute, in its name.

How Far Should Fellowship Be Extended?

As the tensions rose within the OPC as to what it meant to be “truly Reformed,” there likewise grew differences as to how far fellowship should be extended. Although in-

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stances of Professor Cornelius Van Til speaking at the League of Evangelical Students (on the same platform with J. Oliver Buswell, after the division of 1937), those in the OPC tended more and more to concentrate efforts on fellowship with other Reformed Churches.

The Bible Presbyterian Church did as well, yet had a wider overview of the visible church, much as did Miller, Hodge, Dabney and other Old School Presbyterians. Three years after its founding (1941), the Bible Presbyterian Church joined the Bible Protestant Church in forming the American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC). Within the ensuing years, such groups as the General Association of Regular Baptists (GARBC), the Evangelical Methodists, the Methodist Protestants, the Fundamental Methodists and the Independent Fundamental Churches of America (IFCA) joined.

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church was noticeably absent. It did form a Committee to study the matter of joining the Council and published the Committee Report in *The Presbyterian Guardian*.³⁰ The Committee recommended that the denomination consider a "Consultative Membership" with limited cooperation in certain areas. This was sent to the Presbyteries.

The matter stayed alive for several years. *The Presbyterian Guardian* carried opposing viewpoints. Arthur Kuschke, Jr., wrote "Stay Out of the American Council! An Opinion Worth Considering,"³¹ followed several months later by "Join the American Council — If" by W. Harlee Bordeaux.³¹ Bordeaux was a minister of the OPC, who was serving as General Secretary of the ACCC.

Interestingly enough, the 1949 General Assembly of the OPC reject-

ed membership in the ACCC but applied for membership in the newly-formed International Council of Christian Churches. The ICCC was founded upon resolution by the ACCC and had many of the same leaders. A number of current historians friendly to the OPC have made veiled — and sometimes very direct — accusations that unethical actions by Carl McIntire played a large role in the Division of 1937 between the OPC and the BPC. However, the OPC in 1949 sought membership in an organization which just one year earlier had elected Carl McIntire to its presidency (a position he would hold until his death in 2002). Professor Ned B. Stonehouse had participated in the founding of the ICCC in Amsterdam in 1948 and had recommended that the OPC join.

Although the OPC voted to join the ICCC, it was deeply conflicted on the matter. Whereas two-thirds of the delegates had voted against joining the ACCC, another vote saw nearly two-thirds vote to join the ICCC.

There were so many objections raised to the Constitution of the ICCC, and to specific actions, that the relationship appeared doomed from the outset. The OPC application was accompanied by noting many of these objections, and requesting that "extensive changes" be made.³² Many of the delegates objected to:

1. The Preamble to the ICCC Constitution, which said that the Council was "a world-wide agency, for fellowship and cooperation on the part of all true believers, for the proclamation and defense of the Gospel, for the maintenance of a testimony pure, steadfast, and world-wide to those great facts and revealed truths of historic Christianity and especially to the great doctrines of the Protestant Reformation." Some believed this was usurping the place of the church and thus was unbiblical.³³

2. The ICCC speaking out on current events and actions from a

Biblical standpoint — that the Scriptures did not allow churches to involve themselves in such matters.³⁴

3. The ICCC delegates accepting new members. They believed that all the constituent church bodies should have to send their approval before any new member could be received.³⁵

4. Section G of the ICCC Constitution, which read: "Salvation, the effect of sovereign grace of God in regeneration by the Holy Spirit and the Word, through faith, not of works." The OPC found this statement to be "ambiguous, to say the least," and thus it "may" be interpreted wrongly by some. Some declared it to be unbiblical, even though it is clearly taken from the words of Ephesians 2:8-9.³⁶

Professor John Murray, particularly, made numerous protests — many of them relating to his beliefs as discussed in the summer 2016 issue of *Redeeming the Time*, p. 11. His objections would largely have eviscerated the Council from having any Christian witness at all, bringing into question any reason for its existence. *The Presbyterian Guardian* reported that Professor Murray believed "that to allow the Council to warn of the sin of compromise with Modernism, etc., would of necessity grant to the Council a peculiar right of the church, that is, to proclaim the Word of God."³⁷

These beliefs were so extreme that there was objection to the Council "promot[ing] ... true education." It believed it should only "advocate" it. Some tried to appease Professor Murray by parsing words — saying that the ICCC was not warning against apostasy itself, but merely the "fruits of apostasy."³⁸ At any rate, no one in the ICCC was in any way trying to usurp or undermine the duties of the church as outlined in the Scriptures. Other than being the gatekeeper as to whether a church's beliefs were acceptable to join the Council, neither the ACCC nor ICCC has ever tried to meddle in

the doctrinal beliefs or practices of its member denominations. In fact, Dr. Ralph Colas, who served for many years as the Executive Secretary of the ACCC, until his death in 2015, always made a point to describe the Council as a “multi-denominational” organization, as opposed to “interdenominational.”

Rev. Bordeaux became exasperated when Murray entered a minority report stating that it was unbiblical for a Council to receive new members — that that should require the acceptance vote of each of the constituent denominations. *The Presbyterian Guardian* reported that Bordeaux remarked on the floor “that to require such technicalities was to grind the granite peaks to dust and to drain the ocean of every drop and to spend millennia and millennia and millennia upon trivia.”³⁹

Professor R.B. Kuiper was chosen to represent the OPC at the Second World Congress of the ICCC in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1950, with Professor Stonehouse as alternate. Considering amendments to the new ICCC Constitution was one of the first matters of business. The ICCC Executive Committee, upon receipt of the OPC’s objection to the Section G of the doctrinal statement (see point 4 above), recommended a change which should have removed any ambiguity. Although the original wording could be heartily agreed to by most Reformed churches, the question dealt with whether the antecedent of “by faith” was “salvation” — which this writer believes is clearly indicated by the grammar — or whether it was “the effect of regeneration.” The controversy revolved around the theological consideration of the *ordo salutis*, or “order of salvation” — the timing of the events surrounding one’s salvation.

Reformed theologian Louis Berkhof reminds us that we must “not forget that the work of applying the grace of God to the individual sinner

“The word ‘Christian’ is basic and glorious. We cannot surrender it without putting ourselves in a ruinous position.... There is what is called the modernist and fundamentalist groups and the modernist-fundamentalist controversy. We are a fundamentalist. We are not ashamed of that word, and when people speak of us as a fundamentalist we own the word. Nevertheless, the very use of the word recognizes a retreat.... Here is where the terminology is disastrous. A man who calls himself a modernist is not a Christian.... In like manner, there is no such thing as a fundamentalist Christian, though men use the term. The fundamentalist is the Christian, and to call a man a fundamentalist Christian implies that there is some other kind of Christian, which there is not.”

Carl McIntire

is a unitary process,” and “that there is considerable room for a difference of opinion.”⁴⁰ The matter that is important is that the work of regeneration is from God alone and precedes faith. Regeneration is not dependent on some man-derived faith. Faith is given to us by God when we are regenerated by His Spirit.

Professor Stonehouse offered a substitute motion which read: “Salvation, the effect of regeneration by

the Spirit and the Word, not by works but by grace through faith.” At first there was no second to Stonehouse’s motion, as many thought the wording of the Committee was sufficient. However, Dr. J. Gordon Holdcroft, a Bible Presbyterian who later served for many years with distinction as the President of The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, did second the motion. There were several attempts to thwart consideration, but Carl McIntire sided each time with the Orthodox Presbyterian men, and allowed discussion to continue. Dr. Allan A. MacRae, Bible Presbyterian leader of Faith Theological Seminary, spoke in favor of Professor Stonehouse’s wording, as did Professor J.J. van der Schuit, professor at the Christian Reformed Seminary in Apeldorn, the Netherlands. The substitute motion became the main motion and carried.⁴¹

Many of the other matters put forth by the OPC were rejected by the ICCC, which, it should be remembered, included a number of other Reformed bodies.

The OPC, as late as 2002, still officially spoke of the ICCC as having an “unbiblical doctrinal (creedal) position.”⁴² Although certainly not as detailed as the doctrinal statements of individual denominations, we believe that the majority of our readers would rejoice in this fine statement and would be hard pressed to find any error.

With the many objections of a considerable number of the members of the OPC to even the core purposes of the Council, it was of little surprise when they withdrew after a few years. Since that time, the OPC has concentrated its fellowship with such organizations as the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NA-PARC), and the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC).

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Although the OPC has withdrawn from the Reformed Ecumenical Synod⁴³, and cancelled its "fraternal relations" with the Christian Reformed Church — over serious breaches of Biblical teaching — it appears to be more important to the OPC that the organizations and individual denominations with which they associate are "Reformed," than that those groups are themselves separate from compromise with apostasy and weak evangelicalism.

It is undeniable that the OPC has assumed a rigidity against fellowship with those it does not find to be "truly Reformed" in a way totally foreign to the spirit of Dr. Machen. One delegate to the 1949 General Assembly of the OPC stated his objection to ACCC membership because "the first enemy we have met in seeking to build a church true to the Reformed Faith has been what he called 'American Fundamentalism,' of which the American Council is a large sector."⁴⁴ This certainly wasn't the attitude of all, and one delegate stated his disagreement publicly, but it shows a contrast of some to Dr. Machen, who wrote that he enjoyed "close ... fellowship with Fundamentalists."⁴⁵

The Bible Presbyterian Church has continued to support the purpose of the ACCC and ICCC, although they have been absent from membership at different times due to specific events which have occurred. Faith Presbytery, Bible Presbyterian Church, is presently a member and active participant in the ACCC. •

¹Miller is here using the term "liberal" to mean the recognition that others outside the Presbyterian Church were true Christians and that the Church was not sectarian, while still holding strictly to its own beliefs. In the twentieth century, "liberal" was often used synonymously with Modernism.

²Samuel Miller, "Church Attachment and Sectarianism," *The Presbyterian Magazine*, 4.1, January 1854, pp. 1-6.

³"The Basis of the Evangelical Alliance," and "Constitution of the United States Evangelical Alliance," Philip Schaff and S. Irenaeus Prime, eds., *History, Essays, Orations, and Other Documents of the Sixth General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1874), pp. 760-761.

⁴Charles Hodge, "The Unity of the Church Based on Personal Union With Christ, *History, Essays, Orations, and Other Documents of the Sixth General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance*, p. 139.

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 143-144.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 144.

⁷Robert L. Dabney, *Discussions: Evangelical and Theological*, Vol. 2 (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1982), p. 512.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹Samuel Craig and H. McAllister Griffiths, eds., *Christianity Today*, Mid-December 1932, p. 1.

¹⁰J. Gresham Machen, "The Final Form of the Plan of Union," *Christianity Today*, January 1934, p. 5.

¹¹J. Gresham Machen, "Is the Bible Right About Jesus?" (in three parts), *The Evangelical Student* ("Part I. What the Bible Teaches About Jesus," October 1928, pp. 4-11; "Part II. The Witness of Paul," January 1929, pp. 7-15; "Part III. The Witness of the Gospels," April 1929, pp. 11-20).

¹²J. Gresham Machen, "The League of Evangelical Students," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, December 16, 1935, p. 86.

¹³"News of League of Evangelical Students," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, October 21, 1935, p. 35.

¹⁴It had no connection to the present publication by that name.

¹⁵J. Gresham Machen, "The Present Situation in the Presbyterian Church," *Christianity Today*, May 1930, p. 7.

¹⁶J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1946), pp. 51-52.

¹⁷"Victorious Conference at Moody Bible Institute," *Christianity Today*, March 1934, p. 23.

¹⁸"Philadelphia Fundamentalists Complete First Year," *Christianity Today*, July 1932, p. 12.

¹⁹*Ibid.*

²⁰J. Gresham Machen, "The Second Part of the Ordination Pledge," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, December 2, 1935, p. 70.

²¹*Ibid.*

²²*Ibid.*

²³J. Gresham Machen, "What Is Orthodoxy?," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, November 4, 1935, p. 38.

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵*Ibid.*

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷Carl McIntire, *Twentieth Century Reformation*, Second and Revised Edition (Collingswood, NJ: Christian Beacon Press, 1945), pp. 4-5.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

³⁰A Committee Report to the Twelfth General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, published in two installments in *The Presbyterian Guardian*: "Scripture and Cooperation," March 25, 1945, p. 87; and "The Church and the American Council," May 10, 1945, p. 137.

³¹Arthur W. Kuschke, Jr., "Stay Out of the American Council! An Opinion Worth Considering," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, April 1949, p. 64.

³²W. Harllee Bordeaux, "Join the American Council — If," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, July 1949, p. 124.

³³Arthur W. Kuschke, Jr., "The Seventeenth General Assembly," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, June 1950, pp. 116-119.

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶*Ibid.*

³⁷*Ibid.*

³⁸*Ibid.*

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977), pp. 416-417.

⁴¹*Minutes of the Second Plenary Congress of the International Council of Christian Churches* (Amsterdam: ICCC International Headquarters, 1950), pp. 6-7.

⁴²*Minutes of the Sixty-Ninth General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church* (Willow Grove, PA: Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 2002), p. 233.

⁴³The OPC resigned from the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in 1988, when that organization failed to discipline the Gereformeerde Kerk Nederland for allowing homosexual officers.

⁴⁴Leslie W. Sloat, "Assembly Says 'No' to A.C. 'Yes, but ...' to I.C.," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, August 1949, p. 156.

⁴⁵Machen, "What Is Orthodoxy?"



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19th World Congress • International Council of Christian Churches

February 8-11, 2017 • Coatzacoalcos, Mexico



**Celebrating the
500th Anniversary of the
Protestant
Reformation**



ICCC President Dr. Nadir Carreño (right), from Santiago, Chile, presiding over an executive committee meeting with ICCC General Secretary Dr. Quek Swee Hwa, from Singapore.





Stephen Ricker, President of the Latin American Alliance of Christian Churches (ALADIC) and Brad Gsell, newly elected President of the ICCC, were interviewed by one of the television stations in the state of Veracruz, Mexico.



The newly elected Executive Committee was presented to the delegates on the last night of the Congress. A number of members were not present for the photo.





David Ricker, son of missionaries Hal and Evelyn Ricker, took missionary Ken Olson and several others up one of the rivers to preach at the Shalom Bible Presbyterian Church. Ken is the new General Secretary of the ICCC.



A number of the Congress delegates attended Sunday services at the Bath-Tzion Bible Presbyterian Church in Allende, Mexico. A multi-course meal was cooked and served following the service on the roof of the church.

