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May 22 - 1942

Dr. Gordon H. Clark
Philosophy Department
WHEATON COLLEGE
Wheaton
Illinois

Dear Dr. Clark:

Your letter of May 19th is duly received, and I have read the letter which you enclosed, addressed to Allan Jr.

Allan has a very high regard for you....and he enjoyed very much the fellowship which he had with you and your family when at your home during his freshman year at Wheaton.

The conditions which you mention in your letter are certainly most unfortunate, and I am very sorry. I plan to be at the Trustees' meeting on Saturday, June 13th, returning home Sunday evening. I hope I can see you during that time and discuss this matter with you.

Would you like to have me write President Edman? If so, should I quote from your letter to me?

46

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Allan C. Emery.

ACE:LO

May 25 1942

Mr. Allan C. Emery
267 Summer Street
Boston, Mass.

Dear Mr. Emery,

With the exception of your omitting news of Allan, I am deeply appreciative of your kind reply to my long letter of a few days ago.

Since the administration committee is to discuss my case this week, I believe, and to report to the faculty the following Tuesday, there may be some point in your writing to Dr. Edman, though the wisdom of such a procedure is a matter for you to decide. You may quote my letter. I tried to state public facts that cannot be denied.

The reinstatement of the philosophy major, however, - if the faculty decides to reinstate it - will, I fear, leave the basic problem unsolved. A section of the school holds that not merely must all of us accept the nine points of doctrine in the catalog, but that, further, no differences with the head of the Bible Department are to be tolerated. I am one of another group which believes that other views more in accord with historic Protestantism should be sympathetically represented. It is completely impossible for me to hear the reformed faith constantly attacked without saying something in its favor.

Since this is a matter of most basic policy, a clarification by the trustees, if you care to ask for it on June 13, would settle the perplexity of those who are interested. It would be a pleasure to have the opportunity to speak with you during your visit at that time.

Very truly yours,

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

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

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

*With minor changes
sent to
Houside +
Mc Shane.*

June 5 1943

Rev. William R. McCarrell
334 S. Grove Ave.
Oak Park, Ill.

My dear Dr. McCarrell,

The other afternoon I phoned in an attempt to make an appointment with you. Your secretary at the church said it would be better for me to write, and following her suggestion I think it would be as well to lay before you here the matter I have in mind, and then if you care to to discuss it further, I am at your service.

Though this letter may seem long, it will ultimately save time if I begin at the beginning.

When the members of the faculty were preparing the material for the present college catalog, Dr. Thiessen, the chairman of our department, told me that Dr. Edman wanted to see me about the offering of the philosophy major. Apparently war and finances required some retrenchment in the college; and I was already helping out in Greek because one of the young men had been taken by the army. I met Dr. Edman in the hall and he asked me to write him a letter giving my views as to retaining or dropping the major work. In that letter I showed one way in which the major could be retained, and there are other possibilities as well.

The next thing I knew the catalog was published with the philosophy major missing. There had been no departmental recommendation, no committee action, no faculty approval. The copy handed in for the catalog contained the major, but someone had deleted it.

It seems elementary to me that all matters pertaining to the curriculum should pass through the faculty. To say, as has later been said, that no definite method of procedure had ever been adopted for the dropping of a major, is not a satisfactory excuse for ignoring both the department and the faculty. Therefore I asked in the faculty meeting

how a major could be dropped without regular action. The faculty seemed to approve my views and instructed the administration committee to discuss the matter and bring back a recommendation. I have since heard that this secret method of altering the catalog has been used before.

Now a second factor enters the picture. In the administration committee meeting it became clear that the war and the budget had virtually nothing to do with the matter, for I had some eighteen or twenty major students while others had less than five.

The real reason came to light in several accusations made against me. Their common core is that I do not agree one hundred per cent with the theology of Dr. Thiessen. There is no question of my acceptance of the doctrines of the college as printed in the catalog; it is a question of matters on which various denominations have long differed. And yet Dr. Thiessen demanded that I express no disagreement with him.

You may remember that last year Dr. Hoffman was dismissed from the college. I gather that the chief cause of his dismissal was theological disagreement with Dr. Thiessen. Now Dr. Hoffman was an Arminian; I am a Calvinist. Dr. Thiessen is neither. He has a system of his own never adopted by any denomination so far as I know.

This basic charge against me was subdivided into several parts, and I can go into them with you if you care.

At any rate, in the committee meeting I tried to reply. I acknowledged, not with shame but with pride, my acceptance of the Westminster Confession of Faith: I really believe it, it is not just a form with me. Its doctrine is the doctrine of a dozen denominations, and while many of them are modernistic now, they have had a noble history. Further, Wheaton is ostensibly an interdenominational school, and if Calvinism is persistently attacked, as it is, it ought also to have a sympathetic presentation.

Therefore the demand to express no disagreement with Dr. Thiessen is a demand for my resignation. I am unwilling to resign without acquainting some of the trustees with the reasons. If the trustees wish to enforce the views of Dr. Thiessen, that will settle the matter; but it will result in a Wheaton purged of Calvinists and Arminians alike.

These are the facts and issues as I see them, and I am presenting them simply for your information.

Very truly yours,

LAW OFFICES

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BROAD AND CHESTNUT STREETS

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JOHN HARPER
WILLIAM M. BUCHANAN
PHILIP B. DRIVER, JR.

June 8, 1942

HENRY PRESTON ERDMAN
1907-1936

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

Dear Gordon:-

I have your letter of June 5, 1942 asking that I pump you "full of wisdom and information". This makes a big assumption, to wit: I have both in sufficient quantity to spare some. I'll do my best, but please do not take my advice too seriously because I am too far removed from the scene of battle to be much good as an advisor.

I do not see how you have the right to attend a meeting of the Trustees or make any motion thereat. Yet you speak in several places in the letter as though you would be permitted to be present and argue your side of the case. If you personally are not permitted to be present at the Trustee's meeting, I do not believe Dr. Edman's handling of the motion at the Committee meeting can, at this time, be interpreted as more than a firm effort to prevent a decision on your status until a meeting of the Trustees could be held when the matter would be decided adversely in your absence and therefore with less embarrassment. This would be in keeping with the character of the man as I have understood it.

On the other hand, if you are going to be permitted to attend the Trustees meeting then Dr. Edman's action at the committee meeting may indicate either (a) he is out of sympathy with Dr. Thiessen or (b) he is not only out of sympathy with Thiessen but is in sympathy with your position in part. In either event, drive the wedge between the two deeper if you get a chance.

As I understand it, there will be two questions presented to the Trustees (1) Do we want to keep this fellow Clarke for another year? (2) Who is going to teach the major in Philosophy? The first question will, as is usual, be decided affirmatively, as a matter of course, unless some charges are made successfully. The burden will be on the person bringing the charges and a motion at any time to "lay the matter on the table" will be in order; if successful, will end all discussion; and the burden will not be met.

June 8, 1942

On the second question, I doubt the Trustees will consider it, but if they are willing to do so, let them, rather than have the matter referred back to the head of your department. Your chances on this question will be better if decided by the Trustees rather than by Dr. Thiessen.

If you lose out on this fight and are asked for your resignation, I do not know what to advise you to do. There are two main factors involved and, until you are able to evaluate them, I would stall. These factors are:

(1) Your position in trying to obtain other employment. Normally a resignation makes it easier to secure other satisfactory employment because you do not have to state you were "discharged". How much weight this will have in the case of a professor of philosophy, you can judge better than I. Do not forget however that employment produces a monetary return year after year and adds up to a large amount in the course of years.

(2) Your chance of recovering salary by a law suit. I cannot advise you what your rights are under Illinois law. Here in Pennsylvania, we have a very strong presumption that, in the absence of a written contract to the contrary, an employment is at will and may be terminated by either party at any time and without notice. I should think (without looking up any decisions) that the employment of a professor to teach a course or courses would be for such a length of time as the course or courses were to run and that the ordinary presumptions of an employment at will would not apply to your case. A more important question would be, when are you so employed? Sometime in 1941 you were employed for a semester or a year which has now ended. Have you been employed for next semester or next year? If not, you would have no right to recover any salary. Under such circumstances the Board of Trustees probably would not "fire" you but would fail to renew your employment.

When you are "employed" may not be an easy question to answer in your case, because there may be some "custom of the trade" involved (e.g. if by the end of May you are not notified to the contrary, the employment is understood to continue for an additional term). When you are free to do so, consult an Illinois lawyer if you believe your legal rights are important. Assuming you have legal rights, do not follow any lawyer's advice in trying to enforce them unless you are certain that the attempt will not substantially affect your efforts to obtain employment elsewhere. (Lawyers frequently like to bring suits -- it's their unconscious reaction to an infringement of their injured and innocent client's rights). You can bring a law suit after you have obtained employment elsewhere, if it seems advisable.

Having obtained advice on your legal status and having determined the wisdom of trying to enforce such legal rights as you have, you may then advise the Trustees whether or not you will resign.

Personally, I think that anyone who can successfully maneuver the situation so as to isolate the fundamental question for an unequivocal answer, who can drive a wedge between his superiors and who can begin to see a faint glimmer of hope in the situation does not need advice. If you can't get a steady job next fall, come in to see me. Perhaps I can get some helpful hints from you on how to solve some of my problems. My congratulations on the job you have done so far.

The best of luck and remember me to Ruth.

Sincerely,



JH: em

June 27 1942

Dear Ed,

Your recent note reminds me that I intended to write to you about the time of General Assembly. It was somewhat of a shock to hear that you were unable to go, and I hope that you are putting a great distance between you and any collapse. With sessions of the G. A. extending into the wee hours, it is good you did not attend.

The discontinuance of the Committee of Nine is quite a disappointment. On withdrawing my resolution I wrote to all who had written to me urging them to support the Nine. Since it was not an administrative committee, and could merely report to the Assembly, the objections made against it were preposterous. It will be excellent if the Reformed Alliance (or whatever it should be called) can be formed, and perhaps the Christian Education Committee has been improved, but the account of the whole Assembly in the Guardian was rather discouraging.

The situation at Wheaton is somewhat as follows. Dr. Thiessen has made a powerful move to have me ousted. It came before the trustees, and they appointed a committee to confer with me next Tuesday evening. I expect them to tell me that I should not mention Calvinism in class, nor continue the Creed Club. I do not see how I can accede to either of these requests. I shall do some counter-attacking of my own. The President is not so wholeheartedly in favor of Thiessen either; maybe he would like us to balance each other off. But this is all guess work; I'll write you later when I have definite news.

In the meantime I am seeing what there is to be done if I find myself outside looking in. I intend to canvass the field of colleges, but there are very few positions open. I know one excellent young scholar who looked for five years and has found nothing. If I should find a position, even at a good salary, I am not sure that

I would again be content in a secular institution -- in spite of conditions in a so-called Christian college. It is possible that Bob Rudolph could get me a place in his seminary, particularly if and when Wailes leaves. This might make it seem wise to enter their ministry. Or I might, after ordination, take a church. I have mentioned ordination to a few of my friends (Strong, Smith, Goddard, Rudolph), but there are no OPC's, and besides the procedure toward ordination in our church would be long and doubtful in my case; there is a small RE church I could possibly get.

Smith and Strong urge me to hang on here as long as possible. Smith even suggested that I do not send out a proposed tract, The Disobedient Missionary (see Westlake), but even if the tracts were not anonymous, I do not see that they can get me in more trouble than I am in now. And I do not relish the notion of keeping quiet. It is distinctly a question of Christian ethics how quiet I can conscientiously be. I have tried to limit myself to the Westminster Confession, and the result is that I am considered "extreme." Other Presbyterians do not believe the Conf. as I do, therefore that proves I am extreme. Et c.

You once had a hope of a college for our church, or for the Reformed Alliance. Of course there is Calvin College. And there is the ever present question of finances. And perhaps your hope has gone the way of dreams. But, since I am thinking of everything possible these days, I gave this a thought too. Here is a very minimum plan:

One man, twelve hours a week, twenty four credits a year, teaching three years of Greek; one man teaching sixteen credits a year of German and eight of history; one man giving sixteen credits a year of English and eight of history; one man twenty credits of philosophy; one man sixteen of Math and six of philosophy. This makes five men and one hundred fourteen hours of work. It omits Physics and Zoology - these require expensive equipment and could be arranged for by transfer credit. This would throw the total offerings over the minimum 120 hours for a four year course. If the salaries of the five men ranged from 3000 to 1800, that item of the budget would be eleven or twelve thousand. But I am afraid that the financial condition of the country after the war will not be favorable to independent colleges.

Well, I send you the news next week. Take care of yourself; don't let the brakes wear you down.

Cordially

Excerpt from a letter written to Glenn Andreas on
June 27 1942, by Dr. Edman

"Quite possibly there has gone abroad a misconception of the situation in regard to a philosophy major at Wheaton. For some years there has been a rather marked decline in the enrollment in that department. Under the uncertain conditions of war days, we are expecting ~~the~~ teachers to branch out into other fields familiar to them, if there should be need. At the time the catalog was published, it was uncertain as to just how much philosophy could be offered, in view of the fact that Dr. Clark is helping with elementary Greek. As soon as possible, this uncertainty was clarified; and on recommendation of the administration, the philosophy major has been continued.
. . . ."

On the evening of June 30 1942 a committee of the trustees of Wheaton College, composed of Doctors Edman, McCarrell, Fuller, Ironside, and Mr. Fischer, met with me. They had heard complaints from certain members of the faculty, from students, and from the parents of students respecting my theological views.

The session lasted from 7:30 P.M. to 10:30 P.M., and most of the time was taken up by their attempt to learn my views and my attempt to explain them. I was handicapped by what appeared to be the almost complete ignorance of the historic position of the reformed churches. For example, Dr. Fuller was abruptly taken aback when I told him that the Westminster Confession taught the doctrine of reprobation.

Although I argued that a position carefully set down by learned men and accepted by a score of denominations for three hundred years could not legitimately be called extreme, I am confident that they all regard reprobation and the foreordination of sinful acts of men as incredibly extreme.

Some time was given to the consideration of the statements of students who had learned of Calvinism. I gather that they think I am responsible not only for every absurd statement one of my students makes, but that I am also responsible for a great many absurdities committed by students with whom I have never talked.

When I raised the matter of the secret method of dropping the philosophy major and the false statements circulated about me and certain of my friends who are outside the college, Mr. Fischer informed me that the committee had not come to discuss personal discourtesy.

The committee took no action, nor did it make any suggestions. Mr. Fischer personally suggested a more cautious expression of views.

I do not know whether the committee plans to meet again or not. One of the members, I think it was Mr. Fischer, intimated that if the situation did not improve, the trustees would be forced to do something or other.

610 Howard Street
Wheaton Illinois

July 1 1942

Dear Bob,

I have owed you a letter for a long while. The reason for the delay is that I expected the trustees to have something to say following their meeting on June 13. They said that a committee would meet with me on June 30. So I waited again. In the meantime other little items have come up, and we are in for a long letter; so it might be better not to read on unless you are comfortably seated with nothing to do.

To rehearse my own troubles. As I said, philosophy as a major was dropped without departmental recommendation, committee action, or faculty approval. When I brought the matter into the open at a faculty meeting, the faculty referred it to the Administration Committee. There Thiessen charged me with being an extreme Calvinist (he is a moderate Calvinist, denying explicitly most of the fave points, the historic position on the nature of the incarnate Christ, and making false quotations from Calvin in order to discredit Calvin), and demanded that I never express disagreement with him. At a second meeting of the ex Administration Committee Dr. Edman, the president, ruled that the discussion must be confined to the merits of a philosophy major as such. Thiessen tried to make another speech against me, but Edman just shut him up. The major was restored. Edman told Thiessen that any personal matters could be presented to the trustees.

A committee of the trustees met with me last night, and I am enclosing a carbon copy of my report of the meeting. Even David Otis Fuller, who holds to a great deal of Calvinism, and who has edited some of Spurgeon, was dumbfounded to hear that the Westminster Confession taught reprobation. The others have had less opportunity for knowing the reformed position. It seems to me that their idea of extreme, "hyper-Calvinism" is anything they have never heard of before. Their ignorance defines 'extreme.'

The net result, I take it, is that I am supposed to behave myself for a year, or else. They were very polite, even personally friendly in the whole thing. But their whole background is so limited that they are simply unable to understand the historic reformed position. They think they are more than fair and just to tolerate on the faculty one with my views; the idea that I have a right to express them as much as Thiessen has a right to express his, seems to them merely absurd.

This raises problems for me. Of course I cannot hide my views; nor can I control students whom I teach, let alone students I have never met; and it will always be possible for Thiessen to get students and parents to complain about me. A few of the faculty do their best to prevent students from taking my courses → though there are on the other hand some very fine people here.

In the fall, then, I expect to circularize the colleges to discover whether there is a position in philosophy. Remembering that Ruddick looked for five years and found nothing, I have very little hope in this direction. And if I should find even a good position, it would be in a place where I could influence practically no one entering the ministry. It is for that reason that I consider a place in your seminary as the most satisfactory solution to the situation. And as to details, if you would attend to the matter at the proper time, I can teach the following: First year Greek, courses in exegesis (I have gone over Romans several times, and Gal., I John, and I Peter; I hope to write a commentary on I Peter for adult Bible classes), philosophy - including ethics, theism, and a course I have been working up on contemporary religious views - modernism, humanism, ethical idealism, religion of science, agnosticism. It ought to be possible to construct a full schedule out of all this.

By the way, to change the subject, I have been reading recently The typology of Scripture by Patrick Fairbairn. It is excellent; try to find time to look through its two volumes.

A day or two before your letter of June 15 arrived, we heard that Culbertson was coming to Moody. I have been pleased to tell some Moody people that they are very fortunate, but I am far from pleased that the RE church is losing his services. I always felt that he was one man on whom you could depend, and a man who commanded the respect of the whole church. Who will take Culbertson's church? There is one bright spot in the whole situation: it paves the way for your election as Bishop. Perhaps Higgins can carry on for a while, but I suppose he will shortly need a coadjutor, and you are it.

There is one point in your letter that was not clear; you say that you want Trotter back on the seminary board. How did he get off? Did someone have to resign in order to elect a new treasurer?

I sort of smile at the offer of the PE to reconsider the matters before their 1879 council. But there are two matters that puzzle me. First, why are they so anxious about you? They seem very persistent. Second, how much sentiment is there for them in the RE church. When I had lunch with Cloak and Arndt they mentioned someone

in your church, perhaps young Sonne I forget, who had gone PE, but their tone gave the impression that it was not at all disturbing. Of course Arndt could hardly have ranted against the PEs the first time he met me, nor even Cloak had much reason to complain, but the tone seem to indicate some ~~ix~~ indifference.

I wrote to Arndt a few weeks ago, stating again that I was willing to undertake a new work if they could find a suitable place and were willing to back it. He replied that some (I don't know how much) canvassing had been done, but that no place had appeared as yet. Our own church has not the finances to back a new venture so remote from other groups and without a nucleus.

And this leads me to another problem: ordination. First, I go on the assumption that I cannot stay at Wheaton much longer and that I want a position that is more christian ~~ix~~ than secular. To tide over a time during which I may have no teaching position, or to combine preaching and teaching, ordination is something to be considered. Your church attracts me for several reasons; undoubtedly I could easily get along with men like Bustard, Percival, James, Steck; it is too bad about Cloak, Sonne, and Trotter. I have no objection to the Prayer Book; any objection would rather be to the church requiring it; I would prefer to use it without being required to do so. Then another point that inclines me toward you is the inertia of men like Van Til and M.F.T. Even Jn Murray is better on the whole than they are. This past year I was on a Com. of Nine, and the two above were merely obstructionists. MFT objected to everything proposed; I hardly believe there was a single matter of which he approved; and Van Til objected to nearly everything. The two brought in a minority report having the committee discontinued. The more aggressive group won something in the election of members (at Gen Assembly) to the Xn Ed. Com; but I do not think that the Assembly in toto advanced our work very appreciably. This discourages me with our church. Yet, when out here some of the faculty and some of the trustees circulate false rumors about Westminster and its students, it makes me ashamed to think of leaving our church, rather I want to get further into the fight. Harper also suggested that going into your church might look like leaving some of my friends while they are being attacked and leaving a work I had begun. But I do not think that anyone at Westminster would think I had left because it was being attacked. Some of them might get the motives wrong, but not that wrong. I have talked this all over with a few in our church since April, but they are chary of stating much of an opinion. Undoubtedly it is hard for them to weigh all the items in the situation. I wonder what you think of the OPC. Ought I to be discouraged with it. You once made a comment on the attitude of Cal Cummings. He made such an extreme proposal at the Gen Ass. that their

rejection of it led him to resign as chairman of the Xn Ed Com. That was part of our gain. But there are too many like Cal in our group.

One part of your letter, in contrast with the above paragraph, impresses me very favorably. That is, the new work being organized in Jenkintown and Newark.

During June we had rain on nineteen days. I wonder how it is at Dorset. The sugar rationing is typical of bureaucracy: here in town one family of five got a total of five pounds for canning, another family of five got thirty pounds; another family of four got three and a half; and I think we got nine. The board seems to be run by labor racketeers.

This morning (Thursday July 3) the paper say Sevastople has fallen and the Germans are far into Egypt. Oh me. A few more raids like Cologne would help, but apparently the British are not able to keep that speed up. Another raid on Tokio wouldn't do any harm either.

For summer work, I am writing an article on Plotinus' theory of providence. The one on sensation is to be published this month in The Philosophical Review.

Cordially

1317 Wilmut Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan
July 3, 1942

My dear Doctor, Clark:

Just today I have learned of
the dropping of the philosophy major
at Wheaton. Of course, I know no-

thing of circumstances, but I can
not help taking a moment to tell you
how much I have appreciated your
work at Wheaton. Your type of scholar-
ship appeals strongly to me and I con-
sider your being with us a strength
to Wheaton. Students, too, appreciate your
courses, I know, for more than one of our
serious, worthy men have told me they
are among the best given at Wheaton.

Most sincerely, in Christian
friendship and with cordial greetings
to Mrs. Clark, too,

Effie Jane Wheeler

OFFICE OF THE PASTOR
THE MOODY MEMORIAL CHURCH
1609 N. LA SALLE STREET
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

July 3, 1942

Dr. Gordon H. Clark,
Wheaton College,
Wheaton, Illinois.

My dear Dr. Clark:

Since our interview with you the other evening I have been much in prayer about the whole matter and have thought it over a great deal. It finally came down to this in my mind: Would I as a father want either a son or a daughter of mine to be exposed to the hyper-Calvinistic teaching to which you gave utterance? I certainly would not. I should feel I was trifling with the eternal interests of my child if I permitted it.

Our Lord Jesus was speaking not only of teachers but of doctrines when He said, "By their fruits ye shall know them," and during a ministry of over fifty years I have seen some most appalling fruit from this type of instruction. It is so far removed from the evangelical standards of Wheaton that I do not see how anyone could consistently give it out in class under the sanction of the College authorities.

On the other hand, may I say that I felt greatly drawn to you personally. Your frankness, your geniality, your gracious spirit as you responded to our questions made a deep impression on my mind, and I cannot but hope that you will see the unwisdom of giving out your present views if you are retained at Wheaton. I know that a number of parents are greatly distressed because of the effect the teaching has had on their children, whom they trust to Wheaton believing that they would return to them with the same ardent spirit that they had when they left home; instead of which they are now utterly indifferent to soul-winning and have faulty views of individual responsibility to God.

I remember many years ago, when my own soul was in deep exercise over the Scriptural presentation of Divine Sovereignty and Man's Responsibility, I felt myself inclined at one time to swing to hyper-Calvinism, and at another to a modified Arminianism, such as that taught by Finney. At that time there fell into my hands a pamphlet entitled "The Sovereignty of God in Salvation," by the late F. W. Grant, which was a greater help to me than anything I had ever seen up to that time, and to this ~~time~~ ^{day} my faith is anchored to the truth it presents. I hope you will not think me presumptuous if I ask you to read this article. It is still in print, but in a volume with many other essays on Scriptural subjects, and I am

G.H.C.

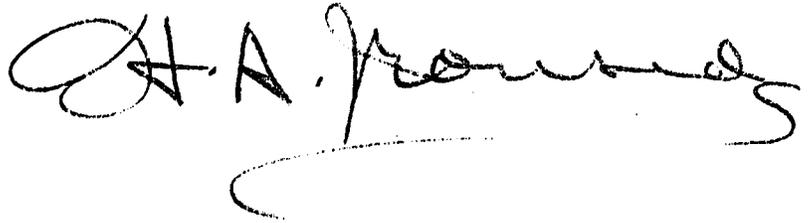
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July 3, 1942

asking the publishers to mail you a copy. The volume is entitled "Leaves from the Book," and you will find the article referred to on page 146.

I am not a philosopher. I am simply a plain preacher of the Gospel, but one who has throughout the years noted with some degree of care the effect of various systems upon the souls of those, particularly the young, who imbibe them, and I am convinced that extreme views on Sovereignty are hurtful and not helpful, at least in the majority of cases.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "H. A. Jones". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name "H. A. Jones".

HAI:ELD

Excerpts from a letter from Dr. Harry A. Ironside to Gordon H. Clark, dated July 3 1942; after a discussion of Election and Reprobation as given in the Westminster Confession, Art. III.

"Since our interview with you the other evening I have been much in prayer about the whole matter and have thought it over a great deal. It finally came down to this in my mind: Would I as a father want either a son or a daughter of mine to be exposed to the hyper-Calvinistic teaching to which you gave utterance? I certainly would not. I should feel I was trifling with the eternal interests of my child if I permitted it.

" . . . It is so far removed from the evangelical standards of Wheaton that I do not see how anyone could consistently give it out in class under the sanction of the College authorities.

" . . . I cannot but hope that you will see the unwisdom of giving out your present views if you are retained at Wheaton."

Copies to Rian, Rudolph,
L. M. Andrews.

610 Howard Street
Wheaton Illinois

July 11 1942

Dr. Harry A. Ironside
1609 N. La Salle Street
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Dr. Ironside,

Since I do not go to my mailbox in the College every day during the summer, there has been some delay in replying to your letter. In the meantime the book you so kindly sent, and for which I thank you, has arrived, and I have read the section you indicated and other sections also.

The author makes an attempt to combine Calvinism and Arminianism. But since the former insists on the necessity of the regeneration of the will (as well as of every other part of man), and since the latter allows some spiritual ability to remain despite the fall, I am unable to see how the two views can be reconciled. As to which view is correct, one of the decisive Scripture passages, in my opinion, is Romans 3:10 ff.

The day that your letter and book came, I also received the enclosed leaflet. Three of our ministers prepare it, and with the young people of our churches they distribute twenty to twenty-five thousand copies from door to door each month. The article on the front page contains a Scriptural reference more consonant with our Confession than is any view limiting God's sovereignty. Nor can I agree that the leaflet or the men lack evangelistic spirit.

There is one sentence in your letter which has implications that I am compelled to deny. Referring to my views you write, "It is so far removed from the evangelical standards of Wheaton that I do not see how anyone could consistently give it out in class under the sanction of the College authorities."

I am compelled, I say, to deny the implication of dishonesty contained, however unintentionally, in this sentence.

When I was first approached relative to the position I now hold, I made it perfectly clear that I was a Presbyterian and that I sincerely received and adopted the Westminster Confession. Moreover I read to the several men who interviewed me the third chapter of the Confession, which states exactly what you heard me state the other evening. The

doctrines of election and reprobation are nothing new; they have been subscribed to by all the reformed churches from the beginning. I must therefore positively affirm that I did not use subterfuge in obtaining my present position. Nor did I ever suppose that the articles of faith of the College were intended to exclude those who held the standard Presbyterian doctrines. Those articles, it seems to me, are intended to include several varieties of Evangelical Christianity.

I am not saying that you intended to imply that I was or am dishonest. In fact, after the other evening I do not see how such an idea could enter your mind. But under the present circumstances, since the words themselves might be so taken, I cannot let the sentence pass without entering a categorical denial.

Again let me thank you for your kindness and interest. If you have read the material I gave you the other evening, we can no doubt agree in prayer that God would lead the people of our nation and of the world to repentance and give them faith in Christ our Lord.

Very respectfully yours,

OFFICE OF THE PASTOR
THE MOODY MEMORIAL CHURCH
1609 N. LA SALLE STREET
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

July 13, 1942

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

My dear Dr. Clark:

Thank you for yours of the 11th. No, I certainly did not mean in any way to impugn your integrity when I wrote as I did, but I am thoroughly convinced that hyper-Calvinism is not consistent with a true evangelical attitude. Perhaps I should have used the word "evangelistic" rather than "evangelical."

I think the great trouble is trying to stress certain credal expressions. The Bible is neither Calvinistic nor Arminian. Men have drawn both types of teaching from it, but each by ignoring certain other lines of truth. I think it would be far better if we could forget human statements and keep to the book itself.

Sincerely in Christ,

W. A. Frowling

HAI:ELD

G. A. ANDREAS
RURAL ROUTE ONE
CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA

July 19, 1942

Dr. Gordon H. Clark
Wheaton College
Wheaton, Illinois

Dear Dr. Clark:

Thank you for your very elucidative letter regarding the situation at Wheaton relative to your department and yourself. I certainly do not blame you for looking for another school. But it would be a great loss to Wheaton if you were to leave, and do you really think you will find a school where there will not be opposition to your teaching on the part of the faculty?

Of course a Christian University is desirable and I wish you would please feel free to call on me if there is any way in which I could help in such a movement.

I have enjoyed receiving the tracts put out by the Christian Literature Association and understand they are written by yourself. Please accept the enclosed check for \$25.00 to aid in this work.

And by the way, this isn't even what might be called 'USA' money, for I have my letter in my pocket addressed to the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Waterloo. Maybe Lowell will decide to

G. A. ANDREAS
RURAL ROUTE ONE
CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA

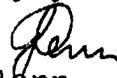
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go along with me when he gets back. Nothing in particular happened to cause me to make this decision. Just made up my mind that it was impossible for me to continue sinning against the Lord by remaining a member of the USA. And as long as there is no local congregation of the OPC the best I can do is join at Waterloo.

Some, if not all, of the elders were shocked a bit when I requested my letter. But I now feel that I am really in a position to say what I really think about the situation, and intend to do so. Rev. Blackstone and the elders for that matter are quite willing that I should remain active in the local aspects of the work of the Church so long, as I tell them, as there is no OPC Church in the city.

I pray that the Lord will lead you to make the right decisions with regard to your problems at Wheaton.

Sincerely yours,


Glenn

P.S. The figures you give for the enrollment in the Philosophy Department seem almost to make the contents of Dr. Edmun's letter to me shocking.

Church Announcements for Sunday, July 26, 1942

The College has no affiliation with any church in the community, but enjoys the fellowship and cooperation of the churches. Students are welcome to the regular services of the churches in the community.

During the year church announcements appear as paid advertisements in the Wheaton Record, and in view of the fact that this publication does not appear during the summer the churches listed take this opportunity of calling to the attention of the Summer School students the services for the coming Lord's Day.

United Gospel Tabernacle
Professor Merrill A. Tenney
Supply Pastor

11:00 A.M. Morning Worship -- "God's Suffering Servant"
7:00 P.M. Evening Worship -- "The All-Important 'If'"
sermons by the Pastor

College Church of Christ
Rev. Evan D. Welsh, Pastor

9:45 A.M. Bible School -- classes under excellent leadership
11:00 A.M. Morning Worship -- "The Intention of God"
sermon by Rev. Ed. Henry
6:00 P.M. Christian Comrades Club
7:00 P.M. Evening Service -- "Hath God Forsaken His People?"

Wheaton Bible Church
Rev. J. A. Macaulay, Pastor

9:45 A.M. Student Bible Class
11:00 A.M. Morning Worship -- sermon by Rev. John Linton,
Evangelist, Philadelphia, Pa.
5:30 P.M. Young People's Meeting on the lawn of the parsonage,
with refreshments. Speaker: Professor Merrill A. Tenney
7:00 P.M. Evening Service -- sermon by Rev. John Linton

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

August 19, 1942

Dr. G. H. Clark
The College

My dear Dr. Clark:

You will find enclosed a draft of the report to the Trustees from the committee which met with you early this summer. It has been suggested that a copy be submitted to you with the request that you let me know at your early convenience of any corrections which should be made of possible misconceptions of your position as revealed in the report. I shall greatly appreciate having word from you soon.

Very sincerely yours,

Y. R. Egan

E:h

Wheaton, Illinois
August 1942

To the Board of Trustees of Wheaton College:

This is submitted as the report of the Committee appointed at the June meeting to investigate certain questions which had arisen with respect to the teaching of Dr. Gordon H. Clark.

Your Committee met with Dr. Clark and conferred with him at length about the questions which had arisen and particularly as to his personal beliefs in certain theological doctrines.

We are glad that we can commend his frankness, and we do not question his scholarly attainments or the intellectual quality of his teaching.

In most respects we do not believe that his Christian beliefs would differ materially from those of others either of the faculty or of the trustees. However, he holds certain views, originating with John Calvin or with imitators of Calvin, which go beyond what we could endorse. He carries the truth that God is the original Being to the point where he frankly states that God is the author even of evil; and he identifies the sins which are committed with God's plan, to the point, as we understand him, of saying that God purposed that they should be committed. To his mind these views neither alleviate the guilt of the sinner nor the need and duty of preaching righteousness and salvation. This situation may be better understood if we quote a few particular beliefs which he holds:

God decrees one man to be a murderer, or adulterer, or an idiot.
God decrees some to heaven and some to hell.
God is emotionless, unmoved.
God's love is a manifestation of His will only, not of His affections (if any).
God never loved the non-elect.

Dr. Clark teaches some course or courses in which historic theological doctrines are reviewed. Obviously information as to the particular group of doctrines which we have mentioned must be included in such a course; and if Dr. Clark is asked as to his personal opinion, he cannot well avoid replying. We feel that his opinions, and doubtless the agitation of such views by certain groups of students, have led in certain cases to demoralizing deductions which Dr. Clark himself would deplore; for example, in the words of a former student: "Since God is the originator of everything, including sin, and He worketh in me both to will and do of His good pleasure, then my sins are not sins at all but merely the works of God in my life. Therefore I should not be too disturbed by my weaknesses."

To your Committee, the deductions are not entirely illogical, and the views themselves are unsound and for that reason dangerous. Some of your Committee feel that part of the error arises from an effort to expand, by human reason and deduction, the doctrine of the person of God beyond what is definitely taught in the Scripture; and that to attempt to directly refute such error, similarly might be to presume by human wisdom to develop doctrines

about God going beyond what He has seen fit to reveal to us.

We do not find that Dr. Clark's opinions differ materially from those which he frankly stated, and which were freely discussed, when he was employed six years ago. They may not be, in themselves, opinions the mere holding of which would disqualify him for permanent membership in our faculty; but we feel that if their active discussion cannot be avoided in teaching his present subjects, ultimately he should teach in other fields or plan for openings elsewhere.

We do not consider it feasible to fully solve this problem now, but in submitting this report to you and delivering a copy of it to Dr. Clark, we make these suggestions:

1. That to the largest extent possible he confine his teaching to the stated subjects, without advocating any theological beliefs which are controversial among orthodox Christians;

2. That if asked his personal opinion as to the group of doctrines in question, he be frank but state the belief rather than expounding his reasons, — being equally frank in admitting his susceptibility to error and that his views in this respect have not been those of most Christian leaders;

3. That he add that he by no means endorses deductions from such doctrines which have been made on such questions as personal responsibility for sin, the duty of missionary effort and evangelization, and the duty of seeking the guidance of the Spirit as to problems both of conduct and doctrine.

We find that the situation has been intensified by the promulgation of special theological doctrines by a voluntary group of students known as the Creed Club. Undoubtedly this group has regarded Dr. Clark as a sponsor, perhaps mistakenly so. They have met regularly in a room provided by the College for the use of student organizations.

We feel that Wheaton as an undenominational College should not be placed in the position of apparently fostering doctrines which would seem perverse to many groups of orthodox Christians, and that care should be taken to avoid loans of College facilities for such purposes.

The difficulties of the situation will be considered in making up class schedules for the current year. We suggest patience and prayer that these problems, difficult as they are, may be resolved in a manner that will be for the glory of the One for whose Kingdom the College exists.

Respectfully submitted,

Members of the Committee:

Mr. Fischer
Dr. Fuller
Dr. Ironside
Dr. McCarrell
Mr. Nicholas

(Signed) Herman A. Fischer
(Signed) V.R. Edman