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## Palmer Says "Go and Do"

Randall Palmer  
*Dordt College*

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tation and when they found they could sit no longer they would take a sixty-second break and jog around their work room. But that was only when the boss, Ed Palmer, wasn't around. You never knew when and where he'd turn up, so even that was risky.

The wives and children soon realized there was no turning the men from this sort of schedule. We left them to their commentaries and Hebrew texts and set out to explore Athens. Those who didn't know the Greek alphabet learned it quickly in order to read street signs. Try reading ΠΑΠΑΔΙΑΜΑΝΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ or ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟΥ from a bouncing bus!

The Acropolis was the place that kept drawing us back. Often we sat in the shadow of the Parthenon and just drank in the beauty of it all—the Propylaea, the Porch of the Maidens, and the graceful Temple of Athena Nike. Mars Hill was nearby, and all around lay the city, hemmed in by a semi-circle of mountains and the sea.

The week-end trips were planned with the interests of the men in mind, and included many archaeological excavations and the ruins of ancient temples and palaces. We visited Delphi, ancient Pella, the Temple of Athena on the island of

Aegina, the ruins of ancient palaces at Mycenae and Tyrins, and the palaces of Knossos and Minos on Crete. One six year old in the group had the opinion that if you've seen one ruin you've seen them all and wailed, "Are we going to visit another wreck?"

At ancient Corinth we stood at the place of judgment where Paul had stood before Gallio. We had stepped back into the eighteenth chapter of the book of Acts! Standing there in the blazing sun, our dusty feet in sandals, we even had a better appreciation of the New Testament passages which relate foot-washing to hospitality.

We worshipped with Greek Christians in Athens and came to know some of them well enough to exchange visits. One eventually asked if we realized we could attend English services in the area. We explained that we found real joy in meeting for worship with Greek people, in spite of the language problem. Our friend smiled and replied, "We like it that you worship with us. It tells us you love Greece and you love the Greek people." After nine and a half weeks in Athens, that rather well summed up our feelings!

by Mary Zinkand

## Palmer Says "Go and Do"

Dr. Edwin H. Palmer, executive secretary of the New International Version, told Dordt College and the Sioux Center community how to evaluate translations, why he thinks the Bible is errorless and how to combat secularism on the basis of the Bible.

A Christian Reformed minister from Wayne, N.J., Palmer delivered the three speeches for Dordt's Spiritual Emphasis Week October 27-29. While on campus he also lectured in many classes and spoke at chapel.

"I think it's important that we find out about a good translation. I find that people too often aren't concerned about details," he declared. "I believe it's important that we have a translation that we can depend on." Palmer postulated four questions to ask in evaluating a translation:

—Are the underlying Hebrew and Greek texts good?

—Is the translation itself accurate and dependable?

—Is the translation clear and idiomatic?

—Is the translation in good style?

For a man who is dedicating about 12 years to translate the Bible into English, it is not surprising that he clings to a high view of Scripture: "I believe that the Bible is the infallible, inspired Word of God, not only in the central core, but in every detail." He stated that even though salvation does not depend on whether Joseph and Mary actually fled into Egypt in Matthew 2, the story is still true. "The New Testament never criticizes the Old Testament," he said. "The New Testament says, 'This must come to pass, because it was written.'"

But only the letters that the authors wrote with their own hand are inspired and infallible, Palmer explained. "Peter did not say that the NIV and the NIV translators are infallible.... The holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit are the ones that were inspired." Verbal inspiration does not mean that the Bible was dictated, he said. "You read the Bible and you'll find the personalities all the way through. But what they wrote are actually God's words and are completely trustworthy." Palmer maintains, however, that "This view of verbal inspiration does not mean that the Bible is to be interpreted literally. Interpret the Bible in the way it was intended to be understood." He added that verbal inspiration does not mean that the order of events are necessarily to be taken in the order of events that they were found in the Bible. Sometimes the authors did not intend to

give a chronology but rather an account, for example, of Jesus' divinity, miracles and power. Verbal inspiration was for a redemptive purpose, he emphasized.

Palmer defined secularism as indifference to God in one or more areas of life, "neutralism" toward any or all areas of life, or autonomy from the Bible and God. He contrasted secularism to the Christian world-and-life view, which states that all of life is religion, rather than just Sunday worship services and Christian education; that either one is for God or against God—he cannot be neutral; and that Christianity pervades every area of life.

Palmer called the audience to work individually to control secularism, and also to form Christian organizations, such as Christian labor unions and Christian political action groups.

But he concluded, "We must learn to work together with non-Christians. This does not mean that we compromise our principles." He said that, working alongside of Jews and atheists, he and other Christians have won larger victories in the fight for government aid to independent schools and in the struggle against abortion. For four years he chaired the national Citizens for Educational Freedom, and he headed the New Jersey Right to Life Committee for several years.

"The Christian's obligation is not to become discouraged," he said, "but to go and do. Leave the results to God."

by Randall Palmer

## **First International Conference of Reformed Institutions for Higher Education**

At the invitation of the Christian University of Potchefstroom, one hundred twenty-two delegates and some fifty observers from nineteen countries and sixty institutions of advanced education met for

four days to discuss educational principles, exchange information concerning scholarship, pass resolutions for institutional interrelationships; and make plans for the second conference.