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May 27, 1954

Rev. Theodore Noe
3744 N. Park Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana

Dear Mr. Noe:

Martin Freeland has let me see the letter you sent out to those who were present at the meeting of the Kentucky-Tennessee presbytery on April 13th, and I have felt moved to express to you my opinion about some of its statements.

First, however, let me tell you how very happy I am about your statement regarding the Lord's blessing upon the meetings in Bristol. Surely nothing but our own lack of faith can prevent great things being accomplished for Christ! We must push forward and let Him use us in a mighty way.

Mr. Freeland felt quite discouraged and disheartened as a result of the discussion that he heard at the meeting, and these feelings were increased when he read your letter. It made him feel as if he were not wanted in our movement.

I can readily understand how these experiences would produce such an effect, and yet I do not altogether think that Mr. Freeland has correctly understood your letter. You have not so much criticized him as criticized the presbytery for rushing the examination through in too much of a hurry. As you said in your letter, it was quite unfair to the candidate, (especially after he had made the long trip to Bristol for the licensure examination) to try "to determine these things during a half-hour recess for lunch, or during a spot-check quiz on the floor of presbytery when time becomes a premium". It is impossible to get a fair idea of a candidate under these circumstances. Anyone who has had as much experience as I have in connection with examination of candidates in three different Presbyterian denominations, over a long period of years, becomes quite aware of the fact that some of the very best men make a rather poor impression in a rapid examination. Surely a man should be called before the committee in ample time that there would be full opportunity to put him at his ease and to secure a fair impression of what he knows, or else an effort should be made to secure information on major items through correspondence with men who have known the candidate over a period of years.