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MEDITATION

Abundance Of Rain

And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink: for there is a sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. etc.

1 Kings 18:41-46.

Get thee up!

O mighty king of Israel, get thee up, eat and drink!

There is reason now no longer to be dejected and to fast, for the theodicy has come, and the people of Israel have acknowledged that Jehovah, and not Baal, is God.

And to this theodicy belong blessings from heaven upon them that fear the Lord and acknowledge His Godhead, and confess His name. The judgment of the drought is past, and Jehovah will reveal Himself to His people by sending rain upon the land.

Get thee up, Ahab, for the sound of the people's shout that Jehovah is God is already followed by another sound, that of an abundance of rain!

Arise, eat and drink!

Participate in the rejoicing of this glorious day of judgment, o, sovereign of Israel!

Rejoice with thine own people, and join in with their shouts that Jehovah is God! Rejoice with them, as they take vengeance upon the powers of darkness and opposition to God's covenant, and slay the prophets of Baal at the brook Kishon! If, o king, it be impossible for thee to take the lead in these matters, as thou shouldest, at least turn with thy subjects away from the service of the dumb idol to the worship of the living God. . . .

Even though Carmel's victory is only apparent, even though the repentance and return of the people to Jehovah is merely external, yet, it belongs to the significance of this day, that thou, too, o king! be inspired by the zeal of thy people to prophesy with them:

Jehovah, He is God! Jehovah, He is God!

But at all events, rejoice, for there is a sound of abundance of rain!

Get thee up, then!

Eat and drink!

Apparently Ahab repented.

Not, indeed, with true sorrow after God, but, nevertheless, with the sorrow of the world, which, in outward show often resembles, even surpasses genuine repentance.

Between the two there is, in reality, a profound difference.

For the sorrow after God is rooted in the love of God, the sorrow of the world is a weed that springs from the root of self-love. The former is a sorrow that is concerned about sin itself, the latter is anxious about the evil consequences of sin. Sorrow after God is hatred of sin, sorrow of the world merely dreads sin's wages. He that is filled with the sorrow of true repentance cannot rest until he has received the assurance of forgiveness, and knows that he is once more the object of God's favor and lovingkindness; but worldly sorrow only seeks to escape the punishment, knowing nothing, and caring not at all, about the

sweetness of God's grace. Godly sorrow becomes manifest in a turning away from the path of sin, and in an earnest desire and endeavor to keep all the commandments of God; but the sorrow of the world is still love of darkness, and would indulge in the pleasure of sin without limit, if only it could do so with impunity.

Yet, as the tares resemble the wheat in the same field, and as the obnoxious weed usually is like the plant near which it grows, so to the eye of man, true and counterfeit repentance may, for a time, appear the same.

To all appearances Ahab repented on Carmel.

Subsequent history shows but too clearly that, although the revelation on Carmel made a profound impression on the wicked king, it did not move him to true repentance. When God's judgments are passed, Ahab returns to his evil ways. But how he could humble himself outwardly under the mighty hand of God! If he hoped that it might move the Lord to pity, and to turn His fierce wrath and judgments away from him, he did not hesitate to go in sackcloth and ashes! And the mighty revelation of Jehovah's glory on Mount Carmel, and that, too, as the climax of the terrible judgment of the drought that had ravaged the land, might well strike fear and terror into the heart of the wicked sovereign.

What a day it had been!

A day of the Lord!

The mighty power of the living God had been manifested, and the utter defeat of Baal and his representatives had been accomplished!

And the king had been witness of it all!

An attitude of humility he had assumed. It is true, the text does not inform us in so many words that he had repented, or even that he assumed an attitude of repentance. He had not taken an active part in the activities of the day. Rather does it appear that he kept himself aloof, taking the part, neither of the priests of Baal, nor of the lonely prophet of Jehovah, but silently awaiting the outcome of it all. When the fire had flashed from heaven upon the prayer of Elijah and had consumed the sacrifice completely, and the people had fallen on their faces shouting: "Jehovah, He is God!" the king had not been fired by their enthusiasm, nor joined in with their confession, but still retained the attitude of a silent witness.

And yet, both from his attitude, and from that of the prophet toward him, it would seem that the king humbled himself.

For, first of all, the words of the prophet addressed to the sovereign plainly suggest that the latter, as he witnessed the activities of the day, had sat upon the ground all day in an attitude of dejection and humility. What is more, it is evident from Elijah's exhortation to eat and drink that he had fasted all the day long. And whatever may have been his own reason for the

fast, certain it is that fasting was a form of humiliation and repentance. And so the prophet appears to interpret these signs. For he that had always been a messenger of wrath and judgment to the king, now assumes a kindly attitude toward him, invites him to arise, urges him to break his fast, and, what is more, brings him the message that the days of wrath and judgment are past, and that the Lord will send rain on the earth!

The wicked pride of the king appeared to be broken.

And tacitly he had confessed that Jehovah is God!

So much, at least, may be said for the king in connection with the slaying of the priests of Baal at the brook Kishon. It is true that this had been accomplished at the command of the prophet, and through the zeal of the moment evinced by the multitude that had been witness of the power and glory of Jehovah. Even in this, the king had taken no active part. Yet, it had been done with the sovereign's silent consent. This was but inevitable, unless he had interfered and protected the false prophets, Jezebel's favorites, against the zeal of the prophet and the wrath of the people. His, and not the prophet's, was the sword-power. To remain silent when the prophet commanded the people to slay the priests of Baal, was to consent to their death. Moreover, the fact that he had brought them to the mount at the command of the prophet, made him doubly responsible for their lives. Nor may it be said that the king was helpless against the enthusiasm and anger of the people, and over against the predominating power of the prophet, for it is hardly conceivable that he had gone to Carmel without some representation of his mighty men of war.

He had consented to their death.

And by this consent he had confessed that they were false prophets, that led the people of Israel astray, and who, therefore, according to the law of Moses, were worthy of death.

Outwardly the king repented, and had taken sides with the cause of the Lord.

And so the prophet explains the king's present attitude.

For not only does he speak kindly to him, and hold before him the promise of abundance of rain, but he prays that the anger of the Lord may be turned away, and that the heavens may be opened to bring rain upon the land.

He who, filled with the zeal for Jehovah's name and covenant, and with holy indignation at the iniquity of the king, had earnestly beseeched the Lord, in the wilds of Gilead, three years and a half ago, that the Lord might withhold the rain, now prays for the return of God's mercy upon the king and the people!

The victory of Carmel was, outwardly at least, complete!

The opposition was crushed!

The people had confessed that Jehovah is God alone!
And the king appeared humbled!

Fervent prayer of the righteous!

"And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees". . . .

Beautiful, God extolling prayer of the righteous!

For, even though the words of this prayer of the prophet on the top of Carmel are not recorded, we know that it was motivated by the zeal for the glory of the Lord, and that it aimed at the magnification of Jehovah's name before the king and all the people.

And what else is prayer?

What else can be its purpose than that the name of the Most High, Who is our Father for Christ's sake, may be sanctified and receive all the glory?

O, if rain and prosperity had been the object in view of the prophet when he went to the top of the mountain, and assumed an attitude of fervent prayer, it might have been judged a vain show. For was it not already certain that the Lord would send rain, even before the prophet went up to pray? Had not the word of the Lord come to the prophet, when he was still with the widow of Zarephath: "Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth"? And had not even now the prophet assured the king of Israel that already there was a sound of abundance of rain? Why, then, should the prophet ascend to the top of the mountain to beseech the Lord for that which had been surely promised, and which was even now approaching?

But the name of Jehovah must be acknowledged by His servant.

Even now, it must become manifest that Elijah is only a servant, and that it is Jehovah, before Whom he stands, that not only sent the drought, but Who also opens the windows of heaven to send rain upon the earth.

Hence, before the eyes of the king and of all the people, the prophet humbles himself and prays for the promised blessing.

Fervent and righteous is this prayer of the prophet. Fervent it is, as is indicated by the very posture of the servant of Jehovah, as he sits on the ground with his face between his knees, not because he feels that he must persuade the Lord by much speaking and urgent pleading to grant him his petition, but because he is wholly motivated by the zeal of Jehovah's name and cause, and is wholly absorbed, with all his heart and mind and soul, in the presence of the Most High. And righteous is his prayer, for, although it is, no doubt, a plea that the Lord may send abundance of rain upon the parched earth, it is not the rain, but the manifestation of the power and glory of the Lord that is the purpose of the prayer. And although we know

not the words of this prayer, we may well surmise that the plea was based on God's own Word and covenant, and that it brought into remembrance the people's repentance and acknowledgement that Jehovah is God alone, as well as the fact that He had accepted their sacrifice by fire from heaven.

And Jehovah hears and answers!

Rain He sends for His own Name's sake, in the way of His covenant, and for those that keep His commandments to do them!

For what else might be the meaning of the number seven in this connection? The prophet prays, and sends his servant to watch the heavens for the Lord's answer, but there is nothing. Six times he prays and sends his servant, and still there is no sign of rain. But when he returns the seventh time, the servant reports a cloud as a man's hand. And soon the heavens are black with clouds, and the rain descends in torrents.

In the way of His covenant Jehovah sends rain!

Blessing them indeed that fear His name!

And in answer to the prayer of the righteous that availeth much!

Beautiful prayer!

Marvelous sign!

In torrents of rain the prophet runs before the chariot of the king!

Through his servant the prophet had sent the message to Ahab urging him to prepare his chariot and to hasten away to Jezreel.

Then the hand of the Lord is strong upon His servant, so that he is able to overtake the speeding horses of the king's chariot, and run before them all the way to the gates of Jezreel, a distance of more than fourteen miles!

Nor is this a vain show.

For as it is in the strength of Jehovah that the prophet runs before the chariot of the king, it is the Lord Who here creates a sign, and through the sign delivers a last Word to the wicked sovereign.

Positively, it is a demonstration of the proper relation between the king of Israel and the prophet of Jehovah, between the throne and the law, between the scepter and the Word of Israel's God. That prophet must take the lead, and the king must follow; that law he must heed, and according to it he must rule; that Word of the Lord he must hear, and in its way he must walk. And in this light there was still much to do for the king. The revelation of Carmel must be followed up, the service of Baal must be rooted out, Jezebel must be killed. . . .

But woe unto the king, if he fails and returns to his wicked way!

For even as that prophet, so the Word of Jehovah runs very swiftly!

Never will he escape its terrible judgment!

Mighty Word!

H. H.

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EDITORIALS**Het Teeken Van Centralisatie**

Onze tijd staat in het teeken van centralisatie.

Als door eene onweerstaanbare stuwkracht voortgedreven beweegt alles zich in de richting van groote en machtige levens-centra, en in uiteindelijke zin in de richting van één groot wereld-centrum.

Deze centralizeerende beweging is een der meest opvallende en betekenende kenmerken van onzen tijd. Op all gebied des levens openbaart ze zich, grijpt ze om zich heen, zoodat de kleinere levens-centra worden opgezwolgen door de grootere, en er voor de eerste bijna geen plaats meer wordt gevonden. En deze beweging gaat voort, niet door eene opzettelijke poging en inspanning van den mensch, maar dikwijls in weerwil van allerlei pogingen om ze te stuiten. Dit laatste is vooral waar van de centralisatie beweging op staatkundig terrein. Er is eene andere, eene onzichtbare stuwkracht, die het geheele leven der gansche wereld hoe langer zoo meer en steeds sneller in deze richting drijft, eene hogere Hand, waartegen de mensch niets vermag.

Op alle gebied, van kapitaal en arbeid, van handel en nijverheid en landbouw, ziet men steeds grootere ondernemingen. De kleine handelsman heeft bijna geen plaats meer in de moderne maatschappij. Als hij poogt om alleen te blijven staan, is het hem schier onmogelijk zaken te doen. De industriele wereld heeft in de laatste jaren steeds machtiger machines en steeds grootere fabrieken met ongelooflijk groote productie capaciteit doen geboren worden. Niet alleen verdwijnt de kleine "shop" hoe langer zoo meer, maar ook beteekent de individueele arbeider of ambachtsman niet veel meer. En hetzelfde geldt reeds op het gebied van den landbouw. En tegenover deze groote ondernemingen en geweldige corporaties van werkgevers organiseert zich ook de arbeider in machtige unions, die ook al weer grootendeels staan onder de macht en invloed van enkele leiders. Denk maar aan John L. Lewis en zijne vereenigde mijnwerkers. En in den drang van al deze steeds grootere centra zoekende bewegingen blijft er voor persoonlijke vrijheid en persoonlijk initiatief niet veel ruimte over. In de wrijving van de vele grootmachten wordt de individu dood gedrukt!

Tegelijkertijd met deze centralizeerende bewegingen op de verschillende terreinen der maatschappij, komt er een soortgelijke drang en ontwikkeling tot openbaring op staatkundig gebied. Dat Nazisme en Fascisme den almachtigen Staat huldigen, wisten we reeds lang. Maar van dat ideaal moesten de gealli-

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erden, en moest vooral ons land niets hebben. Wij streven naar en houden hoog het ideaal der democratie. Volkssouvereiniteit is onze leuze. Eene regeering is immers "van het volk, door het volk, en voor het volk"! En ter verdediging en handhaving onzer vrijheden geven we immers in den tegenwoordigen wereldoorlog ons goed en ons bloed! En toch wordt ook ten onzent, in weerwil van al deze leuzen, en in weerwil ook van veler protest, de Staat steeds machtiger, en worden de vrijheden des volks steeds meer beperkt. En nu reeds worden koop en verkoop, de hoeveeligheid voedsel en de stijl der kleeding, de werkuren en werkloonen grootendeels door den Staat geregeld en bepaald.

Het is waar, de oorzaak hiervan en de noodzaak hiervoor ligt vooral in den oorlog, waarin wij met heel de wereld gewikkeld zijn. Zullen we den oorlog tot een goed einde brengen, dan kunnen we maar niet met onzen voorraad omslaan alsof er geen einde aan kan komen, en dan moet de regeering wel regelingen maken voor kapitaal en arbeid, voor productie en consumptie. En velen vleien zich met de gedachte, dat, als de oorlog maar eerst over is, alles wel spoedig weer zijn ouden gang zal gaan, en ten onzent de echte democratische levensvorm vanzelf terug zal keeren.

Doch ligt dat wel zoo voor de hand?

Zal dat wel zoo gemakkelijk gaan als men het zich voorstelt?

Zeg maar, dat wij straks de axis op de knieën brengen (en daar zijn we nog niet, en vóór het zoover komt, kunnen we nog wel heel wat moeten beleven en heel andere toestanden zien dan thans nog het geval is), zal het dan mogelijk zijn, dat de Staat van zijn tegenwoordige macht wordt beroofd? Is niet veeleer het tegendeel te verwachten? Is het niet nu reeds te berekenen, dat de problemen, waarvoor we als land en volk zullen staan, na den oorlog, veel grooter en geweldiger zullen zijn, dan die we thans trachten op te lossen door middel van een steeds machtiger Staat? Zullen we straks niet een hongerige en aan alles gebrek hebbende wereld moeten voorzien van allerlei levensmiddelen? En zal dat niet oorzaak worden, dat we ook in de toekomst en na den oorlog, voor een langen tijd althans, onze koop en verkoop zullen zien geregeld door de Staatsbonnetjes, waarmee we thans onze levensmiddelen moeten verkrijgen? En is eigenlijk wel ooit het economisch probleem opgelost? Is de tegenwoordige welvaart wel meer dan schijn? En zullen de problemen zich niet vermenigvuldigen, als straks de oorlogs-industrie wordt stop gezet, honderden duizenden onzer jonge mannen uit het leger in de maatschappij terug keeren en een plaats zoeken, en de nationale schuld wie weet hoeveel biljoenen bedraagt? En zal dat geen aanleiding worden tot grooter centralisatie vooral op staatkundig terrein, en tot meer Staatsbemoeiing met de problemen der maatschappij?

Ik ben overtuigd, dat zij, die zich inbeelden, dat na den oorlog de oude vormen en toestanden vanzelf wel

zullen terugkeeren, zich vleien met een valsche hoop.

Men kan nu eenmaal de klok der historie niet terug zetten.

Daar komt nog bij, dat de centralisatie beweging, waarvan we spreken, ook steeds meer een wereldverschijnsel wordt. Ook de volkeren worden gedwongen uit hun nationaal isolement te treden, en de problemen van het ééne volk zijn de problemen van alle volken. En door enkele mannen wordt het lot der volken beslist, door enkele machtigen worden de problemen der wereld opgelost.

Ontzettend klein is de wereld in de laatste jaren geworden. Afstanden zijn er niet meer. Toen Charles Lindbergh over den Atlantischen Oceaan was gevlogen, bracht heel de wereld hem hulde. Dat is slechts enkele jaren geleden. Thans doet men het dagelijks, en wordt het niet eens meer als iets bijzonders aangemerkt. En door de radio staan alle volken dagelijks in oogenblikkelijk verband en contact met elkaar. De wereld is bang-klein!

En het is heelemaal niet meer ondenkbaar, dat ook die volkerenwereld zich al meer en meer zal concentreren om één gouvernement of bestuursmacht.

Inderdaad, heel de wereld staat in het teken van centralisatie!

Onbewust of meer bewust, opzettelijk of in weerwil van alle pogingen om het te voorkomen, zoekt heel de wereld één machtig centrum, waarom alle volkeren, en alle maatschappelijke groepen zich kunnen bewegen, en waarin ze rust en vrede kunnen vinden.

En wel is het waar, dat op het oogenblik de wereld nog tegen zichzelf verdeeld is, en in twee machtige kampen uiteen geslagen ligt.

Maar temidden van het rumoer des oorlogs spreekt men reeds lang weer van de nieuwe wereldorde!

De volkomen gecentraliseerde wereld!

Ik sprak van het *teeken* van centralisatie.

Want metterdaad is deze centrum-zoekende stuwkracht in de wereld een opvallend teeken des tijds.

Een teeken, dat God werkt, en dat Hij Zijn Woord vervuld, ook in betrekking tot de dingen, die haast moeten geschieden, en ook ten opzichte van de tegenwoordige booze wereld.

Wie de Schrift kent en gelooft, zal dit niet alleen toestemmen, maar daarin ook zijn kracht en troost zoeken en vinden.

Hij ziet, dat de Stuwkracht der historie God zelf is, de opperste Potentaat der potentaten, Die Zijn eigen Koning gezalfd heeft over Sion, den berg Zijner heiligheid, en Die dien Koning ook reeds heeft verhoogd boven alle machten en overheden, in hemel of op aarde of in den afgrond, en nu door dien Koning alle dingen regeert naar Zijn welbehagen. En ook Hij

wil centralisatie, doch niet de centralisatie van den zondigen mensch, die buiten en tegenover God wil staan, en zelf de wereld wil redden, om haar te stellen in den dienst der zonde en des oversten van de macht der duisternis. Ook Hij wil centralisatie, en dat wel de centralisatie aller dingen, in hemel en op aarde, maar dan zoo, dat alle dingen in Christus, Die de openbaring en de Vertegenwoordiger is van den onzienlijken God, zullen zijn vereenigd, en door Hem zullen liggen aan Gods Verbonds-harte! Want alle dingen zijn de onze, en wij zijn van Christus, en Christus is Godes, opdat Hij zij alles en in allen!

Doch eer die volkomen, door Christus in God, gecentraliseerde wereld, het Koninkrijk van den Zoon van Gods liefde, in de nieuwe schepping in vollen glans en hemelsche heerlijkheid geopenbaard zal kunnen worden, moet de zondige Mensch, moet heel de zondige wereld onder den vorst der duisternis in haar poging om zonder en tegenover God eene wereld van vrede en geluk te scheppen, in de hopeloosheid en dwaasheid van zulk pogen geopenbaard worden. De zonde moet openbaar worden zonde te zijn. Ten einde toe!

En daartoe behoort ook, dat heel de wereld steeds meer door een geweldigen drang wordt bewogen om een wereld-centrum te zoeken, en zich te vereenigen.

God Zelf is daarvan de onzichtbare Stuwkracht.

En straks, wij weten het immers uit Zijn Woord, zal het die wereld ook voor een korten tijd gelukken, schijnbaar althans, om het ideaal van een groote wereldmacht, van welvaart en vrede, te realizeeren.

Dan is het de tijd van den Antichrist.

De eindelijke wereld-orde!

Doch God zal die wereld ook dat eind-ideaal voor een korten tijd doen bereiken, alleen opdat de goddeloosheid der zonde, en de dwaasheid en hopeloosheid der ongerechtigheid volkomen geopenbaard mag kunnen worden.

Want Babylon zal zeker verwoest worden. De wereld-zonder-God kan niet bestaan, verwoest altijd weer zichzelf. En God moet gerechtvaardigd worden in Zijn oordeel!

Met het oog op dit alles mogen we spreken van het teeken van centralisatie.

En met het oog op dat teeken, maar dan als *Gods teeken*, hebben we goeden moed.

Want wij zoeken niet deze wereld, die voorbij gaat. Maar wij verwachten nieuwe hemelen en eene nieuwe aarde, waarin gerechtigheid woont.

De voor eeuwig gecentraliseerde wereld!

H. H.

In heav'n, and earth, and air, and seas,
He executes his firm decrees;
And by his saints it stands confessed,
That what he does is ever best.

The Triple Knowledge

An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

PART TWO
OF MAN'S REDEMPTION

LORD'S DAY VII

Chapter II

The Nature Of Faith (cont.)

Saving faith, however, is also hearty confidence. The Catechism teaches us that true faith is not only a certain knowledge, "but also an assured confidence, which the Holy Ghost works by the gospel in my heart; that not only to others, but to me also remission of sin, everlasting righteousness and salvation, are freely given by God, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits." After the emphasis we placed upon the knowledge of faith as a spiritual apprehension of the God of our salvation in Christ, and of all the spiritual blessings in Him, it would seem that there is but little room left for this confidence as a distinct element of true, saving faith. And, indeed, the two elements of faith, knowledge and confidence, although they may be distinguished from each other, can never be separated as if they were two distinct spiritual dispositions, and two separate acts of the saved soul. They are two aspects of one and the same spiritual power, but faith is one, and the activity of saving faith is one. The reason for this is that the human soul, as the seat of life, is one, and the human personality is indivisible. One may distinguish various so-called faculties in the human soul, but these may never be presented as if they were separate powers or functions. Man is an intellectual-volitional being. He has a mind and a will. And from interaction of these two arise the emotions. But although we may distinguish in the soul of man the faculty of the intellect, and the faculty of volition, these two do not exist, nor ever act, apart from each other. There is never a mere or pure thought, a separate functioning of the intellect: all man's thinking is volitional and emotional thinking. Nor could there possibly be a pure act of volition, apart from the intellect: all man's willing is rational, intellectual willing. Man is one, and as one being, he lives a physical and psychical, an intellectual and volitional life. And all his actions involve all his powers and faculties, cooperating and interacting most intimately.

This may explain the reason why, when we speak of the elements of true faith, we can never speak of the one without, in part, also entering into a discus-

sion of the other. Faith is one. It is a spiritual *habitus*, disposition, function power and act of the entire soul of man, of his whole personality. Hence, there is never "pure" knowledge of faith without confidence; nor is there ever mere confidence without true knowledge. Knowledge without confidence would be blind, would have no object in which to trust, and would, therefore, be impossible. And so, when one defines the true spiritual knowledge of saving faith, he cannot avoid to speak of confidence at the same time. Nevertheless, the two may be distinguished. The knowledge of faith is strictly a spiritual disposition and act of the intellect, confidence belongs to the domain of the will. Knowledge presents to the believing soul the object of confidence, the God of our salvation in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures; confidence clings to that Object, and by the act of confidence the soul surrenders itself to, and wholly relies on Christ revealed. Confidence is the immediate result of the true knowledge of saving faith.

It is not true, as the answer of the Catechism would seem to suggest, that only the confidence of faith is wrought in our hearts by the Holy Ghost and through the gospel: this holds for the knowledge of faith as well. One dare not say that only the confidence of faith is *personal*, so that through its activity I come for the first time into a personal possession of the blessings of salvation: even by the knowledge of true faith I apprehend the God of my salvation in Christ as *my* God. The knowledge of faith as well as its confidence is assurance that my sins are forgiven me. But confidence is an act of friendship whereby I draw unto Him without fear, make known to Him the secrets of my heart, flee to Him for refuge in all my miseries, cast myself upon Him laying hold upon His promises, assured of His good will toward me, and of His power to save me to the uttermost. The knowledge of God's favorable attitude to me personally is the indispensable ground of confidence. I must be assured of someone's good will in regard to me before I can have confidence in him. A simple but good illustration of confidence is the squirrel that approaches me to be fed out of my hand in my backyard. At first it dared not come near me. As I would hold out my hand and show it the nut I intended to let it feast on, it would sit up straight, and in various ways reveal its eagerness for the delicious morsel I offered it, but it would remain at a safe distance. It was not assured of my good will. It feared that the delicacy in my hand might be a trap. I had to devise means to assure it of my real and honest intention to feed it, by throwing out bits of nut-meat, first at a safe distance, gradually a little closer in, till finally I had gained its full confidence, and it would approach me without fear to take the nut out of my hand.

Thus it is with the confidence of faith. The sinner is afraid of God. He looks upon God as his enemy.

And he has abundance of reasons to be filled with terror at the thought of God. Everything warns him that he should beware of the living God. For "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven," and in that consuming wrath he pines and dies. And his own conscience, i. e. the handwriting of God in his own moral consciousness, witnesses against him, and accuses him before the Judge of heaven and earth. God intends to kill him! God will for ever consume him in His fierce anger! Such is the testimony that reaches the sinner from every side, from without and from within. And, therefore, he is afraid of God, dreadfully afraid! He tries to hide himself, to cover his own nakedness before the face of God. He would flee far away from Him. But God assures that sinner of His eternal good will toward him. He reveals Himself to that sinner in the face of Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son. In the cross and resurrection of the Christ, and in His exaltation at the right hand of God, He reveals His exceeding great power to save to the uttermost, and His eternal good will and covenant friendship and love to the elect sinner. And He speaks of His boundless grace and mighty power unto salvation in the gospel. But this is not sufficient. A "general offer" is of no avail to fill the sinner with confidence in that God of Whom he is dreadfully afraid. It is not sufficient for him to know that God loves sinners: he must know "that not only to others, but also to him" personally, God is gracious and filled with eternal good will. And this "assured confidence" God works through the Holy Ghost by the gospel in the sinner's heart. It is the confidence of faith, and by it the sinner wholly casts himself upon the eternal mercies of the living God in Christ, expecting from Him every good thing.

The Catechism expresses the matter very correctly and beautifully, therefore, when it teaches us that this confidence of faith implies the assurance "that not only to others, but to me also, remission of sin, everlasting righteousness and salvation, are freely given by God, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits." Indeed, the sinner must know that his sins are blotted out, removed for ever, forgiven him freely, and that he is clothed with an everlasting righteousness, if he is to approach God with boldness and confidence. It is God's righteousness and his own sin that fill him with terror and that are an impassable barrier between God and himself. If he may be assured that there is forgiveness with God, that God justifies the ungodly, that the Judge of heaven and earth loves him as a redeemed and justified sinner, then, and then only, can he have boldness to enter into the sanctuary. The confidence of faith is assured of this. It is peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Even in the midst of this world, and while the sinner is still in the flesh and lies in the midst of death, the believing sinner has this peace and flees to

the God of his salvation for refuge. While all his experience in this world bears the testimony to him that he is a damnable sinner, by the strong confidence of faith he clings to the God of his salvation, assured that he is righteous. In the midst of death he lays hold upon life in Christ, and with fear of hell all about him he clings to the mighty God of his salvation, and looks forward to eternal salvation in heavenly glory. God is able to save. It is God's eternal purpose to save. And God knows how to save. Upon that God of perfect salvation the confidence of faith relies for time and eternity!

The question is often asked, in what sense, from what viewpoint the Christian defines true faith in its twenty first answer. Is our instructor speaking of the power of faith or of its activity? Does he have in mind the being or the well-being of saving faith? Yet, it appears rather plain that the Hiedelberger, at least in answer twenty one, is not thinking of this distinction, and is simply speaking of the activity of a conscious faith. This should be evident from the fact that it ascribes the work of faith to the Holy Ghost *through the gospel*. And it is not the power or *habitus*, but the activity of saving faith that is wrought in our hearts by the gospel. If the Catechism may at all be said to speak of faith as a power, it must be found in the twentieth answer where it speaks of those "who are ingrafted into him by a true faith." But in the answer to question twenty one it has in mind the activity of a conscious faith.

However, the distinction may be made between the gift or power of faith as such and its activity. Nor is the distinction merely one of scholastic interest. On the contrary, it has its practical importance and value. The conscious activity of saving faith is not always equally strong and clear; in fact, it is not always present in the life of the believer in this world. It may seem lost sometimes. And in the case of very small infants, who can have no contact with the gospel as yet, this activity of saving faith is not consciously present at all. But the gift and power of faith is always the same and can never be lost. It is present when, in the humdrum of our daily life, we are not conscious of spiritual things whatever, and seem to be wholly occupied with the things that are seen; or when, tempted by the allurements of the world and the evil inclinations of our own flesh, our soul appears to lose its hold upon Christ, and we are enveloped in spiritual darkness. And it is certainly present in those elect infants whom God regenerates from their mothers womb, and who know nothing of Christ and the Gospel, but who are saved by faith nevertheless. These too are ingrafted into Christ by a true faith. The distinction between the power and the activity of saving

faith, therefore, is rooted in experience, and is of practical importance for our life as believers in the world.

Faith is, first of all, a gift, a power, a spiritual *habitus*, a new disposition or aptitude to apprehend and appropriate Christ and all His benefits, the things which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." I Cor. 2:9. It is not another natural faculty of the soul, in addition to those of intellect and will. It is rather a new disposition of the entire soul, a spiritual aptitude which makes the whole soul of man, with mind and will and all the inclinations of the heart, peculiarly fit to apprehend spiritual things. It is the fitness to believe in distinction from the act of believing itself. Analogies of this distinction may be found in natural life. When a child is born it has all the faculties and powers and gifts it will ever have, even though they do not as yet actively function. The infant in the cradle has the faculty to think, to will, to perceive, to understand the world about him, to walk and to act in general, even though at that time it does not actually think and will, perceive and understand, speak and walk. If later in life the child develops into a great mathematician or skillful musician, this mathematical bent of mind or artistic tendency was not added to the child's talents after it was born, but they were all given with birth. The same may be said of saving faith. As a spiritual aptitude, it is given with our spiritual birth, i.e. in regeneration, while it develops into the conscious activity of believing only through contact with the gospel applied to the heart by the Spirit of Christ.

Now, it is about this *habitus* or spiritual aptitude of faith that we must make a few remarks. First of all, it may be said of this power or disposition of faith, as well as of active and conscious faith, that it is both knowledge and confidence. Only, as a power it is the *capability* to know, and *capability* to confide in the God of our salvation in Christ. Without this spiritual aptitude it is impossible for a man to believe in Christ. If a child is born blind he cannot be taught to see; if he is born dumb, he will never speak; if he is born deaf, the activity of hearing will never develop. The same is true spiritually. By nature the sinner is born blind and deaf and dumb with regard to spiritual things. As such no one can possibly teach him to see and hear and confess the God of his salvation in Christ. Even though you would instruct him in the knowledge of Christ from infancy, and preach the gospel to him all his life, there would never be any other response than that of contempt and rejection. For "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14. But when the power of faith is implanted in the heart, the sinner thereby re-

ceives the necessary aptitude to discern spiritual things: it is a power of spiritual knowledge and confidence.

Secondly, we may observe that this aptitude of saving faith may be and is implanted in the heart by the Holy Spirit regardless of age. It is wrought in the heart immediately by the Spirit of Christ, without the preaching of the gospel. Hence, the power of faith may be in the heart of the smallest infant as well as in the adult. And what is more, we may, no doubt, assume that in the sphere of the historical realization of God's covenant God usually gives this power of faith to the elect of the covenant in their infancy. For, not only does He continue His eternal covenant in the line of the generation of believers, but it is also His will that one generation of His people shall instruct the next in the things of the kingdom of heaven, and declare unto them the marvellous works of God. He places His people in the very sphere of the Church, where the Spirit of Christ operates, and the gospel is preached, from their infancy, in order that from earliest childhood they may become acquainted with the Word of God concerning their salvation. But why should the allwise God place His elect within the sphere of His covenant and of the preaching of the Word, as deaf and blind and dumb? He certainly would never do anything so incongruous. Although, then, we cannot establish a general rule in this matter, it is safe to say that *usually* God bestows the gift of the power of faith on His elect covenant children in their infancy. And it is in this confidence that the Church instructs the covenant seed, and preaches the gospel of Christ unto them as early as possible, that they may gradually become active believers, and appropriate Christ and all His benefits consciously.

Thirdly, we wish to remark that the activity of saving faith, as well as its *habitus* or power, is the fruit of the work of the Holy Ghost. It is true that the power of faith becomes active belief only through the gospel. Without that gospel, faith has no Christ to apprehend or cling to, and can, for that reason, never become active belief. But we must not make the mistake of presenting the matter of saving faith as if its *habitus* or power were implanted, wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, while its activity is caused by the gospel without the operation of the Holy Spirit. This is not true. Both, the power and the activity of faith, are wrought through the Spirit of Christ only. It is the Spirit that applies the preaching of the gospel to the heart of the sinner in whom the aptitude of faith was wrought, and it is, therefore, the Spirit of the Lord that calls and awakens the power of faith into the conscious activity of belief.

Finally, it may be said that this spiritual power or aptitude of faith can never be lost. As we have remarked above, the activity of saving faith may be

very weak at times, may seem to have died out and disappeared, so that we seem to have no hold on Christ and the precious promises of Christ, and the soul is enveloped in darkness. But the power of faith can never be lost. Once a believer is always a believer. But that this is true is not due to any inherent virtue in the aptitude of faith, but only to the abiding indwelling and continued operation of the Holy Spirit in the innermost recesses of our hearts. Without that Spirit, dwelling within us, saving faith could not exist and maintain itself even for a moment. But the Spirit never leaves us. The bond with Christ is never broken, because it is constantly preserved by His Spirit. And so, the ultimate ground of the statement that the power of faith is never lost, is the fact that faith is most absolutely a gift of God, which He bestows on the elect only. And "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Rom. 11:29. He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord!

H. H.

Moses As Mediator, A Type Of Christ

The mediatorship was an office in the church instituted by God. It was an office to which belonged the following duties: reconciling the people of Israel to God through a sacrifice by blood; praying for this people on the grounds of the merits of this sacrifice; blessing this people in God's name and thus bringing the virtue of the sacrifice in living connection with them; speaking to this people God's word and bringing them under its yoke. He who served this office was thus mediator of God and man. All the aforesaid duties formed his mediation. By virtue of his office, he occupied an intermediate position between God and man, the chosen people, and as the occupant of this position he formed the transit from God to man and from man to God.

We must guard against conceiving of the mediator of God's covenant after the image of mediators such as we find among men. There is no real agreement whatever. The mediator among men deals with parties mutually hostile. The mediator comes between to reconcile the contenders to each other, i. e. to prevail upon them to come together for the settlement of their disagreements and to forgive and forget. The mediator of God's covenant deals with a people—God's chosen people—by nature dead in sin and hateful of God; but with a God who was so far from hating this people that in His fathomless love He gave

His only begotten Son—the true mediator of God and of man—to stand in the breach and reconcile, through His atonement, this people to God. Thus the mediator, as God's gift, was the highest demonstration of the great love He bore His ill-deserving people.

In the light of the above observation it is plain that the ideal mediatorship was formed of the three fold office of prophet, priest, and king; and that all the prophets in Israel and all the priests and all the theocratic kings were mediators of God and of man be it that none performed all the duties that belonged to this office. Neither the prophet nor the king served the altar. If the view be taken that in the Old Testament Dispensation mediatorship consisted solely in bringing the sacrifices by blood and not also in the related actions of praying for the people, blessing them and speaking to them God's word, Moses, who brought not such sacrifices, was not a mediator. But he was mediator. As such he was even the greatest of them all. None ranked with him.

He excelled as prophet. Since his passing there arose in Israel not a prophet like him (Deut. 34:10). Wherein, then, did he differ? Firstly, "in all the signs and the wonders, which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt, and in all the great terrors which he shewed in the sight of all Israel," (Deut. 34:11,12) in a word, in all the great power that he shewed and experienced. He reigned in Egypt. Through his living faith he brought Pharaoh and all the Egyptian host at his feet.

As prophet, he differed, further, in this that to him the Lord spake mouth to mouth, even clearly and not in visions, dreams and dark speeches as He did to the others (Nu. 12:6, 7). What is more, to Moses, in distinction from others, it was given to behold the Lord's likeness (Nu. 12:7) by which is to be understood a superior revelation of God's virtues. Before him the Lord made all His goodness pass and declared to him His name.

Thirdly, in Moses' hand, in distinction from the hand of all the others, the law was ordained (Gal 3:19). It was he who received the law directly from God that he might give it to the people. In this legislation he was the middle person between God and the church of all ages.

Finally, since his passing there arose in Israel not a *priest* like him. When the people made them gods of gold and thereby committed a sin for which the animal sacrifices did not avail, he would have God blot him out of the book that He had written, would thus give his own life, that they might have life.

But however Moses excelled, he was but a shadow, a type of Christ, but then, certainly, a most excellent type. His mediation bears so plainly the impress of the features of the mediation of Christ.

Christ is God's deliverer. On the grounds of His

atonement He brings His people out of the house of a cruel bondage. So, too, Moses; he was God's deliverer. Through the Passover that he instituted, he redeemed the people of Israel from their sins and brought them out of Egypt.

Christ, as Moses, was a prophet mighty in word and deed.

Moses reigned in Egypt in the midst of His enemies. Christ reigns in the midst of His enemies and makes them His footstool.

As Moses revealed God's wrath over Pharaoh's sins, over his arrogance and wicked pride, and thereby saved his people, so does Christ bring down from Heaven the wrath of God in judgment over all unrighteousness of men that His kingdom may come and His people be saved.

With Christ God spake mouth to mouth. So, too, spake He with Moses.

Christ stood in the breach and appeased the anger of God against sin through the giving of His own life. There was present with Moses a readiness to be accursed from God for his people.

Through His intercession in heaven Christ turns away God's wrath, lest He destroy His people. Over and over did the people of Israel corrupt their way before God through sins that could not be atoned by animal sacrifices. Then Moses would pray for them; and his prayer always availed. It is especially on account of these prayers that his mediation reflects so much of the glory of the mediation of Christ.

Yet, for all this, Moses as mediator was but a shadow; for he was only a sinful man. Thus, he fell short of what a true mediator had to be. Of the signs and wonders that the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt, he was not the author. They were wrought by the wonder-working power of God in response to his faith. He could do all things but only through Jehovah with whom he reigned because he believed. Thus, his victory over the world as represented by Pharaoh was solely his faith. And his faith was God's gift.

The salvation which he wrought out was but a shadow.

His passover and all the sacrifices which he instituted were but shadows.

He gave to the people the law. But, he was only a *servant* in God's house, for a *testimony* of those things which were to be spoken after (Heb. 3:5). Hence, when as a result of the entering of the law, sin abounded, he stood helpless. All that he could do is complain to God. At times the rioting of sin in the people that God had placed in his charge so sorely vexed him, that he wished he were dead, as on the occasion of their lusting for flesh (Nu.11). "Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant?" He was saying this to the Lord, "And wherefore have I not found favor in thy sight, that thou layest this burden of

all the people upon me? Have I conceived of all this people? . . . And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in thy sight . . .”

Of all men he was the meekest,—of all *men*, mark you. There were limits to his meekness. For he was but a mere man, and a sinful man. He was short of that patience—that inexhaustible patience—that enabled the true Mediator to bear with His people in all their sin and weaknesses to the end. In Kadesh, where they came, there was no water for them. And after water they and their little ones now panted. For they had marched for long hours. They chode with Moses. Their speech was exceptionally hard; for they were in an evil mood. Moses’ wrath burned. “Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?” he said to them, as he stood there, smiting in his heat the rock to which he should have spoken. He felt as though he could no longer endure their murmurings. The insufferable rabble! Let them perish, go to perdition, one and all. Such were his reactions to their complainings on that occasion. There were limits to his patience indeed. He was not the Christ.

He was but a shadow. Attend to his praying for them. His prayers prevailed. They were heard. The anger of the Lord was turned but not on account of the virtue of any sacrifice that he could bring. His proposal that he be blotted out of God’s book for the sake of his sheep was rejected on the ground that, whereas he was innocent of their sin, his dying for them would collide with the justice of God. Whosoever hath sinned against God, him will He blot out of His book (Ex. 32:33). Such was the reply by which the Lord countered his proposal; for he was but a mere man.

He finally went the way of all flesh on the very borders of Canaan. He might not bring his people into the land, because he had not believed God, to sanctify Him in the eyes of the children of Israel,—he, of all men the meekest, a great saint. So, when the Lord told him that the time of his passing was at hand, he preached to them his farewell sermon, in which, with all the fervor of his great soul, he, for the last time now, admonished them to love and fear the Lord and to walk in the way of His commandments. His discourse merges into blessings for the tribes. He sings of the excellencies of Israel. He has said and is silent. His earthly career is ended. So he goes up from the plain of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo. The Lord is there, too. And He shows him all the land. “This is the land,” said the Lord to him, which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.” No, not thither, to that place, the earthy Canaan; but thither, to that heavenly country shall Moses go over. For he, too, died in faith,

not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and was persuaded of them, and embraced them and confessed that he was a stranger and pilgrim on the earth, and thereby declared that he sought a better country, that is, a heavenly. Wherefore God was not ashamed to be called his God: for He hath prepared for him a city.

“So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab. . . ; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. And Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died; his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.”

Moses was but a shadow. The true Mediator is Christ. With respect to Moses He stands in the relation of antitype; and this because, besides being very man, He is also very God. Being very God, He is the *true* lawgiver. He is the author of the law and the end of it. And He writes the law—His law—on the tables of men’s hearts and thus sets up His kingdom within them. When Christ said to the Father, “sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; . . . Lo, I come,” the Father did not counter with, “Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book,” but He approved. And He came, did Christ; and He presented His own body a living sacrifice to God on the cross. Through His obedience, He conquered all our foes; He conquered sin and death and hell; He conquered the world—man’s world, the world that lieth in darkness, whose name is blasphemy and whose prince is satan; the world that made war with the Lamb and that kills the saints and prophets; the world where stalks the curse of God. He trusted in God; and God delivered Him.

In distinction from Moses He could also with full propriety identify life—the heavenly life, which He merited for His own humanity and for His people—with His own person, which He did when He said, “I am (the resurrection and) the life.” Of this life He too, is creator as well as meritor. What is more, it dwells in His humanity, so that of *His* life we all receive. Thus, He is the true vine, i. e., the channel of life between God, the creator and fountain and His people the recipients of it, so that to be implanted in Him by a living faith is to have life. Without Him we can do nothing. He is the way and the truth because He is the life. No one has access to God except through Him. And in His face we see God. It is to this truth to which He gave expression, when He said, “And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me” (John 17:22, 23). So He prays now. So He prays everlastingly. He prays that through that Spirit the

Father—the triune Jehovah—be in Him as the fountain and creator of life—true life—and that of His, Christ's life we all receive now and forever. This is His mediation as the glorified priest in the sanctuary above. Also herein, He, in distinction from Moses, is the true mediator of God and of man.

So does He pray for His people, the house of God—the house in which Moses, however faithful in it was but a servant but of which Christ is the builder (Heb. 3:3). And as high priest He bears with His people in all their infirmities; for in all points He was tempted like as we are, yet without sin. And the love that He bears His own endureth; it endureth forever.

There is one more difference between Moses and Christ that we must notice. Moses reigned in Egypt. The Lord made him a God to Pharaoh (Ex. 7:1). Christ reigns in heaven and on the whole earth. He is Lord of all lords and king of all the kings that are seated on the thrones of man's kingdoms. As Moses, He too, does all things through God, because He believes. But more must be said of Him. Unlike Moses, Christ is the author of His own power and might, He being very God. Thus, He reigns also by His own might, by a might that originates with Him. It will not do to say of Him that, as compared with His enemies, among whom He must reign until they all be made His footstool, He is the stronger. There is no comparison here whatever. For our true mediator is almighty, with emphasis on the *all*. The might of His adversaries is *His* might. In Him, too, do they live and move and have their being. In all their wicked rioting, they are actually in His hand. He does with them according to His good pleasure. And all creatures are so in His hand, that without His will they cannot so much as move. Hence, we trust in Him also as in God.

That we must have Christ before us also in His essential divinity in the contemplation of Him as Mediator is plain from scriptures such as this, "And unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The prince of peace" (Isa. 8:6).

The mediation of Christ commenced with the entrance of sin and not before. Christ was not mediating for Adam before the latter's fall. It was not necessary that He should, the reasons being that Adam was an earthy man and that, being created in the image of God, he was without sin and guilt. Thus, he had no need of the Christ, of the Mediator, to stand in the breach and reconcile him to God through a cross; no need of the satisfaction and righteousness that God prepared for His people through Christ—a righteousness apart from the law—the imputed righteousness of Christ with which God clothes His own, so that, though in themselves guilty and con-

demnable, they stand before Him guiltless and righteous and thus participating in Christ's glory. In paradise, man lived as walking in the way of his own obedience. His righteousness before God was not the imputed works of a mediator but his own good works. The life that was his was communicated to him not indirectly though a channel of life, as is now the case with the redeemed of God, but directly. There was no Christ mediating for him through intercessory prayer.

Why did not this state of things continue? This question can be variously stated. Why did God make room for Christ the Mediator through sovereignly willing sin and through so arranging His providence that sin actually entered? The answer to this question we discover in the following scriptures.

"Beloved. . . it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:5).

"The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Cor. 15:47-49).

"And having made peace through the blood of the cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, by him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven" (Col. 1:20).

It takes Christ, the Lord from Heaven, to show us God as He is. Not the first man but Christ only bears, can bear, the image of the heavenly, as He is the Lord *from Heaven*. Hence, it is only through Christ that the chosen of God come, can possibly come, into the possession of the heavenly glory. And it is only by this same Lord—the Lord from heaven—that things in earth and things in heaven can be reconciled unto God. This must be the implication of these scriptures. If not, the terrible cross of Christ was utterly superfluous. And this certainly cannot be. It is certainly a serious blunder to maintain that if the first man would have remained standing, God would have crowned his obedience with the glory that is now the portion of His people through Christ.

G. M. O.

Jesus, my Lord, I look to Thee;
Where else can helpless sinners go?
Thy boundless love shall set me free
From all my wretchedness and woe.

Anselm's "Cur Deus Homo" And The Heidelberg Catechism

A brief explanation of the subject may be of benefit to the reader for the correct understanding of the issue involved.

"Cur Deus Homo" is the title of a theological treatise from the pen of (St.) Anselm of Canterbury. He is considered one of the most eminent of the English prelates, and the father of medieval scholasticism. He was born in Italy in the year 1033 and he died April 21, 1109 at Canterbury, England. He thus attained the age of 76 years.

The above-mentioned work of Anselm was begun by him in England. He writes in the "preface" on this work that this work was begun "in great tribulation of heart, the origin and reason of which are known to God." It was completed at Schiavi, a mountain village in Apulia, where he enjoyed a few months rest in 1098.

In the already mentioned "preface" the author gives a brief synopsis on the scope and intent of his treatise. As the title expresses, it is an attempt to show *why God became man to bring man to bliss and salvation*. After pointing out that the work consists of two parts, Anselm has the following to say: "The first contains the objections of infidels, who despise the christian faith *because they deem it contrary to reason*: and also the *reply of believers* and in fine, leaving Christ out of view (as if nothing had ever been known of him) it proves, by absolute reasons, the impossibility that any man should be saved without Him. And again the second book, *likewise as if nothing were known of Christ*, it is moreover shown by *plain reasoning* and fact that human nature was ordained for this purpose viz. that every man should enjoy a happy immortality, both in body and in soul; and that it was necessary that this design for which man was made should be fulfilled, but that it could not be fulfilled *unless God became man*, and unless all things were to take place which we hold with regard to Christ." (I underscore G. L.)

The importance of the above-quotation from the "preface" of "Cur Deus Homo" cannot easily be over-evaluated. This is evident from the following remark of the author incorporated in the "preface" itself. We quote: "I request all who may wish to copy this book to prefix this brief preface, with the heads of the whole book, at its commencement; so that into whosoever hands it may fall, as he looks on the face of it, there may be nothing in the whole body of the work which shall escape his notice."

Since no one would be able to give a clearer account of the intention of the author than the author himself, we feel we do him justice and the reader a

favor in having written this brief account.

Two matters the author sets forward in bold relief in the part we quoted. 1. That the *end* in view, the *purpose* is twofold. Negatively to stop the mouth of unbelieving infidels, who mock the Truth because it is not *reasonable*. And positively to demonstrate that the Incarnate Word is the only possible way for man to be redeemed. 2. The *method* to be employed is. a. Leaving Christ out of view as though nothing were known or revealed concerning Him. b. Therefore employ "absolute reasons."

Now, what has this to do with the Heidelberg Catechism, What is the comparison or relationship involved in the superscription of this essay?

Permit us just a word about the Heidelberg Catechism as such. The Heidelberg Catechism is an attempt at systematizing the revealed Truth of God. Its purpose is not polemical in the first instance, neither is it to be considered to lie in the field of theological apologetics, but it is a practical Manual (hand-book) to teach the children of the Covenant in the faith of the fathers. It embodies the truth of Holy Writ from the viewpoint of the "Only comfort in life and death." The answers to the questions are taken from Scripture directly or indirectly by logical inference.

However, there are a few questions and answers which *might* seem to be an *exception to this method*. We refer to the questions 12-18 of this reformed symbol. At least the *form* in which the questions are put might seem to indicate this. We refer, of course to: (Ques. 15) "What sort of a mediator and deliverer must we seek for?" (Ques. 16) "Why must He be man and also perfectly righteous?" (Ques. 17) "Why must He in one person also be very God?"

What we are particularly interested in, in this comparison of these two documents, is the *method* employed in both. Is the method of the Heidelberg Catechism, in the particular questions quoted, that of Anselm in his "Cur Deus Homo"?

The writer of these lines first became interested in this problem while preparing his expositions of the Lord's Days V, VI of the Catechism. Particularly this was due to the fact first that at that time he was studying medieval philosophy and scholastic theology, of which the latter, Anselm is considered the father. The writer's interest in this question was further accentuated in his taking knowledge of the against scholastic theology of Dr. Luther in the Ninety Nine Theses. And it seemed to him that he detected some of the scholastic methodology in these questions. One has to preach two entire sermons before he finally can say: this mediator is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ! The reasoning seemed rather abstract to me at that time.

Since that time, I learned that others have thought to observe the same matter. As recently as April 1940 (Ds.) H. Kakes wrote an article touching this very question in the "Gereformeerd Theologisch Tijdschrift" under the heading "Over Method En Oorsprong Van De Vragen 12-18 Van De Heidelbergsche Catechismus." According to Kakes it was Dr. J. I. Doedes who already in 1881 had objections against this "*in abstracto* beschouwen van den Middelaar en verlosser dien wij noodig hebben." Dr. August Lang in a treatise on the Heidelberg Catechism had criticism of a similar nature. He counts this "part without doubt to be the weakest of the whole Heidelberg-er." Dr. P. Seinenga in his book report on Knap's exposition of the Catechism speaks of this part as having its principle via Anselm in Aristotle.

Possibly to be able to give a fair judgment of this important and fundamental question we should attempt an answer to two questions. The first is: How must we judge of the method of Anselm? and the second: Is the method of Ursinus and Olevianus (compilers of the Catechism) that of this English prelate?

There can be no doubt but what the method advocated by Anselm and which he himself superscribed above his "Cur Deus Homo" is that of rationalism. He wishes to meet the infidel on his own ground in the arena of reason and there subdue him. Attend to the following once more: "And in fine, leaving Christ out of view (as if nothing had ever been known of Him) by absolute reasons" he wishes to stop the mouth of unbelievers and mockers! This can only mean that Anselm wished enter the field of apologetics (book one) with a method based on human reasoning, owing all its truth to the self-evidence of its principle and the accuracy of its deductions, reaching an accord with faith spontaneously and without having to deviate in any way from its own proper path.

It may be argued that Anselm did not strictly adhere to this principle. That he in the last analysis accepted God's Word as the criterion of faith and conduct. And indeed many scholars are of this opinion. Thus Dr. H. Bavinck in his Gereformeerd Dogmatiek says: "Anselm lived in the naive confidence that faith can be exalted to knowledge and attempts this. . . for the incarnation and satisfaction in his Cur Deus Homo" Dr. A. Kuyper contends that Anselm declared the dualism between faith and reasoning consciousness to be untenable; but only to think into it for his heart. Page 96 "Christelijke Encyclopaedie." With this agrees substantially the appraisal of Etienne Gilson in his "The Spirit Of Medieval Philosophy" page 6. "Doubtless a fundamental difference remains between such a neo-scholastic and a pure rationalist. (Thomas Aquinas is considered such neo-scholastic by the writers G. L.) For the former the faith is always there and any conflict between his faith and his philosophy is a sure sign of philosophical error. When such a con-

flict declares itself he must reexamine his principles and check his conclusions until he discovers the mistakes that vitiates them. If, however, even then he fails to come to an understanding with the rationalist it is not for lack of speaking the same language. Never will he commit the unpardonable error of St. Augustine or a St. Anselm, and, when asked for proofs of the existence of God, invite us first of all to believe in God. If his philosophy is true, it is solely in virtue of its own rational evidence; if he fails to convince his opponent it would be lack of candor on his part to appeal to his faith for his justification, and this not merely because his opponent does not share his faith because the truth of his philosophy in no wise depends on his faith."

This latter quotation is of interest to us, for it may be considered a rather clear statement of the application of the method advocated by Anselm in the preface of his Cur Deus Homo. Anselm may not have gone this far, but it is the consistent application of his method. It was in Aquinas that this *method* found its clearest expression.

We are now placed before the question: Is this scholastic method that of the Questions 12-18 of the Heidelberg Catechism?

It would almost seem that, in the light of the foregoing observations, to ask this question is to answer it. But to call attention to this matter, and to point out that the very opposite is the case can do no harm.

Question 19 asks: Whence knowest thou this? (that we need the Mediator and Savior spoken of in Questions 12-18). And the answer: For self-evident, rationalistic principles? No! We know this from the holy gospel. . . .!

And when we look at the answers given under the question quoted above from this reformed symbol we see that all the answers are scriptural. It is not scholastic to ask "why" as long as we seek the answer in the revelation of God. And the latter is the method of the Heidelberg Catechism.

The arrangement of these questions when taken by themselves may have the semblance of the Anselmian method, and could with benefit be arranged differently as suggested by Ds. H. Kakes. But that would be a matter of pedagogy and not of principle! Whether the "why" and "what" of the Heidelberger reflects somewhat in a purely formal manner the "why" and "what" of the scholastics is a matter of lesser importance. As was said we are interested in the *principle* not in the *form*.

A few remarks on the general nature of this subject and some of the problems it has bearing on are in conclusion, we feel, in order.

That the method of "Cur Deus Homo" is disastrous

for Christian thinking the history of scholastic theology has abundantly demonstrated. When once, be it in the name of theology one meets the rationalist on his rationalistic ground, it is not possible to defeat him. There is apparently no compromise between "faith" and "rationalistic reasoning".

To say that revealed truths do not contradict each other is one thing; to say that "absolute reasoning" and the revelation of God do not conflict is something quite different. The former is the position of the Protestant Reformed Churches, the latter of the scholastic tradition. The stand of the Protestant Reformed Churches is that of the first sons of the Reformation as it comes to expression in the Heidelberg Catechism.

This does not mean that we must confine our thinking to mere Biblical terms. Legitimate reasoning is allowed; by which we mean: taking both major and minor premises from the Word of God. Theology is a science, not proceeding from philosophic terms and principles, but proceeding from its own principles! It follows the dictum: I have believed, therefore do I speak!

If Anselm says matters, reaches conclusions in his "Cur Deus Homo" in his dialectic method, which also are taught in the Bible, it demonstrates that one, after having been instructed in the scriptures and having there seen the Christ, can no longer "leave Christ out of view, as if nothing had ever been known of Him, and prove by absolute reasons the impossibility of any man being saved without Him." Psychologically he can no longer place himself in the place of the Greek Philosophers who reason from self-positing *apriori*. (Self-evident propositions)

Christ Himself the light of the world, did not come to reason with men, but to reveal God, Whom no man can see or has ever seen. He came to reveal the Father, and to testify of Him. Here no possibility of compromise is left. It is faith-salvation, or unbelief-damnation!

G. L.

The Similarity Of The Synoptic Gospels

The term Synoptic Gospels is used in reference to the first three Gospels of the New Testament in distinction from the Gospel according to John which is not included in this group. The word synoptic means literally to view together, from the Latin *syn* — together, and *opsis* — view, referring to the fact that the three evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke, view the earthly life and ministry of Jesus from a very similar aspect, as it were, from the same vantage point.

Any attentive reader will soon note that there is marked difference between the Gospel written by John and the other three, even though it is true that together they form the one Gospel of Jesus Christ, the glad tidings of the revelation of the Son of God in the flesh. They all have this in common that they make no attempt at a biography, which would be quite impossible of the life of the incarnate Word, but show that in His birth, ministry, suffering, death and resurrection He is powerfully proven to be the Son of God, the Christ of the Scriptures. They all follow, to a greater or lesser extent, the chronological order of events in their natural setting, tracing the course of Jesus' walk and ministry from place to place, often from day to day, and even sometimes from hour to hour as He accomplishes His work here on earth. They all stress the closing scenes of His life, particularly His final suffering, death and resurrection. But John distinguishes himself from the other three by limiting his account almost entirely to Jesus' ministry in the environs of Jerusalem. The only exceptions to this are found in chapters 1, part of 2, 4 and 6, where he describes the witness of John the Baptist in the wilderness, the wedding at Cana, the meeting with the Samaritan woman and the rejection at Capernaum. In the rest of his Gospel he holds himself mainly to the ministry in Jerusalem, mentioning only seven miracles and laying much emphasis on various disputes with the Pharisees and his discourses either in the audience of the people or in the more restricted sphere of his disciples.

This difference between John's Gospel and the other three only tends to accentuate the similarity between the Synoptics. So evident is this similarity that many "harmonies of the Synoptics" are obtainable, in which the three Gospels are placed side by side to show the similarity between them. Thus comparing them we note that Matthew will frequently give an account of the same event recorded by Mark, and Luke's account will often compare with that of Matthew or Mark, while no less than fifty passages can be placed side by side which are found in all three

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of the Gospels. But even the form in which these accounts are written and the expressions used are often so very much alike that the conclusion is readily drawn that the one writer had taken cognizance of the manuscript of the other before he wrote. But even that does not account for the underlying harmony that is evident in these Synoptic Gospels.

This, of course, in no way destroys the difference in style, viewpoint and purpose of each individual writer.

Matthew writes as Matthew, Mark as Mark and Luke as Luke, so that the three Gospels each bear the earmarks of that particular writer. Matthew wrote chiefly for the Jewish Christians, to whom he presents Jesus as the Messiah promised by the prophets of old. Repeatedly, and no less than twelve times throughout his Gospel, he states that a thing is come to pass that it might be fulfilled as was written in one of the Old Testament Scriptures. For that reason he also lays much emphasis on the teachings of Jesus, supplying us with an account of the Sermon on the mount and many parables.

The Gospel according to Mark is the briefest of the three, and was probably the first to be written. It is sometimes thought that Mark gained his information direct from Peter, with whom he is supposed to have been in contact for some time. However this may be, he deals mainly with the works of Jesus during His earthly ministry, beginning at once with the ministry of John the Baptist. Mark emphasizes that Jesus is the promised King Who is come in great power and is gone on into glory.

Luke follows far more closely the chronological order of events than the other two, but also lays much stress on the teachings of Jesus. In distinction from Matthew, who wrote for the Jewish Christians, Luke seems to have written his Gospel for those who spoke and read the Greek. His particular viewpoint is that the Son of Man came to save the lost, and may be expressed in the words of Jesus to the travelers to Emmaus on the day of the resurrection, "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" Luke 24:26.

Even with these differences in the similarity of the Synoptics has always aroused a great deal of attention. Many attempts have been made to account for this amazing similarity, and yet even today many refer to it as the synoptic problem that has as yet found no solution.

Various theories have been suggested. There are those who assume that the three evangelists all drew their material from a common source, possibly from oral tradition carried to them from the mouths of eye-witnesses and disciples of Jesus. Others assume that two of the writers made use of an earlier Gospel written by the third. Although there is by no means a unanimity of opinion on this score, it is most com-

monly accepted that Mark must have been the source used by the other two. And still others prefer to think that there were still other sources, unknown to us, but to which all three writers had free access.

The trouble with all these theories is that they are mere assumptions with little or no basis in the Scriptures. Scripture itself is not particularly anxious to satisfy our curiosity in this matter. We do know that not one of the writers ever refers to the others, nor do they give any definite assurance that they had knowledge of either of the other two Gospels. In fact the only clue that we have as to the possible sources used by the evangelists is found in the first four verses of the Gospel according to Luke, "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first to write unto thee, in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed."

The expression 'having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first', can also be translated as 'having made a diligent investigation anew, or, from the beginning of all things', as the Dutch has: "Hebbende alles van voren aan naarstiglijk onderzocht". Since Luke had knowledge of other writings, in fact, of many other declarations from eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word, it is possible that he investigated these writings as well as the oral statements of those who had seen and knew. And this may likewise have been true of the other evangelists. The possibility is not even excluded that either Matthew or Luke, or both, made use of Mark's Gospel in writing their own. But this is certain that it is of no essential value for us to know this, for God has not deemed it necessary to reveal it to us.

John Calvin makes the very pointed remark in connection with the authorship of the Gospel of Mark, "But on this subject we need not give ourselves much trouble, for it is of little importance to us, provided only we believe that he is a properly qualified and divinely appointed witness, who committed nothing to writing but as the Holy Spirit directed him and guided his pen." And in regard to the differences and similarities in the three Gospels he adds: "For we will not say that the diversity which we perceive in the three evangelists was the object of express arrangement, but as they intended to give an honest narrative of what they knew to be certain and undoubted, each followed that method which he reckoned best. Now as this did not happen by chance, but by the direction of Divine Providence, so under this diversity in the manner of writing the Holy Spirit suggested to them an astonishing harmony, which

would almost be sufficient of itself to secure credit to them, if there were not other and stronger evidences to support their authority." (Harmony of Matthew, Mark and Luke, pp. 38, 39).

That is the one important fact that is often lost sight of, that all these Gospels have a common Author in the Holy Spirit who enlightened and guided these holy men to infallibly write the Word of God. They wrote concerning those things "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life," but they wrote only as the Spirit directed them, even to the smallest detail. Therefore there is always the personal earmark of the evangelist, who is a qualified and divinely appointed writer of his Gospel and has obtained first hand information concerning the things he writes, but behind him stands the Holy Spirit, Whose signature stands out plainest on every page of Holy Writ. That accounts for the fact that the Gospels present no biography written by mere man concerning a man, but contain nothing less than the revelation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Lord. And there lies the real cause for the amazing similarity that we find in the synoptics.

And that we accept in faith.

For the believer a comparative study of the synoptic Gospels can have but one result. We are impressed with the certainty of those things "which are most surely believed among us", as also God Himself assures us that in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. But we are even more impressed with the fact that God has given us an infallible testimony of the work and ministry of Christ, such as God only could give us. And the synoptics, instead of overlapping, serve together with both their diversity and their similarity to present to us the one Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the power of God unto our salvation.

C. H.

Most gracious Father, God of all,
To thee we come, on thee we call,
By whom both man and beast are fed:
Give us this day our daily bread.

All our supplies on thee depend,
Whate'er we need in mercy send;
Thou art the glorious fountain-head,
Give us this day our daily bread.

Nothing, O Lord do we deserve,
The thought of merit we would dread;
'Tis as an alms alone we crave,
Give us this day our daily bread.

Church And State

The importance of this problem is immediately evident to anyone who scans the History of the New Dispensation and recalls the struggle of Pope and Emperor, the question of Calvin and Servetus. The long discussions surrounding Article 36 of our Netherland Confession, and the attempt of Dutch Christian groups to work out a Christian polity and state. And for a very concrete instance of the importance we can look at the Russia, Germany and Japan of today, and not to relax our vigil, the America of tomorrow.

In considering a problem such as this, one often feels the question come up, whether we are intended to have a solution. Does Scripture intend that we should have in this dispensation of crooked and perverse generations, in the midst of sin and abnormalities and ending in a cataclysm of judgment, a solution for these problems.

There are, indeed, Christians who from out of the church take the practical, unreflective attitude that we cannot do anything, we just live along, are dragged along, and the less one has to do with the entire life of the State the better. Here the tendency is to reject the creature because of the sin that has affected it.

On the other hand are the rather blind idealists, who always believe that we are advancing, with these institutions to a more ideal condition, and immediately embrace anything that seems to contribute momentarily to that pleasant prospect, regardless of its ethical quality.

The one throws away nature with sin; the other embraces sin with nature.

We can immediately establish that they are two entities clearly taught in Scripture, and any denial of either the State (Anabaptists, and the modern dialectic theologians) or the church (conventicles and sects, who deny the institute, or Modernist who deny the organism) is an ignoring of the Scriptural relations of nature to sin and grace.

Now we can conceive the relation of these two in several ways.

First, according to their essence as: 1. Unrelated, 2. Co-ordinate, 3. Church subordinate, 4. State subordinate.

Now it seems advisable to learn the essential being of both and thereupon their historic embodiment in order if possible to determine the mutual relation, if any. And though the order of their arising might suggest that we speak of the State first, yet it seems advisable to look first at the church as being most easily defined, thus giving us something of a guide in formulating the more difficult.

The Church we can define as the Mystical body of Christ, i.e. the organism of elect humanity in and

through which He lives and manifests His eternal life of righteousness, holiness, love, etc., and this church we can view from three aspects, viz., the church invisible, the church visible in its extra-institutional life and the church visible as institute.

With the church as instituted we have now especially to do, and know that the nature of this institution is determined organically by the manner in which the mystical life of Christ would come to manifestation and in accord with this by the Word and precepts of Christ and the Apostles. So arising and guided she is the bond and mother of the believers in the world, and provides all necessary means for the profession of faith, in word and deed, the teaching, the discipline, and the ministry of mercy.

In this God-ordained function it has sovereign competency and recognizes no other authority than the Word of Christ.

Coming now to the definition of the State we face difficulties. For although their formal organizations have so much in common that they are easily conceived of and also often talked of as almost twin institutions, yet when we seek their essence we are forced to ask wherein they are alike.

First of all we lack the definite advantage which we had in the case of the church, viz., that there was a concrete essence, which we could grasp and which was determinative for the institute, i.e., the living Christ, and further we lack that same full Scriptural material.

We stand before the questions: What is its idea, what is its purpose, wherein is it founded?

Now in struggling with this question, Christian theologians and statesmen have usually asked the question, what is its origin? Dr. A. Kuyper, who has written several works on *Staatkunde*, strongly advocates that the state has come to existence because of sin. Household and family relations (*gezin en familie*) arise out of creation but the state does not come up out of creation and would not be except for sin, but is mechanically added. And he asks the very reasonable question: What would be the task of the state if there were no sin, remembering of course that the proper task of the state lies in the realm of equity.

On the other hand, however, there are other considerations that would induce us to seek its origin in creation. 1. We may point to the world of angels, which, though it has no sin, yet is according to Scripture well organized in ranks and authorities; 2. We may point to the family before sin entered, where we have the authority of the man over the wife, and over the creatures; 3. There is no doubt that the great similarity between the term used to picture the nature and relations, in the kingdom of Heaven and the kingdoms of earth is found in an underlying likeness, and abiding element; 4. But not least is the utter lack of an explanation how such an institution could

be introduced after the "beginnings".

Scripture does not tell us of any such act of God after the fall, and if we conceive of the word-revelation given to Noah as the founding of the state we must remember that it is not a creative word, such as those words and blessings of the six creative days. And if we consider it a command we must ask, how, besides the obedient church, also the disobedient world came to assume that command and lived according to it ever after.

We may regret that Dr. Dooyeweerd (*Wijsb. der Wetsidee*, Vol. III) did not enter upon this problem, which he apparently considered outside the province of his studies on *Structuren der Tijdelijke Mensche-lijke Samenlevensbanden*, although he adopts in principle the view-point of Dr. Kuyper.

Now perhaps this difference is not as great as it seems, it being somewhat accentuated by the view-point that is taken.

It is very possible that the potentiality for the state is given in creation, including such factors as the great variety among individuals with predominance in some, and the natural knowledge and bent for equity and external deportment, whereas the *exercise* of these powers first appears, when sin calls forth authority vested in certain persons with the power of the sword.

This brings us to the second question: What is the purpose of the state. What is it that the Creator would reveal in the civil order, analogous to the purpose of the church? And the answer is undoubtedly that the state is a creaturely temporal organ for the eternal Righteousness of God. So it was in the Old Testament Theocracy. The state was a minister of righteousness, of equity and of vengeance; so it is also in Romans 13.

This natural faculty for equity is indeed given in the creation of man and by it he reveals that equity is desirable and that it must be maintained if human life is to reveal its fulness so that all of life acquiesces in and corroborates the eternal rightness of God.

And in this respect there is a strange difference between the state and the church, for whereas the church can only fulfill that purpose when it does so as a willing organ, the state can also do so to an extent in unbelief toward the Creator. The explanation is that the state maintains only the righteousness whether to destruction or to restoration and does so by virtue of increased power, whereas the Church is a manifestation of God's restoring grace, and can be an organ thereof only when it is itself restored by grace.

Since then, the state arises out of the creation and has its function in the natural sphere it would seem questionable whether she has anything to do with revelation or the Gospel. However, this does not at all follow, for if the state in its government is to function efficiently it will have to use all the know-

ledge of God and His will that it can obtain and there is no reason why the state must not be guided in all its official conduct by revelation, not only in nature, but also in Scripture generally, and even as it is specifically given us in the Gospel of the crucified and reigning Christ.

But this does not yet determine the limits of the competency for the state, for this is quite different from the question of a believing personnel, or of the complete norms of its conduct.

The question of its competency is often stated by asking its relation to the first table of the Decalogue. And although it is debatable whether the division of the decalogue is so simple, whether we know how it was divided, and then whether the tables intended to indicate man's relation to God. And his relation to his fellow-man respectively, we may retain as a gist the question our fathers meant to ask, viz., must the state also concern itself with our relation to God.

Now it has of course been felt that ascribing to the government power also over man's relation to God, places us before insurmountable difficulties, and this practical consideration has apparently also affected the historic stand of the church on the question. Yet this practical difficulty may not influence us when we seek for principles. We are bound to face the problem of the sphere and just extent of competency.

And the nature of this competency is determined by the nature of the physical sphere and the subjects found therein. For she has dominion over a geographic domain and the citizens resident therein for the purpose of maintaining and avenging justice and equity among men, and this again determines her means for whereas the church has as its sphere the small circle formed by those who are susceptible to the method and means of spiritual appeal, and grace and forgiveness, the government cannot use the methods of grace, for its subjects are not presupposed to be susceptible thereto. They require the restraint and vengeance of temporal physical power and the sword, and only these does the government have.

However when we now view the relation of the government to the first table, we must evidently take into account the traditions of the people, for what might be to one people a very unobtrusive act of the government might be to another a very disrupting process. Yet we may say that any transgression also of the first table in so far as it affects the communal life of the citizens and temporal welfare of the state falls under the sway of the state. She must punish Sabbath breaking, Atheistic, Communistic propaganda, and any kind of "Moloch Sacrifice". This does not mean that she is trying to establish the Kingdom of God with the sword, but that she is vindicating the law of God for the relations of men as it is revealed in outward life, and this does not make the striving of the state mere humanism so that Atheistic blas-

phemy is less wrong than speeding or trespassing, but it is a question of her competency, and she can serve God fully only when she abides in her sphere.

Thus in judging an issue between a christian and an atheistic group the state would be called only to maintain equity in the material and personal rights. Thus it is with the government and education, where the estate has no competency and every parent or every group of parents must determine what their children shall be taught. So she is neutral which does not at all imply that she is Anti-christian, but that officially she has nothing to do with it except to regulate its civil ordinances.

Indeed, in many cases this principle of relations would be hard to maintain, but the difficulty would undoubtedly lie rather in the actual application in a sinful world than in applying the principles theoretically and that is where we must always begin, of course.

But there is also a definite *interrelation* of the two in their conduct. The Church has certain functions that extend into the state and vice versa. As instances of the first we have the church proclaiming a severe morality whereas the state is often lax in its divorce laws; contrarywise, when the state advocates prohibition the church may feel called to preach that all creature of God is good. Such preaching cannot fail, theoretically to affect the citizenry of the state.

On the other hand we have the state's concern about church property. And just recently the question of her calling to pay the victory tax and to display the flag has arisen. In these cases it is very necessary to discern the proper relations. Why, e.g., should not the officers of the church deduct the victory tax? For surely when they function in the task of financing they are not engaged in the spiritual task of the church. And why should not the government regulate the administration of monies that are an integral part of the financial fabric of the nation? So also with the taxation of church property, which is not "spiritual" but is merely a part of the wealth and also the responsibility of the nation.

The question of displaying the flag may be noticed here. The propriety undoubtedly, depends on whether

flag on the church property symbolizes that the property and the members are subject to the government, or whether it means to symbolize that the church as custodian of the Gospel places itself in the service of the nation. But just because the flag is symbol we must be sure that the symbolism is properly understood and gives no false impression of allegiance. Should the church preach patriotism, is another vital question. And here again we must carefully discern. Indeed the church must. The Scriptures everywhere teach it. Subjection and tribute and honor and fear are enjoined toward the government. This is essentially no different from the love and reverence we owe our parents. We are to love our fellowmen in that

relation also according to God's ordinances. But let us not forget that she preaches patriotism to men of all nations.

And here again we must carefully discern. Indeed the church must. The Scriptures everywhere teach it. Subjection and tribute and honor and fear are enjoined toward the government. This is essentially no different from the love and reverence we owe our parents. WE are to love our fellowmen in that relation also according to God's ordinances. But let us not forget that she preaches patriotism to men of all nations.

And it is true that this point which seems to raise such conflicts in our minds in war time with its choosing of sides and is seen much more easily in its positive beauty and constructiveness, does nevertheless, not raise an essential conflict. It implies nothing less than that when we in war-time pray that God may cause His children to be faithful also in their calling as soldiers, we pray for those of every nation. If then it seems absurd that we pray that our enemy may do his best when he faces us in the battle line, the only answer is that the true Christian loves law and order, more than he does personal success and victory. Unless, then there is another competent government ready to take charge, also our enemy may not institute anarchy in the ranks against his lawful government. Tyranny may be unbearable to the flesh, but anarchy is unbearable to the spirit; it is nihilism, the destruction of the order of the universe itself.

We may end with the practical remark that if the relations are so serious there is room for more clear-cut testimony of the truth to the government, although it is questionable whether this should be done by the church and not rather by the christian citizen and citizen-groups.

Our space forbids to treat the relation of the state to the Incarnate Christ, whether her essence is temporal or abiding, and what is her ultimate relation to the church in that perfected coming Kingdom.

A. P.

On Christ, by faith, my soul would live,
From Him, my life, my all receive:
To Him devote my fleeting hours;
Serve Him alone with all my powers.

Christ is my everlasting all,
To Him I look, on Him I call;
He ev'ry want will well supply,
In time, and thro' eternity.

Faith And Works In The Epistle Of James

In this essay we will not take up too much space to disprove the contention that there is disharmony between Paul's assertion "that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," and the assertion of James: "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." We will try and confine ourselves positively to the idea of faith and works in the epistle of James, and only consult other parts of scripture, including that written by Paul, only to make clearer the beautiful truth as expressed by the inspired James. Sufficient to state here, that it is impossible that God would contradict Himself, and that God speaks the same language in the book of Romans as He does in the book of James.

James is indeed combating a certain class of people when he asserts throughout his second chapter that "by works a man is justified and not by faith only," but he is in no wise combating Paul's comforting doctrine of the child of God being justified by faith only. In fact James is defending the doctrine of justification by faith, and developing it to such an extent that he at the same time exposes a shameful and sinful tendency of certain hypocrites in the church. These hypocrites did not deny the doctrine of justification by faith. On the contrary they were profuse in their declarations that works cannot save any man. Either wholly or in part, and that nothing but faith can save a man. This is evident from the course of James' reasoning with them. "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man SAY he hath faith, and have not works? Can (such) faith save him?" And further, concerning the destitute and poor, "if one of you SAY unto them, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled: notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body: What doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works is dead, being alone." These statements of James imply very plainly that James has in mind those who hypocritically espouse the truth of Justification by Faith, but abuse it for the purpose of walking in sin, yea for the purpose of DISREGARDING the works of the law. He attacks what he calls "dead faith." In fact James tells these counterfeit christians that even as Paul speaks of "dead works," so there is also a "dead faith," and that neither the "dead works," nor the "dead faith" can save them. The class of people James opposes "said" they had faith. Their professed faith, in James phraseology, was "alone." It had no connection with works. It was not a directive principle of the heart and mind and will, but it was merely a PROFESSED faith. So that when James speaks of a

justification by works and not by faith only, it is evident that he is referring to THEIR faith, their nonworking, inactive, and therefore dead faith. Such faith cannot save the soul, anymore than dead works can save the soul.

We must also remember that James is speaking throughout his epistle of a "saving faith," that is, a faith that actually saves. What now is such a faith that actually saves us? First of all we may say that faith is the spiritual tie uniting us to God in Christ Jesus. Faith is the mystical union between Christ and His people. A union that unites us even as the engrafted branch is united to the tree. The life of Christ causes that engrafted branch to have the same life. Secondly we may say, that faith is given us with regeneration. When God gives the new life, from above, unto His chosen people, they receive in that new life the principle of faith. So that this faith is not something that we possess or can come into possession of anytime we please, but it is the absolute gift of God's love. Even as Jesus says: "Unless ye are born again (regenerated) ye cannot (even) see the kingdom of God." Therefore thirdly this faith contains two elements: "a certain knowledge" and "a hearty confidence." I cannot say it better than as it is contained in the Heidelberg Catechism: "True faith is not only a certain knowledge, whereby I hold for truth all that God has revealed to us in His word, but also an assured confidence, which the Holy Spirit works by the Gospel in my heart; that not only to others, but to me also, remission of sins, everlasting righteousness and salvation, are freely given by God, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits." So that justification (and that is what James is speaking about) is complete in Christ. And there is no need of completing the complete. Nothing but the work of Christ can in any way satisfy or justify. No man can supplement nor add to his justification by any works, **NO MATTER HOW GOOD THEY MAY BE.** He who trusts in that work of Christ, as the sole ground and reason of pardon and salvation, need not bring with him a single jot or tittle of his own work. There is nothing **EXPIATORY** in the good works of any of God's people, even though he is the holiest of the saints. Even the perfect works of the saints in heaven will never pardon or give us salvation. And upon this doctrine of justification by faith alone, and not by works of the law, James stands foursquare. Finally this faith has its root in love. God's love to us brings regeneration and from regeneration comes faith, rooted in love to God. Just as unbelief is rooted in hatred to God, so faith is rooted in love to God. And "we love Him because He first loved us."

From the above it will become evident that this faith is not divorced from works. The hypocrite in James epistle tried to do this very thing, namely di-

vorced faith from works. This is plain from the words in chapter 2:18: "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith and I have works." A plain implication that one man may have faith and another man may have the works. James however, in his answer to this, so shapes his words, as not only to deny the possibility of a divorce between faith and works, but also to show the connection ever so clearly between the two. This connection was that faith is the root and principle by which we are justified, and that works are the fruit and evidence of this faith. Notice that though James does lay strong emphasis upon works, yet he does not divorce these works from true faith: "Shew me thy faith without any works (of the hypocrites) and I will show thee my faith **BY** my works." The implication of this answer is, not only that true and saving faith cannot exist without showing itself in good works, but that good works are secondary to faith as being its effect and evidence. Works are not the root, but the branches, or better the fruit. A faith that is devoid of works is a dead faith and will never save a soul. For such a faith is not rooted in love of God, nor does it have certain knowledge and hearty confidence spoken of in the Catechism, nor is such an inactive faith a gift of God's grace, and finally it is not the mystical tie uniting the sinner to God in Christ Jesus and saving him. Such a faith is merely a **PRETENDED** faith, not true but falsely professed.

The works that James continually speaks of, and by which we are justified, are works produced by living faith. Keeping this in mind we can better understand the two examples he uses to explain this truth. "Works" as standing for "working faith," is what justified Abraham, "when he offered up Isaac his son." And, "Rahab was justified by works (working faith) when she sent the messengers out another way." In saying that Abraham and Rahab were "justified by works" James is describing faith therefore as the living tie to God in Christ Jesus whereby these saints of old wrought mighty work, which works justified them because they were the fruit of a marvelous faith.

The works, as fruit of faith then, also bear the marks of all good works, namely, they are to the glory of God, and are according to the Holy Law of God, and come from true faith. The works resulting from true faith are not first of all outward and visible, such as the discharge of duties and obligations toward others. They are first of all invisible but very evident in the one possessing faith. They are peace, joy of heart and mind, long-suffering, meekness, hope, perseverance. These all are also the fruit of saving faith. They necessarily follow upon faith and are the evidence of the same. A dead faith possesses neither peace, hope, joy of heart, long-suffering meekness or perseverance. Therefore a dead faith will never justify a man. It is Paul remarks of a

heathen idol, "it is nothing." It is a nonentity. A dead faith, a faith that does nothing, and produces nothing,—yea is nothing. It is a pretence. It is sheer hypocrisy. It can no more save the soul than sin can save it. But the true faith as described by James will produce bountiful fruit unto everlasting life, first in the mind and will and heart.

Then there also follow the works of faith such as can be seen and are revealed to men. This faith produces prayer and praise, Christian benevolence and the discharge of our duties and obligations also to the neighbor. Yea this faith will produce the obedience to the second table of the law also. This faith honors father and mother, and does not kill; nor does it commit adultery, nor steal nor speak false witness against the neighbor nor covet what has not been given unto me by my heavenly Father. It works, not to be justified but because it IS justified.

In closing it is well to note that according to James, the dead faith, produced just the opposite of good works. One with false faith becomes fearfully hardened. He treads the atoning blood under foot, whereby we are truly justified. There is evidence in James that those who were abusing the doctrine of justification by faith only and not by works, were very far gone in earthliness and sin. This is evident from the kind of sins rebuked by him in his epistle. He rebukes them for their human standards used in judging of the rich and the poor; for their reckless use of the tongue, in slander and boasting; for their grasping after authority making of them "many masters;" for their quarreling, envying and fightings, causing James to address them sternly: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" These are all corruptions that had crept into the church and among the brethren because of the abuse of the doctrine of free grace.

It is evident then that Faith and Works are essentially the same, in so far as they are both the result of God's grace unto His people. Without faith it is impossible for me to do any good works. By faith, good works are automatic results and of necessity follow. In that working faith we are justified and have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Let no man then think himself justified before the bar of God's justice, when he merely says that he has faith but has not the works. For such faith will not save him. It is dead faith in a dead sinner. But that man is justified by God, who has received a living faith in Christ Jesus as the sole basis and ground for his justification and who has the evidence of such living faith in living works. Such faith works unto his salvation for it is SAVING faith.

L. V.

The Dangers Of Early Adolescence

God has not willed that we should come into the world as mature men and women, ready to take a full-fledged place in life. Adam and Eve never had a childhood or youth. Their offspring, however, born into the world as helpless babes, must pass through a long period of growth and development before they attain maturity. This long period of development that finally emerges into manhood or womanhood may again itself be divided into two sharply distinct periods: childhood and adolescence. It is the latter period, that of adolescence, that we are interested in in this article, and primarily in the early part of that period. Irving King in his *The High-School Age* well says, "There is no season in the life of the boy or girl, which, to parent and teacher, is more interesting and more baffling than are these years which we may roughly consider as lying between thirteen and twenty."

Early Adolescence

Our English word "adolescence" means: "the state of growing, applied to the young of the human race;" "youth, the period between childhood and manhood." As the above quotation indicates this period includes the years from thirteen to about twenty. As a dependent child one enters that period of development, and emerges from it as a full-fledged man or woman taking a full place in society.

Adolescence itself is frequently divided into two periods: early and later adolescence. Although these two are not as sharply distinct as childhood and adolescence or adolescence and manhood are, there is a noticeable difference as everyone realizes who pays attention to the difference between a normal fifteen year old and an eighteen or nineteen year old. Early adolescence extends roughly from thirteen thru sixteen, while later adolescence runs from seventeen thru about twenty. The settled adult is clearly recognizable in the adolescent passing through the years just prior to maturity. While the early adolescent is naturally thought of as still belonging in the group of minors, the late adolescent quite readily takes his place among mature men and women as soon ready to be one of them.

Early adolescence has one outstanding characteristic: *change*. During the years thirteen through sixteen a great change takes place in the life of the individual. There is first of all: physical change. Profound physical changes come about, changes that bring about a series of bodily adjustments. Even the most ordinary observer has noted how most boys and girls suddenly begin to grow rapidly somewhere between the ages of twelve and fifteen. The youngster

whose growth excited little attention from those about him daily during the years prior to this, now suddenly begins to shoot up. In spite of a watchful mother his sleeves get too short and an awkward length of shank appears between his shoe-tops and the bottoms of his knee trousers. His movements become ungainly. He stumbles about and has great difficulty in knowing what to do with his hands and feet. This awkwardness is more apparent in boys than in girls. This marked physical growth is usually a little later in boys than in girls, but the boys go on growing for a longer period. The maturity of the sex function is, of course, central in these physical changes; the rapid increase in stature is so nearly coincident with the change of puberty that it may ordinarily be taken as a proof that that change has taken place. Usually this is a period of good health. Ill health is not normal at the time. The vital forces are intense, and the over-flowing energy is all needed for the accomplishment of the change. If this energy is diverted, by an excess of physical labor or by excessive social interests with interference with regular habits of rest and sleep, the child suffers for it.

But there is more than physical change going on during this period—there is corresponding mental change. Parents realize the child cannot be taken by the hand so easily, the adolescent wants to know the reason of things, he disputes the authority of others over him. Mentally the child is undergoing as profound a change as physically. This period shows a marked change taking place, a change that *should* take place. It should take place for *God* has willed that the child become a man. Parents should realize this, expect it. They should desire it. It is *God* in His providence that brings about this change.

This mental change reveals itself in various ways. First of all, in distinction from childhood the time of adolescence is the time of reflection. The child in his teens is not interested in mere facts but begins to relate them. While the child took for granted and believed what parent and teachers told it, the adolescent wants proof, and asks for the why's and wherefore's. This is not the time of pure memory work anymore; it is time to explain, to help the growing child answer its problems. Secondly, this is the period when the individual begins to declare its independence. The pre-adolescent child was satisfied to be led by father and mother, to go where they went, to go with them. The adolescent wants to live its own life, prefers to go without parents, delights in taking care of itself. Especially when the adolescent begins to earn a little money does he wish to be more or less independent. Thirdly, this is the period of the exuberance of life and vitality. The child is full of the exuberant joy of living. The cares and problems of life do not oppress. There is an unbounded hope and conviction of being able to accomplish

great things. Everything throbs with the joy of living. Fourthly, we ought to add that this is the period of instability. The adolescent, during early adolescence especially, turns from one thing to another. He is easily influenced by others, though during these years he would be the last to admit it. The adolescent wishes to be acceptable to others, and easily adapts himself to others. He often acts before he thinks.

The Dangers

Of course, if there were no sin and no consequences of sin there would be no dangers during this period of adolescence. But there is sin in the world, and there are consequences of sin. The adolescent child of the Kingdom also, even as the non-covenant child, is by nature a child of darkness. And it must grow up and develop in a world that lies in sin and darkness. It is a period of rapid growth, and we must use our utmost efforts to keep up with that growth in the spiritual surroundings and influence we as Christian parents must provide.

We mentioned adolescence as a time of reflection. This reflection is perfectly natural and normal. Do not repress the adolescent's questions. Often the adolescent reaches wrong conclusions in his reasoning; don't get too excited about it. Many of these things adjust themselves. Be sure that you can't by a final command of authority correct your child if he errs. Try to show him where he errs; often you can accomplish your purpose better indirectly than directly. Don't forget that at sixteen there are many radicals, at seventy there are very few. But by all means see that the adolescent, as far as his spiritual training is concerned, finds a healthy Christian atmosphere in the home, and if he goes to school in the school. Instruct him in good reading. In listening to good radio programs, encourage him to attend worthwhile meetings. Teach him to pray for himself, rather than pray with him.

We also mentioned youth as a time of self-assertion and independence. Also this is in itself normal, and divinely willed. It is an evidence of the growing consciousness of individuality and may not be repressed. As parents seek to guide this new-found self assertiveness in the right channels. That is not an easy matter. Usually, however, the turn which this self-assertion will take depends upon the home atmosphere in early childhood. If the child has felt irritated and repressed, if it feared rather than loved mother and father before adolescence, then you will find it next to impossible to lead the child in adolescence. An adolescent revolts against imposed authority that rules by decree rather than by love. But by all means seek to influence the child for good. Don't on the other hand, allow the child all the freedom to

go out evenings, etc. it desires. The child is not able to handle uncontrolled freedom during these years. Usually the child thinks it is, but it is not, anymore than the young calf led from the barn for the first time.

Then there is the youth's exuberance and vitality, which brings dangers and problems of its own. Life seems so sweet, there does not seem to be a cloud in the sky, marriage seems nothing but roses, sin and evil often seem so distant. The youth easily imagines that by his own efforts he can change conditions that none could before him. The young girl imagines she can choose a life-partner, the young man that he can choose his mate. The young girl of sixteen or seventeen, and even older, thinks if she marries a young man of the world, she can lead him and take him to church. The youth is full of hope, and sees no danger, not naturally nor spiritually. It is a time of unconcern, even more so than in childhood. This brings dangers. The youth must be guided, not uncontrolled, lest it form friendships and alliances that will bring sorrow and disillusionment later, if not life-long grief.

As a fourth characteristic we mentioned instability. In itself that is perfectly natural and normal. But due to sin in the world and the consequences of sin, it brings its dangers. Dangers that this instability will go to extremes, and it will emerge from the period of adolescence still unstable. A certain amount of firmness is necessary on the part of parents and teachers to control this instability and tide the youth over it.

Adolescence is the spring-time of life, indeed. The world beckons to the covenant youth, Give me thy heart. Home, school and church must use their best efforts toward the youth. If in one period of their life we must not let them down, it is in this period. An understanding, sympathetic, spiritual attitude is above all things needed. It is in this period above all that the admonition of Ephesians 6:4 is in place, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

P. D. B.

Contribution

Esteemed Editor of the Standard Bearer,

May I have a little space in your paper.

In the last Standard Bearer appears an article by Mr. Ten Elshof that occasions me to write. I take it upon the word of Mr. Ten Elshof that these things he relates in connection with the C.L.A. are facts and that

is what we need in all these problems that surround us as christians. We need principles and facts.

And this series of Mr. T. E., some of which I consider very serious, show how badly we need to discuss these problems.

Do such things belong to the essence of the C.L.A., do they follow logically from its principles, are they inevitably connected with it, are they unavoidable?

An answer to these questions would seem to determine whether it may bear the name of "Christian," for they are serious charges.

There are thus a group of distinct questions which we should try to discuss from our Protestant Reformed principles:

1. The Bread Question.
2. The Strike Question.
3. The Membership Clause Question.
4. The Closed Shop in favour of Brethren.

And in discussing these things could we avoid as much as possible all partizanship which is after all nothing but the old mad Class Struggle. Let us avoid discrimination between rich and poor, farmer and urbanite, Labor Ass'n. and Business Ass'n., Employer and Employee, A church and B church.

Surely the time is near when we as christians will have, in a new sense, to stand alone with God in the world.

The time is very short and we as christians are swamped with problems in every sphere of our life and calling.

I long for bold and objective discussion with only the Word of God as our Standard.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. A. Petter.

Rejoice, believer, in the Lord,
Who makes your cause His own
The hope that's built upon His word,
Can ne'er be overthrown.

Though many foes beset your road,
And feeble is your arm:
Your life is hid with Christ in God,
Beyond the reach of harm.

As surely as He overcame,
And triumphed once for you;
So surely, you, that love his name,
Shall triumph in him too.