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MEDITATION

Prayer For Divine Instruction

*Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes;
and I shall keep it unto the end.*

Ps. 119:33

Unto the end!

I shall persevere!

Upon that blessing of perseverance the inspired poet of this beautiful psalm fixed his longing eye!

It is, perhaps, the main theme, the controlling thought and yearning expressed in this particular section of the psalm.

For as we know, the one hundred and nineteenth psalm is divided into different sections, twenty two in all, according to the number of characters in the Hebrew alphabet, each section consisting of eight verses; and in the original each of these eight verses begins with the same Hebrew letter. The whole psalm is a eulogy of the Word of God, and expression of the love of that Word on the part of the psalmist, and of his longing to keep it and to walk in its way; and each section of the inspired song speaks of a particular aspect of that glorious theme. The longing to keep that Word and to walk in its way unto the end appears to be the theme of this particular section.

I shall keep it unto the end!

I shall keep thy law, I shall observe it with my whole heart!

A resolution to persevere!

But the psalmist clearly realizes the difficulty to carry out this resolution. Who he was is not known. From the contents we gather, however, that he was a young man, who loved the law of the Lord, and walked in the way of His covenant; that he lived at a time of wilderness and marked epochs, and that

he was the object of hatred and derision of the proud that persecuted him.

He was, even in his youth, acquainted with the reproach of Christ!

The way of Jehovah's statutes was a way of suffering according to the flesh. To keep it unto the end meant a hard battle.

And he knew his own weakness, and proneness to wander.

Hence, this entire section is an earnest prayer for preservation in order that he may keep the way of Jehovah's statutes even unto the end.

Give me understanding!

Make me to go in the path of thy commandments!

Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not unto covetousness!

Turn away my eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken thou me in the way!

Establish thy word unto thy servant; turn away my reproach which I fear; quicken me in thy righteousness!

For he knows that only when Jehovah hears his prayer and preserves him in the midst of his enemies by His grace, he will be able to persevere.

Then only shall he be able to observe Jehovah's law with his whole heart, to taste the goodness of His judgments, and to have his delight in the path of His commandments.

To keep the way of the Lord's statutes!

Even unto the end!

Wonderful and blessed way!

The way of Jehovah's statutes!

We understand, of course, even though we might overlook the fact because the Scriptures so frequently employ this particular figure, that in the text we have figurative language.

It is the figure of a pathway, a clearly defined and outlined road, that stretches itself before the eyes of the traveler as far as he can see; while there are many other roads, curving away from the main

road, tending to confuse the traveler's sense of direction, and tempting him to follow their way. And the psalmist prays for instruction that he may not be deceived, but that he may clearly discern and steadfastly keep the one main road, the way of the statutes of the Lord, that is, the direction that is determined by the Word of God, even unto the end!

And the figure has reference to man's active life, and that, too, from an ethical, spiritual viewpoint.

Man is like such a traveler!

He is ever active! Always, continuously, he walks! Never does he pause; incessantly he is active. Constantly, every moment of his existence in the world, he is busy. Whether he goes forth in the morning to the place of his daily work, in shop or office, in school or store; or whether he returns in the evening to seek rest and relaxation in the midst of the family circle,—he is always active. Whether he arises from his bed to start upon the way of another day, or whether he stretches his weary limbs to seek repose in sleep,—constantly he is engaged. He walks! . . .

There is the incessant activity of his inner being, of his mind, his will, his contemplations and aspirations, his cogitations and meditations, his joys and his sorrows, his love and his hatred, his desires and his longings, the flow of which he can never stop. There are, even below the surface of his conscious life, the secret and inadvertent motions of his inmost heart, over which he apparently has no control, and that constantly arise from the dark and mysterious recesses of his soul above the threshold of his consciousness,—a thousand unshaped thoughts and emotions that appear to crowd one another to the surface of experience.

All are so many steps in the way he travels!

There is the outward activity that comes to manifestation through his outward being, his activity through the body, by which he stands and acts in inseparable relation to the world about him. Man is constantly active in seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling, speaking, singing, laughing, weeping, laboring, toiling, running and hastening on his way. The eye is never satisfied of seeing, the ear is never weary of hearing, or even when they are satisfied and weary, they must still hear and see. The mouth constantly forms its speech, uttered or unuttered. Man is active personally, individually, and he is active with relation to those about him, and with relation to the broad world in which he lives and moves: in home and on the street, with relation to his wife and children, brothers and sisters, and with relation to his fellowmen, in society and in the church, whether he is toiling in the field or laboring in the factory. . . .

Always he is active!

A traveler is he that can never rest, that never sits idle by the wayside.

And in all his activity there is direction!

That, too, is implied in the figure of the way of man!

For man was created out of the dust of the ground by God's very fingers, and He breathed into him the breath of life, and *thus* man, in distinction from all other creatures, became a living soul, a being capable of bearing the image of God, to know the Lord his God, and love Him with all his heart and mind and soul and strength, and to walk before Him in true righteousness and holiness; and, for that very reason, capable, too, of turning about, away from the living God into the darkness of enmity against the living God, into the perverse way of unrighteousness and iniquity.

That is the direction of all man's activity, man's way!

There is motive power from within, and there is an end, a purpose in view of all man's work, that determine the ethical spiritual direction of all his thinking and desiring and willing, of all his emotions and inclinations, even of the secret recesses of his heart, as well as of his outward walk and life.

It is the direction of his whole active life *toward* or *away from*, *in harmony with*, or *in opposition to* the living God!

And even as there are progress, constant activity, and direction in the life of man, so there is an end, a destination, toward which man constantly moves!

Life or death; outer darkness or eternal glory!

And the way of God's statutes, of which the poet speaks, is the direction of that whole life of man, with all its activity, as it is determined and counselled by the Word of Jehovah!

It is the way in which no man can or will, or is inclined to walk, for by nature he loves darkness rather than life: it is the way of grace!

It is the way of forgiveness, of the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus our Lord!

It is the way of the new creature, of repentance, of renewal and sanctification!

It is the way of light and life!

It is the way of faith in the cross, *and* in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!

It is the way of eternal glory, the way home!

Blessed way!

Teach me, O Lord! . . .

For, indeed, without Jehovah's own instruction no man will choose the way of His statutes, so foolish is he.

And without God's own constant illumination no man will be able to continue in that blessed way of light. Always again he will be deceived by the darkness of his mind, and led astray by the folly of his evil nature.

Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes!

O, to be sure, this instruction is accomplished through the revealed Word of God. Apart from it, there is no knowledge of Jehovah, of His righteousness and salvation, of His precepts and glory. And the psalmist knows that revelation of the Lord, and to meditate on it daily is his delight.

But he realizes that even so, he is constantly dependent upon Jehovah's own destruction. For it is not for a mere natural and intellectual knowledge of the statutes of the Lord that he longs, he craves true, spiritual knowledge, the knowledge of love! What he longs for, is not that knowledge of the Word of God, whereby he may be able to theorize about its riches, about the Lord and His Anointed, about Jehovah and His salvation, about Christ and His cross, and resurrection, and exaltation at the right hand of God; about all the spiritual blessings in Him: righteousness and forgiveness, the adoption and the rebirth, the hope and the eternal inheritance; and about the goodness and perfection of God's precepts. He desires that other, deeper, spiritual knowledge, whereby he may taste the goodness and sweetness of it all, appropriate all the promises of God unto himself, and steadfastly choose and keep the way of God's blessed Word even unto the end!

And to be sure, it is true, that the psalmist of the old dispensation could as yet but dimly discern these pleasures and delights of the way of God's statutes, for he could but apprehend them as they presented themselves to him in the shadows of the law.

And it is true, too, that we of the new dispensation behold all the fulness of this glory of the way of God's Word in Jesus Christ our Lord.

But principally this makes no difference.

Also the poet of the old dispensation longed for the spiritual knowledge of the God of his salvation that alone could satisfy his soul.

And so he must be instructed, enlightened, renewed, sanctified, guided by Jehovah Himself.

And he prays: Teach me, O Lord!

And so God's people always pray, throughout the ages!

Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, for I have a small beginning of the new obedience; and in virtue of that small beginning I know that I am called out of darkness into thy marvellous light, so that in principle I love thy Word, and thy salvation, and thy good commandments, and it is my earnest desire to appropriate them, to love them more and more, to behold the beauty of them, to taste their goodness, to direct my whole life in the way of them, even in the midst of this world of darkness!

Teach me, O Lord, for I earnestly seek to know thy Word, and to study it, and hear it, and meditate

Teach me, O Lord, for I am poor and needy; and even though I should study thy Holy Scriptures continually, I could not discern the things of the Spirit, neither choose unto myself or keep the way of thy precepts, but by the light of thy Spirit, and the power of thy marvellous grace!

Teach me to know and to keep the way of thy statutes!

Teach me today and every day!

O Lord, my God!

And I shall keep it!

Then, when thou, O Lord, shalt have heard my prayer, and shalt teach me, day by day, then I shall keep the way of thy statutes!

Then thy Word and the way of thy statutes shall be more precious to me than gold, and I shall keep them, preserve them, as something very dear, dearer than all other things, to my heart! For such is the implication of the original word used here for *keep*. And counting all things earthly but dross for the excellency of thy knowledge, I shall walk in the way of thy word with great delight!

Even unto the end!

The end of my earthly way!

For there is the end of the battle, and there waits the victory and the crown of life for those that persevere even unto that end! No indeed, there does not end the way of Jehovah's statutes, for His Word is eternal, and when the battle is finished, and the victory is won, we shall for ever have our delight in His perfect Word, and that, too, in heavenly perfection before His face. But the end of our earthly way is the end of the enemy, of the powers of darkness, of temptation, of battle, of the danger of ever departing from the way of His statutes.

Unto that end I will keep the way!

Yes, and unto the end implies that I will keep it even to the extreme of temptation and suffering. Even though the end would be the loss of all things in the world, derision and shame, yea, very death, I would still keep the way of thy statutes!

Bold statement!

And yet, it is the expression, not of some rash, man-made resolution, but of a well-founded assurance.

For the confidence of the psalmist is not rooted in self. It is not carnal vainglory that causes him to be assured of his perseverance even unto the end.

His hope is in Jehovah his God! Teach me. . . and I will!

Blessed assurance!

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EDITORIALS

Common Grace

XII.

That Van Til has no ground whatever for the accusation that we present God as the real Subject of man's actions, and that, on the contrary, he had plenty of material in his possession to convince him exactly of the opposite, may become still more evident from the following quotation from my *The Gospel*:

"Of a similar nature is the objection of Heyns' that our view presents men as being passive. Man, Heyns teaches, must do something to be saved. It simply will not do just to tell him: you have to do absolutely nothing! No, he must believe and convert himself! Doing this he will be saved. Well, on this point we agree perfectly. We would even refuse to accept Heyns' proposition that small children are not saved through faith. To be sure, in the way of faith and conversion man is saved. But we do not agree with him, when he insists that the offer of salvation sets man to work. He means to say, that, if we do not proclaim a general, well-meant offer of grace, man will passively sit down and wait for God as a stock and block. But again, Heyns overlooks two facts, for the simple reason that he does not think Reformed. He overlooks that no offer of grace will ever set man to work. And he also overlooks that almighty grace does just this, and that, too, without fail. There is absolutely no danger that he, who is drawn through the grace of God becomes a stock and a block, no more than that there is any danger that the ungodly will reveal himself and act as a stock and block over against the Gospel. No, under true Reformed preaching every man is called to stand before the face of the living God. The ungodly is touched in his conscience, and is condemned, when he repeatedly and constantly says: "no; I do not want God!" And he that is the recipient of God's grace cannot help to exclaim: "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" And God is justified in the consciences of both when He judges.

This should be sufficient to convince the reader that Van Til had absolutely no ground for his indictment that we make God the real subject of man's obedience, or disobedience. Let me add a few remarks concerning my view of this interesting and frequently discussed problem.

1. Man's moral freedom can never mean that he is sovereignly and independently free to choose and act regardless of the will of God's decree. It may be readily granted that here we deal with a problem

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which in last analysis we cannot solve, but we must say all we can about it in the light of Scripture, in order to avoid falling into error of Pelagianism. And the Bible teaches us very plainly, that, although man ever remains a moral agent, he is, even so, limited on every side by the will and counsel of God. God's will and counsel on the one hand, and man's freedom and responsibility on the other, may not be presented as two parallel lines extending infinitely on the same plane, or as two tracks that never meet. Even though we may not be able to fathom this relation completely, Scripture teaches us very plainly that it is a relation of dependency: even as a moral agent man is utterly dependent on the sovereign will of God, Who executes all His good pleasure even through the moral deeds of man, both good and evil.

2. Man's voluntary determinations as to their ethical character are subjectively determined by the ethical state or condition of his nature. It is this that is denied by Pelagianism. According to it either good or evil consists only in the act, and the will as such, or man's moral nature can never be either good or bad essentially. But Scripture teaches differently. A good tree brings forth good fruit; a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. And this has always been taught by Reformed scholars. From an ethical viewpoint the heart is the center of man's being. But it is not in man's power to make his heart good.

3. The natural man's nature is wholly corrupt. Hence, he can never will to do good. He is incapable to think or to will and to do that which is good. He is "free to sin." With him is only the *posse peccare*. In this state he surely can never assent to the gospel, or even will to receive the grace of God in Christ. This does not render him passive, so that he is not a moral agent, responsible for his determinations and acts. He loves evil, chooses sin, rejects Christ as a conscious moral agent. He is not a stock and block. He is much worse. A stock and block cannot morally react. The natural man can only so react upon the preaching of the gospel that he always rejects Christ.

4. It is almighty, efficacious, irresistible grace only that changes man's corrupt nature, and makes him a new man in Christ. And it is only when the tree is thus made good that it can bring forth good fruit. Only when this operation of grace has been accomplished in man's nature can he will the good, and can he hear and receive the gospel unto salvation. But again, this operation of almighty grace, whereby man's nature is fundamentally changed, does not make God the subject of his actions or obedience, and does not render man passive. On the contrary, through that grace he now becomes active to do good. He repents, he believes, he embraces Christ, he fights against sin, he walks in all good works. It is God that worketh within him to will and to do of His good pleasure; therefore he is able to work out his own salvation.

Such is the view always maintained by us.

And it is, to the best of my knowledge the teaching of Scripture, and the view of all Reformed people. Nor is there another side to this truth.

H. H.

The Christian Reformed Synod on the Labor Unions

Let us take a little closer look at what the Synod had to say on the question of corporate responsibility, and its application to union membership.

We find this in "principles" 2 and 3:

"1. The Biblical doctrine of corporate responsibility and the Biblical teaching of the Christian's separation from the world make it imperative for members of neutral labor organizations to discontinue membership of such unions whose common practices are clearly in conflict with the principles of the Word of God.

"2. The doctrine of corporate responsibility does not imply that membership in unions which have engaged in sinful practices makes one liable to ecclesiastical censure, however, when members of the church render themselves guilty of acts that are contrary to the Word of God, the usual application of the rules for discipline shall be made. Corporate responsibility may render one worthy of ecclesiastical discipline but the degree of guilt must be determined by the local consistories."

In passing we may notice here that "so-called neutral" organizations now are simply called "neutral labor organizations." This reveals what was in the committee's mind. As far as they are concerned (and as far as the Synod is concerned) you may as well omit the qualifying phrase "so-called." Neutral labor organizations are a possibility.

But let us confine ourselves to the main question: that of corporate responsibility.

We must make a serious attempt to understand what the committee and the synod meant to say in the above two "principles." This is not easy, as anyone will admit as soon as he asks himself the question what definite action consistories will have to follow on the basis of these principles. The language is such that it is in need of a commentary by the committee or by synod itself. But we shall try to interpret the meaning of the committee.

1. It appears that synod on advice of the committee adopts the principle of corporate responsibility. We say advisedly, *appears*, for several other statements in these two "principles" give the impression

that the committee and synod did not adopt this principle in all its meaning and implication, but rather so qualify it that sufficient room is left for church members to be members of "neutral labor organizations." This is evident from:

a. The fact that the committee and synod do not speak of the imperativeness to discontinue membership in organizations whose *constitution* is clearly in conflict with the Word of God. But suppose that a constitution of such an organization declares that all men are born free, that they all have a God-given right to happiness, and that the pursuit of happiness consists in the seeking of material things, that government derives its authority from man, in other words, that a constitution is based on the principles of the French revolution, thus denying all the fundamental truths of Scripture and the Reformed Faith; and suppose that the same constitution plainly declares that only those that subscribe to these philosophical principles can be member of such a union, is one who joins such an organization responsible for its philosophy? Is he not an open denier of the Christian faith? Or suppose that a constitution demands of its subscribers an oath or solemn pledge that they will hold their union membership sacred *above all other relationships, social, political, or religious*, is one who joins such an organization responsible for this oath, and that, too, regardless of the question whether he is actually compelled to swear it or not? The committee does not seem to think so. To us this is the first and most important element in corporate responsibility for the acts of any organization one may join. But the committee and the synod speak only of "unions whose common practices are clearly in conflict with the principles of the word of God."

b. The fact that the synod speaks of the "common practices" of such unions. Now, it is not very clear what the synod would comprise under this term. Very common practices of the existing unions are the strike, picketing, the closed shop, and the boycott, and all the violence necessarily connected with these. Did the committee have these in mind and did the synod adopt a resolution condemning these when they adopted "principle"? But that is unthinkable, for these practices are so common that no union could be conceived without these practices, and in "principle" 1 synod adopted the possibility of compatibility of church-membership and membership of such unions as the AFL and CIO. If this had been the meaning of the committee, it should have plainly stated that the Biblical doctrine of corporate responsibility makes it imperative for members of "neutral" organizations to discontinue membership in the AFL and the CIO. Yet, I cannot possibly think of other and more common practices which the committee and the synod can have had in mind. But, plainly, the committee and the synod meant to convey the thought that a

distinction must be made between "common" and "uncommon" practices. What did they have in mind by this distinction? Which are the "uncommon" practices of the union? Are they such acts of violence as were committed in the "sit-down strikes"? Or did the synod have in mind all kinds of acts of violence and molestation committed by union members upon non-union workers, to make life miserable for them, and thus to compel them to join the union? Such acts are "common" enough, indeed. But does synod mean to say that a Christian who is member of a union that connives at and encourages such acts of violence committed upon a fellow Christian that works in the same shop with him, is not corporately responsible for such acts, and is free in his conscience to sit with the same maltreated brother at the communion table? It is evident, that although the language is very ambiguous, and although we are clearly in need of a commentary by the committee or by synod on this distinction between "common" and "uncommon" practices, synod did after all not fully adopt the principle of corporate responsibility, and left plenty of room for union membership by members of the church.

H. H.

The Triple Knowledge

An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

PART TWO

OF MAN'S REDEMPTION

Lord's Day IX.

Qu. 26. What believest thou when thou sayest, "I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth?"

That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who of nothing made heaven and earth, with all that is in them; who like wise upholds and governs the same by his eternal counsel and providence, is for the sake of Christ his Son, my God and my Father; on whom I rely so entirely, that I have no doubt, but he will provide me with all things necessary for soul and body: and further, that he will make whatever evils he sends upon me in this valley of tears turn out to my advantage; for he is able to do it, being Almighty God, and willing, being a faithful Father.

Chapter I.

The Father Of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Only one Lord's Day, strictly speaking, the Heidel-

berg Catechism devotes to the discussion of the first article of the *Apostolic Confession*: "I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth." It is true that also Lord's Day X is arranged under this head, but it occurs as an appendix to the present Lord's Day, and as an elaboration of the statement already found concerning the providence of God in this ninth chapter. And let us note that this entire answer consists of one sentence. Yet, this one answer is both beautiful and very significant. It is beautiful, for it is not a mere dogmatic explanation of the article of the Confession: it is the expression of a living faith. The Catechism would have us bear in mind that it is discussing the truth from the viewpoint of the faith of the Church, and that, too, as the expression of a living, saving faith, which is both a true spiritual knowledge and a hearty confidence. Ursinus, in his *Schatboek*, reminds us that the first article of the *Apostolic Confession* speaks of faith in God. And: "*I believe in God* signifies: I believe that He is my God, that whatever He is and has, He is and has unto my salvation. *To believe God* is, strictly speaking, to believe that there is a God in accord with all His perfections. *To believe in God* is: to accept that God causes all that is ascribed to Him, for His Son's sake, to work together unto my salvation." I, p. 186. And this is clearly and beautifully expressed and emphasized in this ninth Lord's Day: the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . is my God and Father for Christ's sake, and I rely completely on Him, in prosperity and adversity, knowing that He is both able and willing to turn all things unto my advantage and salvation.

But not only is this ninth Lord's Day, brief though it be, beautiful and rich as the expression of a living faith, it is also highly significant from a doctrinal viewpoint. One cannot but wonder, when considering this twenty sixth answer of our Heidelberger, at the ability of its authors to crowd so much important doctrine into a single sentence. Let us note that this Lord's Day speaks of: 1. The eternal Fatherhood of God with relation to our Lord Jesus Christ. 2. Of the work of creation out of nothing. 3. Of God's providence. 4. Of his eternal counsel. 5. Of his Fatherhood in relation to the believer for Christ's sake. 6. Of his omnipotence. 7. Of his power and willingness to cause all things to work together for our good. And let us notice, too, that all these truths are set forth in their proper order and relation to one another: It is *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* Who as such, i.e. precisely as *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, created all things, and upholds and governs all things; and Who, being for Christ's sake also my God and Father, from the very beginning adapted all things, and still adapts all things, according to His eternal counsel, to my salvation: so that I may, indeed, completely confide in

His almighty power, and eternal love!

The main theme of this Lord's Day is plainly the Fatherhood of God. A mistake do they make who, instead of emphasizing this Fatherhood of God in their explanation of the Catechism in speech or print, present an elaborate discussion of creation. It is not creation but the Creator that is the chief subject of the first article of the *Apostolic Confession*. Faith in God is expressed there. And it speaks of this God as Father Almighty, Who is revealed as such in His divine work of creating heaven and earth. The Catechism has discerned this quite clearly, and while speaking of the work of creation and of providence only in passing as it were, places all the emphasis on the Fatherhood of God. And we may distinguish here at once a threefold divine fatherhood, viz. the fatherhood of God with relation to our Lord Jesus Christ, His fatherhood as the Creator, with relation to all things, and His fatherhood with relation to His people in Jesus Christ and for His sake. It is this first fatherhood of God, His father-relation to our Lord Jesus Christ, that is the subject of our discussion in the present chapter.

But here we must at once make an important distinction, that, namely, between the eternal fatherhood of the First Person in relation to the Son in the divine nature, and the fatherhood of the triune God in relation to Christ as the Mediator, in His human nature. This distinction is frequently overlooked, and in some instances even expressly and consciously denied, but it is very important that it be clearly discerned and maintained. In *Sermons on the Apostles' Creed*, edited by H. J. Kuiper, we read on p. 27: "After this general description we must now direct our attention to the fact that, in harmony with what Holy Scripture reveals about God, the ninth Lord's Day for our Catechism speaks of God's fatherhood in more than one sense. To be father is to be the root, the cause of things or persons to whom that fatherhood pertains. To be the Alpha, the origin, of all that is and lives can be said only of the Creator in an absolute sense, and not of any creature. But to God that fatherhood is attributed in different ways, for God is not the first cause of all beings in exactly the same sense, or by the same activities. Scripture clearly distinguishes between three kinds of fatherhood which are ascribed to God. *Of course, when speaking here of three different kinds of divine fatherhood, we have reference to the first person of the Trinity.* (Italics are mine.) He is the Father of the second person, the eternal Son, by his act of eternal generation. But in his Word He is also revealed as the Father of the entire universe. And, lastly, we honor Him as the Father of believers, whom He has adopted as his beloved children. He is the father of Christ, of all the creatures in general, and of his spiritual children in Christ. Thus we should think and

speak of Him as we meditate on the first Article of the Apostles' Creed: 'I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.' "

I do not know, of course, whether and in how far the author of this sermon was fully conscious of the implication of these sentences; but it seems to me that, on second thought, he will discern that they present a serious error. For they imply that in the first article of the *Apostolic Confession* the believer speaks of the first person of the Holy Trinity only, that only the first person is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and that only the first person is the Father of believers, so that, when they address God in the Lord's Prayer as "Our Father, who art in heaven," they are praying to the first person only, to the exclusion of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. It is evident that this cannot be the meaning of the *Apostles' Creed*, and that this is not the correct presentation of the sense of the ninth Lord's Day.

That it was not the conception of Ursinus is plain from his *Schatboek*. In explanation of the words "I believe in God," he writes: "*In God.*" The name God is here to be taken as denoting the being in the place of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; because the verb *to believe* connected with the preposition *in* has reference in the same manner to all the three persons of the Godhead. For we do no less believe in the Son and in the Holy Ghost than in the Father." p.186. And on the term Father in the first article of the *Apostolic Confession* he writes as follows: "*The Father.* The word *Father* here stands over against Son to denote the person and signifies the first person of the Godhead; *when He is compared with the creatures, one understands by this word the being of God, and thus the word Father refers to the whole divine essence,* (Italics are mine.) as in the Lord's Prayer: 'Our Father, who art in heaven.' " idem, p. 186.

And the same distinction is presented by Dr. A. Kuyper in his *E Voto*, p. 186: "Speaking on this point, we must mean while remark that the name *Father* may be used by the creature, either in the narrower sense of the First Person of the Trinity, or likewise of the Divine Being without distinction of persons. Over against the creature, Father, Son and Holy Ghost is the Creator and the Fountain of all good; and we call upon the Triune Being as our Father in heaven. But if we inquire further, in whom of these three Persons this Fatherhood in the Eternal Divine Essence is found more particularly (that is, economically) this Fatherhood in the narrower sense must be ascribed to the First Person."

We must, then, make a distinction between the unique fatherhood of the first person of the Holy Trinity with relation to the essential and eternal Son of God, and the fatherhood of God with relation to all creatures. The former is a relation within the

economy of the Trinity, the latter a relation of the Triune God to the creature outside of Him. The former is a relation between two persons of the Trinity, the latter is a relation between the Being of God, as subsisting in three persons, and the creature formed by His will and power. The former is an eternal relation, the latter is called into being in time. The former may be called a natural, necessary relation in God, the latter is rooted in God's sovereign counsel and will.

And for the same reason we must make a distinction between the relation between the Father and the Son within the Holy Trinity, and the relation between the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," and the Mediator in His human nature. The author of the sermon from which we quoted above ostensibly denies this expressly. He writes: "God is our Father for Christ's sake. By that very expression we also state that God's Fatherhood over us is essentially different from his relation to the eternal Son. In the present humanistic tendencies of our American churches we must not suffer ourselves to be led into modernistic vagueness and confusion. Remember how carefully our Savior expressed himself when he instructed the disciples about the Father and his Fatherhood. He never confused the relations but spoke distinctly about 'my Father' and 'your Father.' Never did he draw human beings, even if they were his beloved friends, into that unique relationship between the Father and Himself. He never spoke about *our* God and *our* Father, but always clearly distinguished between 'my' and 'your' Father. Only once did He use the expression: 'Our Father, who art in heaven.' But we know that was to be the disciples' prayer, not his own." pp. 31, 32.

The truth in the above quotation is, that there is an eternal distinction between Christ's Sonship as the "only begotten God," and our sonship of adoption and regeneration. As condemnation of modernism to draw the essential Sonship of Christ as the second person of the Trinity down to the level of man's sonship, or, pantheistically, to raise our sonship to that of the second person of the Holy Trinity, the distinction made is quite true. But when the author insists that *in no sense* Christ could say *our* God and *our* Father together with His *brethren*, i.e. according to, and in and through His human nature, he is in error. And even to successfully defend the distinct essential Sonship of Christ in His divine nature, it is necessary to point out that He was also the Son in His human nature, the "holy Child Jesus," and that, although the two are related so that the latter is rooted in the former, even as the two natures are united in the one divine Person, yet they must be distinguished. This is evident even from the very words of the Lord to which the above quotation seems to refer, the words of Jesus to Mary Magdalene: "But go to my brethren, and say unto

them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and to your God." John 20:17. For how could the Son in His divine nature call the Father *His God*? As the essential Son He is very God Himself, and in the divine nature He could no more call the Father His God than the Father could call Him His God. Or how could the second person of the holy trinity *ascend* to the first person? It is plain, then, that the Saviour in these words speaks as the Mediator, the Brother among many brethren, in His human nature; and that as such He speaks of "my Father and your Father" in one sense, in the same sense in which God is also "my God and your God." It is not the second person in the divine nature that here speaks of His relation to the first person, but the divine Son in and through His human nature, that here calls, not the first person, but *God* His Father. This is corroborated by the well known expression "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. 15:6; I Cor. 15:24; II Cor. 11:31; Eph. 1:3; I Pet. 1:3. It is true that some interpreters claim that the genitive "of our Lord Jesus Christ" (tou Kuriou heemou Jesou Christou) must be understood as modifying only the name Father, and not also God. But not only have they no exegetical reason for this construction, and not only is it much more natural to connect the genitive with both, God and Father; but besides, we find the expression "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ," Eph. 1:17; and the Savior calls Him *his* God, Matt. 27:46; John 20:17; Rev. 3:12. All this, and many other evidences in Scripture of the same truth, plainly shows that we must make a distinction between the essential and eternal Sonship of Christ in relation to the Father as the First person in the Holy Trinity, and the assumed sonship of the Saviour in His human nature in relation to God as His Father.

We must bear this in mind, even when we would quote proof texts for the doctrine of *eternal generation*. There is no doubt that Scripture teaches this truth. But we must be careful when we quote texts in support of this doctrine, lest we do violence to Scripture. Thus, to mention just one example, Ps. 2:7 is often offered as direct proof of the eternal generation of the Son of God: "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten thee." But if we are not careful we will, by quoting this text as referring directly to the generation of the Son of God, fall into the error of modernism, or, at least, into that of the theory that the Son is subordinate to the Father. Let us notice, in the first place, that there is mention here of the *decree*. It is, therefore, according to the *decree* of God that the one that is here speaking is God's Son. But surely, the second person is not Son by virtue of a decree of the Triune God, but by virtue of the act of eternal generation by the first person. We must, therefore, at once conclude

in the first place, to the eternal generation of the Son of God. And the context of the second psalm bears this out. For it is evident that the psalm has its historical background in David as the theocratic king of Israel, and that the words of vs. 7 must be applied to him in the first place. It is against him that the "heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing." He is the anointed of the Lord against whom "the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together." It is of him, first of all, that the Lord declares: "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." And it is he, too, as far as the historical background of the psalm is concerned, to whom the words refer: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." In this historical background of the psalm, therefore, we must take our startingpoint, would we do justice to the meaning of Holy Scripture.

Yet, we must immediately add that it is only in a comparatively small way that the words of Psalm II can be applied to David. They are spoken of him only as a type, as a faint prefiguration of Another. This is evident from the words of the Psalm itself. It would be the height of presumption to apply all the words of this inspired prophecy to a mere man. This is evident if we only consider the last verse: "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." But this is very plain if we consult the passages in the New Testament that quote the second psalm. From these it is raised beyond all doubt that David spoke prophetically of the Christ, the Son of God in human nature, the Anointed *par excellence*, who is made heir of all things, and to whom indeed the ends of the earth are given for his possession. But even so, the words of Psalm 2:7 may not even in the second place be directly applied to the eternal generation of the Son: they refer directly to the fact that according to the *decree* God begot Christ, His Servant, the Anointed, the King over Zion, against whom all the kings of the earth set themselves, and the nations rage and imagine a vain thing, but who is victorious and made heir of all things. This is evident from that beautiful prayer the Church uttered upon the return to them of Peter and John: "Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is. Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Acts 4:24-28. It is evident that here the words of Psalm 2 are applied to

His human nature. And more specifically, the words of Psalm 2:7 are applied to the resurrection of Christ in Acts 13:32, 33: "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." It was, therefore, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead that the decree was fulfilled: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." It was then that God begat Him to be for ever King over Zion. It was in the resurrection that we find the beginning of that exaltation that was completed when He was placed at the right hand of God in glory. "This day" of Psalm 2:7, therefore, refers, first of all, to the moment of David's anointing as king of Israel; and, secondly, to the moment of Christ's resurrection from the dead. From all this it is evident that, when we speak of Fatherhood of God with relation to Christ, we must make a distinction between the Fatherhood of the first person of the Holy Trinity with relation to the second person, and the Fatherhood of the Triune God with relation to Christ in the flesh. The first is by eternal generation, as we hope to explain in the next chapter, the second is according to the *decree* by which the Son was anointed Mediator, and heir of all things. And according to the last relation the "holy child Jesus" is subordinate to the Father, His servant, and the Father is also the God of our Lord Jesus Christ.

H. H.

The Altar Of Blessing and Cursing

As soon as Achan's crime is punished by his death God reassures Joshua and the people, exhorts them to be courageous and cheerful, and for the second time to undertake the expedition against Ai in the confidence, reposing on His promise, that the king of Ai and all that appertains to him—his people, city, and land—has been given in Joshua's hand.

In this second venture, the Lord and not Joshua takes the initiative. These are His orders to Joshua. All the people and thus not merely a two or three thousand will do battle with the adversary. The city is to be captured by a tactical trap. Its inhabitants, including the king, are to be slain; but Israel will take to themselves the cattle and the spoils according to the commandment of God.

By this introductory step, the Lord let it be known that He and not Joshua is the real captain of Israel's

armies. It seems that Joshua had not sufficiently kept this in mind. He had been guilty of undue haste, of taking matters out of the hand of the Lord. Without waiting for orders, he had sent forth spies from Jericho to Ai for the purpose of exploration. The advice of the spies had been that, whereas the inhabitants of Ai were but few, a few thousand warriors would be sufficient to overcome its military force. It therefore would be pointless, they said, to make all the people to labor thither. To these spies the warring of God's warfare was somewhat of an ordeal, a burdensome task to be avoided. The victory over Jericho had come exceedingly easy. Consequently, the thought seems to have taken root in their soul that, whereas the battle was the Lord's, they could afford to stand aside now and play the role of passive onlookers. But in this they were sorely mistaken. Assuredly, the battle was and would continue to be the Lord's. Their faith had conquered and would continue to conquer the world. But this could only mean that, in the strength of their redeemer-God, they must do battle with the adversary, and thus strive to enter in. The advice of the spies was bad therefore and should not have been adopted. Joshua should have consulted with the Lord. And this he failed to do. Assuredly, the principal reason of Israel's defeat was Achan's theft. But might this disaster not have been worked by the Lord also to rebuke the inordinate forwardness of Joshua and the lack of zeal and wrong passiveness on the part of the people?

In further prosecuting the war with Ai, Joshua, under the direction of God, now puts into operation a stratagem, i.e., a trick for misleading the enemy. An ambush—a post of troops in wait, concealed for the purpose of attacking an enemy by surprise—is stationed on the west side of the city between Bethel and Ai, while the main body of the assaulting force pitches on the north side of it, on a mountain and thus in full view of the enemy. There is some obscurity in the narrative. Verse 3 of chapter 8 does not seem to agree with verses 12, 13. At verse 3 it is stated that 30,000 men are placed in concealment; according to verse 12 they are only 5,000. "And Joshua chose out thirty thousand mighty men of valour, and sent them away by night. And he commanded them saying, Behold, ye shall lie in wait against the city, even behind the city." (vs. 3). "And he took about five thousand men, and set them to lie in wait between Bethel and Ai." (vs. 13). Further, according to verse 13, the troops to lie in wait were sent out already on the evening before; in verse 12, on the contrary, these same troops betake themselves to their place of concealment on the morning of the battle. If only we were in the possession of all the particulars of this engagement, these contradictory statements could be reconciled, which means that the contradictions are not real but only apparent. There is certainly nothing that com-

pels us to maintain that they are real. Doubtless the whole force amounted to thirty thousand of which five thousand formed the ambush. It is not likely that thirty thousand men could conceal themselves in a valley (there was a valley between them and Ai, vs. 11), so as to be invisible from the city. Verse 17 says that "there was not a man left in Ai or Bethel, that went not out after Israel". From this statement it would appear that the men of Bethel left their city and went into Ai.

The full plan for the capture of the city is this: The ambush will be concealed west of the city in the valley. Ai will be attacked from the north, possibly from the East, by the main force under the direct command of Joshua. The king of Ai will go out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, confident of victory. Joshua will give a signal to the men lying in concealment; whereupon these men will break forth into the city abandoned by the enemy and set it on fire. At sight of the flames, the pursuers will turn and rush back to save their city; then the main force of Israel will turn likewise and thus the enemy will be caught between the two sections of the army and be destroyed. The plot was entirely successful. All the inhabitants of Ai in the field were slain. Thereupon the Israelites returned to Ai and smote it with the edge of the sword. The number slain, both men and women, were twelve thousand. The city itself was burned and made a heap, a desolation forever, "even till this day." The king of Ai was hanged on a tree. At sunset his carcass was taken down and cast at the entering of the gate of the city. Upon it was raised a great heap of stones.

The question has been raised whether the employment of stratagem (craft in war) was consistent with the dignity of God. It was this, assuredly, as God, Himself, had ordered it. The craft here employed thus belongs to the legitimate science and art of military command. It was not properly deception. For it was not the breaking of a promise previously given the adversary, but simply the execution of a plan of action that had been adopted for this particular war. To denounce the craft as sin is to be obliged to maintain that, in war, a general finds himself under the moral necessity of revealing to the enemy all his contemplated strategic movements. The parties to a war do not expect this of each other. Each knows that it is a part of his business to watch the other and to imagine his real purpose. If the one or the other is too careless to watch, he must suffer the consequences. But when conditions have been reached on both sides, when promises have been made, and treaties signed, the case is altogether different. Then the enemy has a right to expect that he will not be mislead. A word of honor has been given. A pledge has been made. And to disregard this pledge is a heinous sin.

We now come to Ebal and Gerizim. Joshua builds

an altar to the Lord God of Israel in Mount Ebal. It was an altar of whole stones, over which no man had lifted up any iron. So it was written in the book of the law. The action is thus a fulfillment of the command given to Moses. (Deut. 27:5, 6). Upon the altar thus erected burnt- and peace-offering are sacrificed unto the Lord. Thereupon Joshua writes upon great stones, whitewashed with lime, a copy of the law of Moses, the commandments proper, in all likelihood, with their warnings and admonitions. The inscription itself, according to some, may probably have been effected not till after the ceremony was completed, being reported here by anticipation. But this view militates against the statement that it was done "in the presence of the children of Israel." The sacred narrative continues, "And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the Ark of the covenant of the Lord, as well the stranger as he that was born among them, over against Mount Gerizim, and half of them over against Mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel" (ch. 8:33). Thus the position of the people was such that the priests with the Ark of the covenant stood in the midst of the valley, between Ebal lying on the north and Gerizim lying on the south, but half the people over against Gerizim, therefore on Ebal, and the other half over against Ebal, therefore on Gerizim. After this had been arranged Joshua caused to be read all the words of the law, the blessing and the cursings. We learn from Deut. 27 that the curses are directed against idolatry, contempt of parents, removing a neighbor's landmark, inhumanity toward the blind, strangers orphans incest and sodomy, murder, and finally against the transgression of the law in any manner. Blessings are promised in the city and on the field (ch. 28), on all births, on the basket and the kneading-trough, on going out and coming in; a blessing in particular on their arms in contest with their enemies, a blessing on the position of Israel among the nations.

From Deuteronomy we learn that the tribes grouped on Gerizim embraced Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph and Benjamin. On Mount Ebal stood Reuben, Gad and Ashur, Zebulun, Dan and Naphtali. The priests were stationed between, and read out the blessings and the curses in the audience of the people. When blessings were read out the tribes on Gerizim responded with Amen. When curses were read out those on Ebal did the same. "It was" in the language of one writer, "beyond question or comparison the most august assembly the sun has ever shone upon. . . The loud-voiced Levites proclaimed from the naked cliffs of Ebal, 'Cursed is the man that maketh any graven image, an abomination to Jehovah.' And then the tremendous Amen! tenfold louder from the united

congregation, rising and swelling and re-echoing from Ebal to Gerizim and from Gerizim to Ebal. Amen! and even so, let him be accursed."

But the whole ceremony can be understood properly only in the light of the final discourses of Moses contained in the book of Deuteronomy. The substance of these discourses is that the people of Israel hearken unto the statutes and judgments "which I teach you for to do them," that they may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of their fathers giveth them. The people are told that the end of the law is obedience and therefore exhorted to hear and to observe to do it, to love the Lord their God with all their heart, to teach His words to their children, and to write them upon the posts of their houses and upon their gates. They shall beware lest they forget the Lord, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, when He will have brought them in the promised land of their abode and have filled their houses with all good. They shall fear the Lord and swear by His name and shall not go after other gods. They shall not tempt the Lord as they tempted Him at Massah. They shall do that which is right and good. They shall surely smite the nations inhabiting the promised land. They shall make no marriages with them. Instead they shall cleanse the promised land from all defilement of their abominable idolatry. For they are a holy people unto the Lord. They shall know that the Lord keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him; and repayeth them that hate Him to their face to destroy them. If they hearken unto these judgments they shall be blessed above all people. They are exhorted to obedience with regard to the Lord's dealings with them in the past. They are warned lest, after the Lord shall have destroyed their enemies and brought them in to possess the land, they glory in themselves, in their own righteousness instead of in the Lord. Let them understand that the Lord giveth them the land not for their own righteousness; for they are a stiffnecked people. This He shows them by recalling their past rebellions. Their minds are directed to God's doings in the past in renewing with them the covenant at Sinai, the covenant they had broken, through His restoring the two tables, and hearkening to Moses' prayer for them. And what now does the Lord require of them but to fear Him, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him and to serve Him with all their heart and soul. The Lord is their praise. He has done for them these great and terrible things which their eyes have seen. And now He has made them as the stars of heaven for multitude. Therefore they shall love the Lord their God. Their eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord which He did. Let them therefore keep all His commandments. If they do, He will prosper them in the land of Canaan. If they forsake the Lord, His wrath will be kindled against them, and He will

shut up the heaven that there be no rain. Blessing and curse is set before them; blessing for them if they obey, but curse if they obey not.

The entire collection of exhortations of these final discourses of Moses is summed up in two statements: (1) "Ye shall therefore keep my judgments and my statutes; which, if a man do, he shall live in them." And (2) "Cursed is he that confirmeth not all the words of the law to do them." The book of Deuteronomy set forth the doing of God that consisted in His placing the people of Israel, the church of the Old Dispensation, under the law. In this book the law is added to, imposed upon, the promise. In the 27th chapter of this book, Moses set forth the commandments of which the solemn ceremony just depicted was the fulfillment. What Moses had enjoined was now performed by Joshua because the conquest of the land has been virtually, though not actually (but according to some interpreters *actually*) completed. The Lord has thus fulfilled His promise made unto the Fathers. He has redeemed Israel and planted them in the promised land—His land—having driven before them their enemies. So the blessings are now read out and the tribes shout Amen. The curses, too, are read out, and again the tribes shout Amen! It means, certainly, that Israel assumes full responsibility and the full blame for all his past and future transgressions of the law and thus declares that in visiting upon them their sins Jehovah is just.

Will Israel walk in the way of the Lord's commands? Will he keep God's covenant? Israel cannot. Walking in the way of the commandment presupposes life. And Israel is by nature dead in sin because he must be. The command of God, "Do and live" as it comes to fallen man, places him under the necessity of atoning his own guilt and thereby delivering himself from the curse of the law. But all that man can do is to increase his guilt. Thus in shouting out their *amens*, the people of Israel signed their own death sentence. The people will transgress. The law entered and sin abounded.

Moses, being a prophet, foresaw and foretold their apostacy. "But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked: . . . And they provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they Him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Of the rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee" (Deut. 32:15-18). Being a prophet, Moses also foresaw and foretold their doom, the curse by which they were finally driven into exile because of their sins. "And when the Lord saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters. And he said, I will hide my face from them, and I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is

no faith. They have moved me to jealousy with that which is no God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundation of the mountains. I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine errors upon them. . . . I will scatter them into corners. . . . And the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day". (ch. 31:21-23; 29:38).

But being a prophet, Moses also spoke of the remnant according to the election, the people to whom the law was the schoolmaster to Christ and who were thus delivered by Christ from the curse of the law. This people Moses blesses in his song (ch. 33). Upon this people the blessings read out by Joshua descended. They were God's saints in Israel. And Christ was their righteousness and redemption.

There is the question of the place which this narrative of the ceremony on the Ebal and Gerizim has in the Bible. These two mountains are several days journey from Bethel and Ai. Because it would have taken several days for the people of Israel to march all the way to these mountains and then to march back to Gilgal, many have come to believe that this passage has been inserted out of its proper place, and would appear to be in place later, perhaps after ch. 9:23. It is said, further, that it is not likely that before the complete conquest of Canaan, Joshua could have undertaken such a celebration, and besides, we find him still, (chs. 9, 10) in the south of Palestine. But it is a question whether any weight should be allowed to this. It may be that the camp at Gilgal, spoken of at ch. 9:6, is not the Gilgal near Jericho but another place of that name near Shechem. Mention is made in Scripture of another Gilgal near Bethel (2 Kings 11:2). But if Joshua had removed the encampment thither, it is strange that the author in some way gives no intimation of the fact. There is still another explanation. It is possible that Joshua subdued the central part of the country before encountering the confederacy of Adonizedec at Gibeon and Bethhoran.

G. M. O.

The Standing Still of Sun and Moon

At the camp of Gilgal a strange company of ambassadors arrived. Professedly and apparently the travellers came from afar. For the sacks upon their asses were old, their wine bottles old and rent and bound up, their shoes clouted upon their feet. The garments upon them were old, and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy. According to their account, the land of their abode lay far beyond the borders of Palestine, where their fellow-countrymen had heard the fame of Jehovah, the God of Israel and all that He did in Egypt, and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan. Attracted by the name of Jehovah, they came to make a league with Israel. Joshua allowed himself to be deceived and made a league with them, which was ratified by an oath. But the deception was soon discovered. After three days the Israelites heard that the strange visitors were Hittites and thus belonged to a people who dwelt nearby and whose cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjathjearim. Yet, because of the oath which the princes of the people had sworn them, their lives were spared. But, as a punishment for their falsehood, they were made woodchoppers and water carriers for the congregation and the altar of Jehovah. As the case of the Gibeonites has already been fully dealt with in a previous article, we pass on, without further comment, to the great victory at Gibeon over the five Canaanite kings.

The capture and destruction of Jericho and Ai, and the surrender of the Gibeonites made terrifying news to the kings of Southern Canaan. For it is stated concerning Gibeon that it was a great city, "like one of the cities of the kingdom," that is, perhaps, like one of the cities in which a king dwelt. They who have explored this region tell us that these Hittite towns, of which Gibeon was the chief, commanded the summit of the great passes to the coast and to the south. If so, the possession of these cities threw the whole south of Canaan upon to the incursions of the Israelites. Mindful of this, the chieftains of this region were furious with the Gibeonites, especially so Adonizedec the king of Jerusalem whose city lay within easy reach of Gibeon. It was he, therefore; who exhorted the other kings—Hoham, king of Hebron, (about seven hours south of Jerusalem); Piram, king of Jarmuth, (about three hours to the southwest of Jerusalem); Japhia, king of Lachish, and Debir, king of Eglon, to the southwest of Hebron,—to come to him and help him smite Gibeon. Under the leadership of Adonizedec these kings went up they and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon to make war against it. The purpose was to root out treason in their own camp, and further to recapture the city and thereby neutralize the grave danger to which the surrender of these

The Lord our God is god alone,
All lands His judgments know;
His promise He remembers still,
While generations go.

Hittites had exposed them. The Gibeonites, outnumbered perhaps, sent to Joshua and implored immediate help. How they feared the wrath of their countrymen is evident from the urgency of their appeal: "Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered against us." That same night Joshua marched to their relief from Gilgal, "he, and all the people of war with him, that is, all the mighty men of valour." With their spirits strengthened and sustained by the word of encouragement that the Lord gave Joshua: "Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee," the host went up all night and suddenly stood before them in the morning. They fled before Israel, the Lord's host. The latter smote them in a great defeat at Gibeon and chased them northwestward on the way to the ascent of Bethhoron and in a southwesterly direction even unto Azekah and Makkedah. This was the Lord's work. The sacred narrator, as is his custom, makes a point of this: "And the Lord discomfited them before Israel. . . ." By what means is not stated. In I Sam. 7:10 we are told that, at Samuel's prayer, the Lord thundered upon the Philistines, and *discomfited* them. The Lord may have thundered upon the Canaanites at Gibeon, and thus fought for His people out of the cloud. Assuredly, He did this very thing. As they fled from Israel, He cast down great stones (hail) from heaven upon them unto Azekah. More were killed by the hailstones than the children of Israel slew with the sword. The Lord first may have terrified them by thundering upon them from the oncoming storm-cloud. During their flight the storm broke upon them in full fury; hailstones fell on them of such a size that more died from these than were slain by the sword.

But the work was but half done and the day was far spent. The enemy might still escape before being completely crushed. Then there formed in Joshua's soul the passionate desire that the day might be prolonged "until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies." The desire crystallized into a prayer of faith,—which is quoted in the sacred text from the "Book of Jasher,"—or "Book of the Pious."

"Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day. . . and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand still upon Gibeon; and moon, in the valley of Ajalon."

(to be continued)

G. M. O.

While yet our fathers were but few,
 Sojourners in the land,
 He swore that Canaan should be theirs,
 And made His covenant to stand,

The Prayer In Consistory Before Service

A committee of a certain Classis in the Netherlands, whose task it was to trace the origin and define the meaning of the pre-service prayer, wrote to Dr. Rutgers, complaining that it could find no material on that subject. Dr. Rutgers answered that this was nothing strange since he doubted whether, before the nineteenth century, such a prayer had even been in common usage. (Dr. Rutgers, *Kerkelijke Adviezen* I. p. 255). He himself could find nothing on it in the earlier centuries.

I am not more successful than Dr. Rutgers.

It is peculiar to notice that neither Voetius in his "De Kerkelijke Gebeden" nor Heyns in his "Lithurgiek" nor even Dr. Kuyper in that monumental, "Onze Eeredienst" make any explanatory mention of this particular prayer. In his "Kybernetiek" Heyns touches on it (p. 252) but about its origin and meaning he too is peculiarly silent.

Before the nineteenth century there seems to be no trace of this prayer. The churches evidently did not use it.

As accurately as we can trace, its origin (thanks to Dr. Rutgers, I p. 255) lies in the days of the "Afscheiding", when molestations of church worship were very frequent, persecution severe and the consistory frequently in doubt whether the service would go on without interruption. Police might come to see how many souls were at the meeting, a recorder might enter to take notes of what the minister was preaching or some mischievous rogue might hurl a stone through the window. Our fathers were quite often in difficult ways when it came to holding the church service.

Under the press of this suspense, it seems, our godly forbears decided to call upon the Name of the Lord before the service began, bring Him their trouble and reverently beseech Him to grant them an hour of quiet and unmolested worship.

Perhaps, therefore, we had better assume that the prayer came to us from the days of the persecution. Then you feel at once that this prayer had meaning and pathos in it. The church, in spite of severe persecution, conceived of the service as a divine command. It was dangerous to gather together for service, but dangerous as it was, they were no cowards. Danger would not deter them, it would not move them to shirk their calling. In childlike trust and reverence they begged the Lord to make this service possible and to give them that necessary courage to take this service upon themselves.

The prayer then is a reminder of the fact that "in the world ye shall have tribulation". Perhaps if we

had been consistory members in Pastor Niemoller's church during the days of his trial, this prayer would perhaps have taken on the full and rich meaning it one time had.

Times have changed greatly, in that sense.

The prayer, in its original setting, has somewhat lost its significance for we have "religious freedom" and physical persecution is unheard of in our day and locality.

By which I do not mean that it has no meaning for us today and that therefore we could perhaps just as well discontinue it. By no means.

But then this particular prayer ought to take its designated place among the various prayers which are organized around the service. There are first of all prayers by the various and individual worshippers when they take their places in the church building. Then there are the prayers of the minister before he ascends the platform and of the elders and deacons before they take their places. Then the prayer of the minister during the service, the pastoral or congregational prayer.

The pre-service prayer, to be orderly and effective, should not therefore be a repetition or overlapping of these other prayers, but it should take a proper place among these, and in unity with them.

That all things be done orderly.

With that in view I believe we might suggest several things concerning this prayer.

First of all that we bear in mind that it is a prayer by the consistory, within the consistory and therefore that it be a prayer with a view to the consistory more particularly. The entire service is conducted by and under the supervision of the consistory, she is responsible for the service and the consistory must realize its responsible position. In too many churches the official character of the service has disappeared, the service becomes a meeting with the minister for chief speaker. We realize that the ministry is official work and the consistory the chief official. In view of that, let the prayer be to the effect that we may function in unison, in harmony, each observing his office in order that the service may proceed from Christ through His earthly representatives, in such a way that His church may be edified and His Name glorified. The deacons must gather the alms, the elders prove the preaching and the minister must bring the Gospel. Let the prayer beseech grace and power to be faithful officers, each one in his own place. To confine this prayer therefore to the minister is to forget that we are all officers of Christ and all charged with the calling: Preach the Gospel.

Secondly, since the preaching of the Gospel is, by the very nature of the case, the center of the service, let the prayer be in behalf of the pastor. The fervent prayer of the righteous is often a great support to him who stands ready to deliver the Word. Men pray for

him in secret, that is well, but now, let there be public prayer made on his behalf. That is perhaps the only time he hears anyone praying for him. The minister is responsible for what he will proclaim, but the consistory is no less responsible. Let them pray that the minister may, with all sobriety and reverence, sincerity and zeal be an ambassador of Christ, to preach the truth and nothing but the truth. Let him be an ambassador of no one than alone of Christ. If he carries the word from the High Command, let him bring it in its purity, without alteration or corruption. Besides, since the minister is only human and only an earthen vessel, he has need of the soothing, calming, energizing power of prayer. Perhaps the burden of his message makes him restless or nervous, perhaps he is spiritually unready for the service, perhaps he feels that he isn't "in it" as he would like to be. Perhaps he has to say things he does not like to say. In all these and like circumstances the pre-service prayer can be a decided support to the minister and a means to attain to a consecrated ministry.

Finally this prayer requests that the entire service, as it is now to begin, and as it stands in the charge of the officers, may proceed without interruption to the welfare of the church and the glory of His Name. The congregation waits for the service to begin, "They come to learn the will of God." "How beautiful upon the mountains the feet of those that preach peace". The organ is playing, the children of God are waiting for the refreshing streams of living water. The service is to begin. Who does not feel a great responsibility? Let us pray. Let us go up to Zion and let us say to her, "comfort ye, comfort ye my people." Before we do that, let us pray.

In conclusion, it need scarcely be said that this prayer ought to be short. It ought not to cover the entire field inasmuch as it loses its effect if it becomes a pastoral or congregational prayer, in that sense. Undue length defeats its very beauty and purpose. This is true psychologically also as far as the minister is concerned. The consistory should allot time for this prayer so that the service may begin on time. Let the brethren consistory members take turns in offering this prayer.

Then I feel sure this prayer may have a rich influence for good.

And so be it.

M. G.

The seasons are fixed by wisdom divine,
The slow changing moon shows forth God's design;
The sun in his circuit his Maker obeys,
And running his journey hastes not nor delays.

Voor de Dooden Gedoopt I Kor. 15:29.

Deze woorden van den apostel in I Kor. 15:28 worden zeer uiteenlopend opgevat. Er zijn van dit textvers niet minder dan dertig verschillende verklaringen. Op al deze verklaringen in te gaan in dit eene artikel is vanzelf onmogelijk. En tevens onnoodig.

We mogen met zekerheid het volgende constateeren. Ten eerste, de apostel Paulus heeft hier het oog op de dooden, die ontslapen zijn. Sommigen hebben getracht, op de allervreemdste wijze, om de uitdrukking "de dooden" te vergeestelijken, in geestelijken zin te verstaan. Het kan, echter, zonder twijfel worden aangenomen dat Paulus hier doelt op degenen die ontslapen zijn. In heel het verband spreekt hij over de lichamelijke opstanding in heerlijkheid. De zekerheid van de heerlijke opstanding der kinderen Gods ontvangt immers allen nadruk in dit wonderschoone vijftiende hoofdstuk van I Korinthe.

Ten tweede, als de apostel hier spreekt over het "gedoopt worden" van sommigen voor die dooden, heeft hij het oog op het sacrament des doops. Ook in verband met deze uitdrukking in den text heeft men een uitweg uit de moeilijkheid gezocht om dan deze woorden op te vatten in figuurlijken zin. Men heeft dit "gedoopt worden" opgevat als ziende op den doop der beproeving, den vuurdoop. De Heiland Zelf, zoo beweerde men, gaat ons daarin voor. In Lukas 12:50 lezen we: "Maar Ik moet met eenen doop gedoopt worden; en hoe worde Ik geperst, totdat het volbracht zij!" En in Markus 10:39 wordt deze doop des Heilands toegepast op de jongeren. Daar lezen we: "Doch Jezus zeide tot hen: Den drinkbeker, dien Ik drink zult gij wel drinken, en met den doop gedoopt worden, daar Ik mede gedoopt worde." Aldus heeft men dit "gedoopt worden" van I Kor. 15:29 ook willen verstaan. De bovengenoemde uitdrukkingen van den Heiland heeft dan de kerk in den tijd der apostelen overgenomen in betrekking tot den bloedigen marteldood. De beteekenis van dit gedeelte der Schrift zou dan ongeveer aldus luiden: Sommigen werden gedoopt, niet met den waterdoop, maar met den vuurdoop om aldus in te gaan in de Kerk der dooden, dergenen die om den Naam van Christus ontslapen waren. Degenen, die zich aldus lieten doopen, getuigen daardoor hun geloof in de opstanding. Immers, indien de dooden ganschelijk niet opgewekt worden, waarom zouden sommigen, door den vuurdoop, den dood ingaan? Tegen deze opvatting zijn gewichtige bezwaren in te dienen. Zou men met een schijn van recht zich kunnen beroepen op de texten die inmiddelijk op dit textvers volgen, men kan deze verklaring onmogelijk harmonieeren met den text zelve. We lezen immers van een gedoopt worden voor de dooden. Men liet zich doopen

"in de plaats van", of "ten behoeve van" de dooden die ontslapen waren. Het was dus eene doop, niet om met die dooden vereenzelvigd te worden, maar in de plaats van, of ten behoeve van hen. We kunnen dus met zekerheid constateeren dat de apostel hier het oog heeft op het sacrament des doops.

Ten derde, het voorzetsel "voor" in den text kan niet worden opgevat in den zin van "over". Ook deze verklaring heeft men van den text willen geven. De bedoeling zou dan zijn dat er sommigen waren, die "over de dooden", dat is over de graven der dooden het sacrament des doops ontvingen. Afgedacht nu van de grammatische bezwaren tegen deze opvatting, deze verklaring is geene oplossing uit de moeilijkheid. Immers, wat zou die doop iemand toch baten? Noch de gedoopten, noch de dooden konden er eenig voordeel uittrekken. Bovendien, het voorzetsel "voor" heeft nergens in de Heilige Schrift deze locale beteekenis, de beteekenis van plaats—we hebben vanzelf het oog op het voorzetsel zooals het voorkomt in den oorspronkelijken text.

Ten slotte, de uitdrukking "dooden" moet in dien letterlijken zin verstaan. Men heeft "dooden" in "doode" willen veranderen om dan dit woord toe te passen op den Christus. We moeten den text dan ongeveer lezen als volgt: Anders wat zullen zij doen, die op grond van den Opgestanen Doode (Christus) gedoopt worden, indien Christus ganschelijk niet is opgewekt? Waarom worden zij ook op grond van dien Opgestanen Doode gedoopt? Ook tegen deze verklaring zijn gewichtige bezwaren in te dienen. Ten eerste, zij houdt zeker geen rekening met de letterlijke taal van den text. We lezen eenvoudig van "de dooden." Niemand heeft het recht om het meervoud hier in het enkelvoud te veranderen. Ten tweede, het voorzetsel "voor" kan men niet verklaren als "op grond van." En ten derde, de apostel heeft hier zeer kennelijk een bijzonder soort van gedoopten op het oog. Bedoelde Paulus hier een doopen op grond van den Opgestanen dooden Christus, dan zou hij het oog hebben op den doop van alle kinderen Gods in het algemeen. Kennelijk spreekt hij hier, echter, niet van alle geloovigen. Hij schrijft niet: Wat zullen *wij* doen, die voor de dooden gedoopt worden, maar: Wat zullen *zij* doen, die voor de dooden gedoopt worden. Daarom mogen we constateeren dat Christus hier niet in den text bedoeld wordt. Bovendien, de text spreekt van een gedoopt worden voor de *dooden*—we worden toch niet gedoopt, volgens de Schrift, op grond van een dooden Christus.

We mogen dus met zekerheid vaststellen dat de apostel in dezen text het oog heeft op lichamelijke dooden, en dat dit "gedoopt worden" ziet op het sacrament des doops.

Ook Calvijn schijnt met den tekst geen raad te weten. Hij verklaart dat deze gedoopten catechumenen waren, die, of door krankheid of door de vervolging,

bedreigd werden door den dood, en die dan om den doop vroegen. Zij vroegen dan om den doop of ter hunner eigene vertroosting of ter opbouwning der broederen. De woorden "voor de dooden" worden dan vertaald als "met het oog op de dooden, in het gezicht der dooden of des doops". Ook deze verklaring, echter, is in strijd met de duidelijke taal van den text—immers, we lezen dat er sommige Christenen waren die zich lieten doopen voor, ten behoeve van, of in de plaats van dooden die alreeds in Christus ontslapen waren.

De moeilijkheid in dit gedeelte der Schrift concentreert zich om het voorzetsel "voor". Wat bedoelt de apostel wanneer hij zegt dat er sommigen waren die gedoopt werden "voor" de dooden? Dat Paulus hier het oog heeft op de dooden die in Christus ontslapen zijn staat, onzes inziens, boven allen twijfel verheven. Hij zou de opstanding der goddeloozen toch niet gebruiken als een argument voor de heerlijke opstanding tot in het eeuwige leven. Grooter wordt de moeilijkheid indien we voor de aandacht houden dat de Schrift verder geen licht werpt op dit gedeelte van Gods Woord. We kunnen hier de Schrift niet met Schrift vergelijken dan alleen insooverre om in het licht van de Schrift verklaringen te verwerpen die met Gods Woord in strijd zijn.

Het voorzetsel "voor" heeft gewoonlijk in de Heilige Schrift de beteekenis van "in de plaats van, ten behoeve van". Vatten we dit woord op in den zin van "ten behoeve van", dan zou de apostel hier van een doopen vermelden dat ten voordeel was dergenen die gestorven waren. Men heeft ook in dezen zin den tekst willen verklaren. Paulus heeft dan het oog op een gebruik om een levenden christen in de plaats van een onvoorziens ongedoopt gestorvene te laten doopen. Dit veronderstelt de gewoonte van een plaatsvervangenden doop die later door de Marcionieten overgenomen werd. Het was onder hen de gewoonte, indien eene catechisant stierf voor dat hij gedoopt werd, om iemand in zijn naam te doopen, opdat de gestorvene onder de Christenen gerekend mocht worden en het voordeel des doops ontvangen. Het is zeker niet noodig om de dwaling van deze beschouwing aan te wijzen. Zij druist ook lijnrecht tegen den tekst in. Ingeval dat hier zulk een plaatsvervangende doop bedoeld werd, zoo zou de vraag niet gelijk thans moeten luiden: wat nut hebben zij die zich voor de dooden laten doopen—maar: wat nut hebben de dooden er van, dat men zich voor hen doopen laat. Bovendien, is het volstrekt niet te bewijzen dat dit gebruik alreeds in de apostolische eeuw in zwang was. Eerst in de tweede eeuw wordt er melding gemaakt als van iets dat bij sommigen sekten aangetroffen werd, onder den invloed van eene overschatting des doops. Het is ons dan ook onverstaaenbaar hoe de apostel Paulus hier spreken kan van eenen doop die dienen kan tot voordeel van geloovigen in Christus die alreeds gestorven waren.

Ook kan men dit voorzetsel opvatten in den zin van "in de plaats van." Het behoeft geen betoog onzerzijdsch om te bewijzen dat dit voorzetsel dikwijls deze beteekenis heeft in de Schrift. Dan kunnen we den text aldus lezen: Anders wat zullen zij doen, die in de plaats der dooden gedoopt worden? Volgens sommigen, dan waren er Christenen, die nog niet gekomen waren tot belijdenis huns geloofs, die zich wederom lieten doopen om aldus in de kerk de plaats in te nemen van Christenen die gestorven waren. Echter, men gevoelt terstond dat deze opvatting in strijd is met des apostels betoog in dit gansche verband. Immers, waartoe zou zulk eene doop toch dienen? Paulus bespreekt in dit hoofdstuk de zekerheid der kinderen Gods aangaande hunne opstanding tot in het eeuwige leven. Waarom dan een zich laten doopen om slechts de plaats eens gestorvenen in de kerk in te nemen?

Voor de aandacht moet worden gehouden dat de apostel Paulus in dit tekstvers deze gedachte gebruikt als een argument voor de zekerheid van de opstanding der dooden *voor het bewustzijn dergenen*, die alzoo doen. Het is niet zijne bedoeling om een voorwerpelijk bewijs te leveren voor die opstanding, maar hij beroept zich op de conscientie dergenen, die zich aldus laten doopen. Dit is toch zeer kennelijk de bedoeling in dit tekstvers. Immers, de vraag luidt: Wat zullen zij doen die voor de dooden gedoopt worden? Dus, dezen worden voor de dooden gedoopt en worden daardoor in hun bewustzijn versterkt aangaande de opstanding tot in het eeuwige leven. Echter, zoo vraagt de apostel, wat zullen zij doen indien de dooden niet opstaan? Dan is hun gedoopt worden voor de dooden de allergrootste dwaasheid. Dus, zij worden voor de dooden gedoopt en betuigen daarmee hun geloof in de opstanding der heerlijkheid.

Het ligt thans niet in ons vermogen om dit gedeelte der Schrift te verklaren en des apostels bedoeling duidelijk toe te lichten. Dit is niet het eerste artikel dat in ons blad verschijnt over dit tekstvers. Zooals we alreeds hebben opgemerkt, we hebben hier een Schriftwoord dat door de rest van Gods Woord niet nader wordt toegelicht. Deze gedachte van den apostel komt niet elders voor in Gods Woord. We zijn dan ook van oordeel dat we het hier te doen hebben met een zekere praktijk die toentertijds in gebruik was. Echter, met die praktijk zijn we niet op de hoogte. We gelooven onzerzijds dat het geen bijgeloovige praktijk was, als men in sommige omstandigheden zich voor de dooden liet doopen, maar wel terdege een geoorloofde daad. Echter, de gegevens ontbreken ons en we kunnen niet verder gaan dan eenige gissingen maken. Toch willen we wel eene gissing wagen en zeggen wat naar onze meening een mogelijke verklaring van den tekst kan zijn.

We gaan dan uit van de gedachte dat het voorzetsel in dit tekstvers de beteekenis moet hebben van "in de plaats van". Er waren sommigen die zich lieten doopen

pen in de plaats van gestorvenen. De mogelijkheid bestaat dat deze gestorvenen heidensche Christenen waren die wel door God bekeerd waren maar toch niet in dien Christus waren gedoopt, om welke reden dan ook. Er waren Christenen nu die gedoopt werden in de plaats van die gestorvenen, daarmede getuigende van hun geloof in de zaligheid en daarom in het eeuwige leven dergenen die ontslapen waren. En zich aldus doopen latende, werden zij, door middel van deze uitdrukking van of dit getuigenis des geloofs, versterkt, in hun bewustzijn en conscientie, in de zekerheid der heerlijke opstanding tot in het eeuwige leven.

H. V.

The Sin Against The Holy Spirit

When we speak of this sin we may first of all establish that there is in the Scriptures ample ground for the discussion of such a sin. For we may at first thought imagine that the question is based upon an isolated instance in Matthew's gospel, which would leave the discussion of it rather precarious. Against this we must first point out that not an isolated passage or instance teaches us about this, but that besides the main passage of Matt. 12 we also have the parallels in Mark 3:20-30, and Luke 11: 17-25, but besides this we have the passages of Hebrews 6 and I John 5.

But now we must also add a second observation, namely, that it may be advisable to consider whether we should speak of "The Sin Against the Holy Spirit", or, rather of "Unpardonable Sins". For we are indeed in danger of confining the thought rather narrowly to an isolated, particular sin, which will then stand out as rather arbitrarily chosen, and as for some unknown reason or other having an unalterable rather arbitrarily affixed. This limited, narrow conception will then cause us to miss the meaning of Scripture. Therefore, we must take all the teachings of Scripture together and try to find the peculiarity of this sin.

In the parallel gospel passages referring to this sin, we find that Jesus had performed the miracle of healing a demon-possessed man, and the Pharisees, in the face of this striking miracle by which all the spectators were utterly astounded, ascribe his work to Beelzebub, the Prince of the Devils. Jesus effectively refutes this charge. They do not merely choose an alternative that would draw in question the supernatural power of Jesus, for it had been possible that they had accused Him of having no greater power than their own sons, who undoubtedly performed some kind of demon exorcism, for Jesus says: "By whom do your sons cast them out?" But, no, they choose the most improbable alter-

native, for the sake of a powerful effect upon the spectators. They boldly ascribe it to the devil, in order to stigmatize Christ as very wicked, and this is an outright, malicious maintenance of the ridiculous in the face of plain facts.

The material of John's first epistle (5:16, 17) is instructive and helps us further in our consideration, when we speak of sin (not a sin, but a kind or class of sin) unto death. The manner of expression is instructive. John does not treat of such sinning here, but mentions it in passing. His purpose is to exhort unto prayer for the sinning brother. Prayer for a sinning of sin not unto death, will be heard. The limitation "not unto death" is a necessary reminder to the brethren that there are also limits to prayer in behalf of sinning persons, and so the apostle expresses the incidental thought negatively. There is a sin unto death, he means to say. Don't lose sight of that when you take up my exhortation and when you would intercede for a sinner. Not concerning that kind am I saying that he shall pray. That is, not concerning that kind am I speaking now, of course. Now this manner of statement teaches us that there is a grade or degree of sinning for which the brother may and is exhorted to pray, and the brother can know; he sees that sinning, and is able to judge whether it is pardonable. It will lie quite evidently well within the unknown bounds. But this does not imply that the brother knows exactly where to draw the line, where the boundary lies. The apostle does not touch upon that here since his reference is incidental, a passing reference, as limitation upon his main thought.

But there is a third passage which stands in line with the above and gives additional content to the sin. Heb. 6:4ff speaks of this sin. The passage speaks of people who fall away from the faith, crucify the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. With such people the case is hopeless. Their perdition is inevitable. That is, it is impossible to bring them again unto repentance, and their covenant background is as it were the means of their irremediable condition. They have namely been partakers of a very bright revelation of the heavenly kingdom. All the characterization in the passage of their knowledge and experience points to the apostolic age when the glories of the kingdom were visibly and miraculously attested by signs and wonders and empowering spirit-gifts. And it is altogether possible that as and when these overwhelming manifestations subsided with the disappearance of the apostolic dispensation the participants simply returned to indifference.

And although in the text the causal relation is not necessarily and not strongly expressed by the participles "crucifying" and "putting to open shame", yet the climatic position of these participles and the illuminating figure of the field that was cursed because it yielded thistles, strongly suggests that their inevitable

destruction is the effect of their conduct. However there is a question here which commentators generally overlook and should be answered here; namely, does the finality lie in their inner attitude toward the cross of redemption (they crucify Him to themselves anew), or does it lie in their damnable outward life and conduct, before the eyes of men (they put Him to an open shame). And to this we may safely choose the latter. For, firstly, it is easier to conform the first (crucifying to themselves) to the last (putting Him to an open shame), as meaning an outward conduct of life than to conform the last to the first, and to think of an inner attitude. But, secondly, it is also the general teaching of Scripture that men come to a state of outward sin, rebellion, and abomination that places them under unchangeable condemnation, as an example of God's justice vengeance. It is not a question of God's power to save and it is not a question of irreparable attitude and psychological spiritual condition, but it is a question of God's will and justice.

Here we have essentially the picture of those who surrounded Jesus and blasphemed. They were enlightened, that is, they experienced the powerful effect of God's speaking; they saw and experienced the powers which the age of salvation then setting in wrought in the visible world, yet they boldly defied it and rejected it.

From these Scriptural teachings I believe we may conclude that this sin is the deliberate and well meditated rejection of the gospel as it comes attested by all the New Testament revelation. Therefore, it is erroneous to read the pertinent gospel parallels in any such way that a distinction is made between the Father and Son on the one hand, and the Spirit on the other. For the distinction which Jesus makes is plainly that although one may blaspheme and contradict the Son of Man as the Messenger whose identity is still in dispute, yet the contradiction of the work which is proved above all doubts to be the work of a Divine power which is establishing the kingdom of salvation and grace in the world, is demonstrably a malicious, deliberate contradiction and opposition against the Spirit of God, Who establishes an unescapable testimony by means of miracles and the conviction of conscience.

Therefore, the practical import for us is not to ponder inquisitively what the limits for repentance and forgiveness may be, but rather to ponder the awful holiness and righteousness and jealousy of God Who says to His creatures, "In order to vindicate My holiness, this rebellion and defiance of My glory shall receive its just punishment, and that punishment shall be an unalterable sentence of condemnation". Isa. 8:19-22 and I Thess. 2:14-16, and II Pet. 2:1-9, and Jude 4. Also God is sovereign in His avenging justice.

The Angels and Salvation In Christ

We confess in Art. 12 of our Belgic Confession: "He also created the angels good, to be His messengers and to serve His elect; some of whom are fallen from that excellency, in which God created them, into everlasting perdition; and the others have, by the grace of God, remained steadfast and continued in their primitive state." From this quotation it is plain that among other things we believe concerning the angels: 1. That all of them were created good. 2. That some of the angels fell into everlasting perdition. 3. That others remained steadfast. 4. That the angels are messengers of God to serve the elect. Naturally much more could be said about the doctrine of the creation and the work of the angels. We believe e.g. also that the angels as originally created were higher creatures than man. Man, even though created after the image of God was earthy, the angels were heavenly creatures. On the other hand when man has reached his eternal destination he will be higher than the angels. (Psalm 8:4, 5). However, no matter what we believe and teach concerning the angels our doctrine must be based upon, drawn from and be in harmony with Scripture. That also holds true with respect to the subject which we are to discuss at present. We may not let our imagination decide as to what part the angels play with respect to the salvation in Christ. We do believe, as stated above, that the angels are messengers of God to serve the elect. But with this mere statement our task is not ended. We must broaden out on this subject, illustrate it and prove it from Scripture.

To begin with, the word angel means messenger. Angels are heavenly messengers of God. The Bible speaks very frequently of angels. Some are even mentioned by name, I have reference now to Michael and Gabriel. The Bible also seems to speak of different classes of angels, of cherubim and seraphim. Scripture furthermore definitely teaches us that there are many angels, for the Bible speaks of hosts and legions of angels. As we read Scripture, beginning with Genesis, we frequently meet with the appearance of angels to God's people of old. Especially is this the case in the Old Testament although the New Testament also records various instances wherein angels appeared unto men.

It would indeed be interesting to study and describe what many of the ancient people believed concerning the angels and our salvation. Even in our own day there are various interesting theories on this subject. There is e.g. the theory that every man has a special guardian angel which is at all times near him, protects him and endeavors to lead him in the right direction. When one reads upon the doctrine of angels

ology one comes across very strange notions, theories and philosophical reasonings. However, interesting though it might be to study the broad subject of angelology, this lies beyond the limits of our present subject. And therefore we may safely pass it by as irrelevant material as far as our particular subject is concerned. It seems to me our subject calls for the task of clearly bringing to the foreground a few undeniable facts as taught us by the Word of God. Naturally our discussion will be far from complete and exhaustive. However, our writing will not have been in vain if we succeed in stating some definite facts, give food for thought and arouse, at least by some, a further interest in the study of this subject.

As to the angels and salvation in Christ, several outstanding facts are taught us. To begin with, it is plain from Holy Writ that the angels of God at various occasions appeared to God's people to deliver to them a special message from the Lord. They usually appeared in the form of a man. Oft-times theirs was a message of encouragement, of joy and glad news, as was the case with Jacob when he was on his way back to Canaan and the angels of God met him at Mahanaim. The very sight of this host must have encouraged Jacob. The same is true of Gideon, Manoah, Peter, Cornelius, etc. At other times the angels served as messengers of God to warn, admonish, rebuke the wicked or God's own people. (Numbers 22, Judges 2, II Samuel 24, etc). "It even may be noted that angels never serve as an explanation of the events of nature, but appear only in connection with a divine revelation."

In the second place Scripture reveals to us that the angels take a very definite part in prophetic revelations and the judgments of God. This becomes plain when one reads books like Zecharias and Revelation.

In the third place, the angels take a very active and interesting part in the salvation of God's people. Much could be mentioned in this connection. We'll quote a few texts to make our point clear. Says Christ in Matt. 18:10: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." And again, Luke 15:10: "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." When the beggar Lazarus dies, he is carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. (Luke 16:22). Speaking of Christ's glory and the revelation of God's saving grace in Christ, the apostle Peter states: "Which things the angels desire to look into." (I Pet. 1:12).

But, in the fourth place, we read above all about angels in connection with our Saviour Himself. They announce His birth to Mary, to Joseph, the shepherds. (Matt. 1, Luke 1, 2). They minister unto the Lord, comforting Him and strengthening Him. (Matt. 4:11, Luke 22:43). The angels announce His resurrection.

(Matt. 28). And the Lord frequently speaks of the angels in connection with His coming judgment of the world and the final salvation of His people. (Matt. 24). In this connection we also might mention the book of Revelation. The entire angelic service is concentrated around the Christ and it is indeed true as stated by Dr. A. Kuyper: "En geheel deze *buitengewone* engelen-dienst vindt zijn middelpunt in het dienen van den Christus, wiens komst zij aankondigen, wiens geboorte zij toezingen, dien zij dienen in de woestijn, ondersteunen in Gethsemane, wien zij den steen van het graf afwentelen, bij zijn opvaren ten hemel tegemoet snellen, en dien ze bij zijn wederkomst zullen verzellen. Immers de Zoon des menschen zal verschijnen *met zijne heilige engelen*. En ook in afwachting van dien dag der dagen, hooren we hen in den hemel dankbaar een echo geven op het lied van het Lam dat geslacht is." (De Engelen Gods, p. 276).

Much more could be added to the foregoing, but we must come to the conclusion of our subject. And in conclusion we wish to state: 1. The angels are very definitely to be ministrants of Christ at His second Advent. "The reapers in the great harvest are angels, and they separate the tares from the wheat. (Matt. 13:39). The Son of Man will send forth His angels to gather out all that offend. (Matt. 13:41). He shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him. (Matt. 25:31). He shall send forth His angels with the great sound of a trumpet to gather the elect. (Matt. 24:31, I Thess. 4:17, II Thess. 1:7).

2. The angels are indeed deeply interested in our salvation. Besides what we have said on this point already, the words of the angel are instructive which are recorded in Rev. 22:9 where we read: "I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God." The same deep interest in the progress of the Church appears in Eph. 3:10, where we are taught that one great purpose of God's work of salvation was, that "Through the Church the manifold wisdom of God might be made known to the principalities and powers in heavenly places." And in the Church is displayed the perfections of God for the admiration and adoration of the angels in heaven.

3. In their ministering to the elect they reveal themselves as obedient servants of God whose calling and joy it is to glorify the Christ of God.

4. In their selfabnegating service they always seek and promote the spiritual welfare of God's children, watching over them, influencing them for good, longing for the consummation of all things, to the salvation of God's people and the glory of God Triune.

Finally, a few practical remarks are perhaps not out of place. There is a closer relation between the children of God and the angels than we are often aware of ourselves. And even though the angelic ap-

pearances of olden times do no longer happen today, due to the fact that we possess the full revelation of God, we may safely conclude that the holy angels of God are ever near us. One does not need to believe in a guardian angel to come to this conclusion. This in itself is a comforting thought, there are not only devils around us but also angels. However, great and powerful and mighty the angels may be they never may become objects of worship for us. Neither can they in any way be our mediators. There is but one Mediator, Jesus Christ the Lord. But when the curtain of this world's history falls and the Lord shall appear with His holy angels to judge the world and Himself renew all things, then we shall also fully understand, and that for the first time, what important role the angels played in the salvation which is ours through Christ. And then it shall be the privilege of God's elect to join the angelic host in praising and worshipping Him Who is worthy to receive all honor and glory unto all eternity. And then it also shall be the eternal privilege of the angels to remain ministering spirits unto those who were bought with the blood of the Lamb. And God will be all in all.

J. D.

The Objective Reality Of The Temptations Of Jesus

Our subject is one which has often been the cause of much debate and perplexity. Every now and then someone is bound to ask whether or not the temptations of Jesus were real and genuine in character in the sense of being effective. Whenever this question is asked the one enquiring does not necessarily doubt the holy record of Scripture that Christ was tempted by Satan (Matt. 4), or that the evil one employed his means of temptation as in Matt. 16:23, and many other instances recorded in Holy Writ. In general the enquirer is most willing to accept Scripture's testimony that Christ was tempted in all points like as we are. (Heb. 2:18; 4:15). But when enquiring whether or not these temptations were *objectively real* he is asking whether these temptations of Christ actually affected Christ as they affect us. Did they cause Him trouble and anxiety, fear and strife? Or did it mean nothing at all to Jesus to be tempted? Did Christ merely shake off the onslaughts of the evil one as if it were nothing at all and simply pass on to the next episode in His life as if nothing had happened? Was Christ's nature so repellent to temptation that it af-

fect that He could even enjoy temptation? Or did Christ actually feel the temptor's sting and did He feel His own inability to meet these temptations alone? Did they cause His soul to fear and did they drive Him out in bitter agony to God for help and mercy?

The cause of this questioning finds its source in the quality and attributes of the natures ascribed to Christ. Christ is no ordinary human being, but He is God and man. As God He is the fullness of all divine perfections, absolutely holy and perfectly righteous. As man He came in the true human nature, weakened through sin, yet sinless. As far as His human nature is concerned it, too, was absolutely holy, perfectly righteous and positively unable to sin. Hence, Christ might be tempted in the most furious manner but for Him it would never be possible to fall. In all temptations He would remain the true, obedient Servant of Jehovah and prove His absolute righteousness.

This very nature of Christ, His inability to fall into sin, seemingly makes true temptation impossible. One would think temptation could never have the least affect upon such a nature. To us it would appear that being gifted with such attributes it would be a joy to seek out temptation since its conquest would be an absolute certainty.

However, Scripture gives us an altogether different picture. Temptation, when present, was no joy for Christ at all. In Heb. 5:7 we read: "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared."

This testimony of Hebrews is in perfect harmony with what we read concerning Christ when Gethsemane with its temptations pressed from His soul the words: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death", and He prayed saying: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Matt. 38, 39). Previous to Gethsemane Scripture records another temptation brought upon Christ by the thought of His coming suffering and death when in John 12:27 Jesus says: "Now is my soul troubled and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." What a world of misery, too, is wrapped up in that horrible word, "offense", when Christ, sensing Satan's onslaughts through Peter, says to him: "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an *offense* to Me." (Matt. 16:23).

All the instances in Jesus' life which are connected to the citations quoted above are considered by Holy Writ as temptations in Jesus' life. Besides referring to Matt. 4 we would enumerate many more such instances recorded by the Holy Spirit, and the accompanying misery which they caused in Jesus' life.

In connection with all Jesus' temptations it will be

as he does on any and all whom he desires to tempt. When Satan tempts he always focuses and directs his assault upon that certain point in our life where he can influence us most easily and where, if we yield, it will spell certain ruin. In the life of a christian that point is usually our inclination toward the world with its pleasures of sin. This was not the case with Christ. The world offered Him no pleasures, nor was there in Him any inclination toward sin. With His whole being He abhorred sin with all its pleasures. Neither could the pleasures of sin influence Him in the least because He was perfectly holy and righteous. In Him sin and the inclination to sin was an absolute impossibility.

The focal point in Christ's life was His terrible suffering and death on the cross. So terrible was the anticipation of this suffering that it haunted Him every step of the way from the manger to the grave. It often caused Him a sorrow of soul at the point of well nigh killing Him. On the other hand, so intricate and all important was this whole way of Christ's suffering, so weighty was each step and the manner in which each step was taken that one single step in departure from this way would spell ruin for Christ and for His Church. Every step, every moment, every inclination, motive and desire was of eternal value in the obedience demanded by the righteousness of God in saving His chosen saints.

Satan was well aware of these facts. Therefore, in all his endeavors with Christ he focused all his assaults upon that part of Jesus' life. Whether he tempted Christ personally or through his selected means, by Christ's own disciples or by the multitude's laud or bitter mockery, he was always after that one single step in departure from the way of Christ's suffering. That one single mis-step would be Satan's glory and Christ's downfall. Thus he focused everything in that direction and upon that point.

Now it is true that Christ could never depart from that way. It was impossible to deviate one step from the terrible race set before Him. He was the perfect Servant of Jehovah Who would build God's house. This perfection of Christ was due to the fact that although He possessed with His divine nature a true human nature, both body and soul, yet the *person* in which these natures were united was not a human person but the Person of the Son of God. Hence, sin, deviation from the way of suffering and obedience was impossible.

However, although Christ had a perfect human nature from the viewpoint that He was absolutely sinless, yet it was a *weakened* human nature. Though sin itself was not found with Him, yet the *results* of sin, such as sickness and death, fear and anxiety, strife and misery were found with Him. This we have previously proven. Hence, it can be understood how temptation could affect Christ in that it produced the effect of fear, anxiety, misery and even strife. Not

that Christ ever hesitated as to what He should do, but His very *doing* and the *determination to do* often brought upon Him a dread of the suffering that awaited Him in the future, and it made Him fear and tremble, and sweat drops of blood and caused Him to cry out in agony to His God for help. So often He seemed forsaken and finally He was forsaken. Terrible were the realities of His temptation, much more so than what they are in our own lives since Christ as perfect man realized the implications of the temptations far more than what we ever can.

Finally, the possibility of Jesus' temptations being an objective reality can also be realized if we bear in mind one other factor in connection with Christ's human nature. That fact is that wonderful powers contributed to His human nature by which He performed miracles and read the thoughts of His fellowmen and could prophesy of things to come were not original to His human nature. By this we mean that we must never consider these powers as being *naturally* present and finding their origin and abode and residence in Christ's human nature. It must be remembered that the origin and residence of the miraculous powers which Christ revealed through the medium of His human nature were found in the Person of the Son of God. By Christ's divine Person His human nature had to be continually *infused* with these peculiar gifts. It was Christ's divine Person contributing these gifts to His human nature. Therefore, it is also conceivable that these gifts were in some measure withheld from Him human nature so that Scripture can speak of the fact that Jesus developed, learned and grew. As, for instance, Scripture speaks of Jesus *increasing* in favor with God and man, (Luke 2:52) and of *learning* obedience by the things that He suffered, and of *being made* perfect though He were a Son. (Heb. 5:8, 9). In considering these things we can somewhat understand how the reality of the temptations were very well possible.

Seemingly the question about the objective reality of Jesus' temptations is an unimportant one, likewise its answer non-essential. We should bear in mind that the very reality of Christ's temptations is considered by Scripture as a tremendous comfort to us in our temptations. Whenever our evils press upon us and overwhelm us we may call to mind the Son of God who labored under the same, and since He has gone before us there is no room for us to faint but rather, first of all, be reminded that deliverance from evil can be found from no other than God alone to whom in all temptations Christ always betook Himself. Finally, since Christ is our merciful Highpriest to whom we must look for mercy and grace in the midst of all temptations we may be assured that: "He is able to succor them that are tempted in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted" (Heb. 2:18), since: "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the

feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:15, 16).

A. C.

The Forgotten Man In Our Midst

Dear Editor:

Please let me have a little space to give expression to something which has been on my mind for some time.

In this day of high cost of living, most of us have obtained higher wages, salaries, or business returns to meet the greater layout for daily necessities. Some of us, who are working in war industries, even receive much more than is needed to meet the higher cost of living and "profit" greatly by the terrible conflict in which also our nation is involved. But while for most of us the increases in income are proportionate to meet rising expenses, there is a very small group in our churches that has not shared in this proportionate increase of income. The forgotten man in this case is the minister of the gospel.

He never did receive a remuneration commensurate with his office, but he found it below the dignity of his office to fight for his rights. He felt that the church should know her obligation towards him by spiritual intuition. While he was always willing to bring sacrifices for us, were we always justified in asking these sacrifices?

Are we justified in placing our ministers with their education and responsibility in a class with the lowest paid factory worker or the stenographer in an office? If we rightfully expect the employer to pay the sweeper in the factory and the girl in an office a living wage, what about the minister of the gospel, the ambassador of God to His people, he who has the most responsible of all positions, who breaks the bread of life to us, who teaches our children and us according to the Word of God? Let us pay him a salary as befits his office. Let us be so grateful to our God that He gives us faithful servants that we are willing to make sacrifices for them, rather than expecting them to make sacrifices for us.

Therefore, let us hasten to make the necessary adjustments. Let it be below our dignity to bicker about it, and let us do it in a spirit of love and appreciation. Easy will it prove to be when we thus approach the situation.

Take, for instance, the case of a minister with a family of five or six, in a congregation of from sixteen to twenty families, with a salary of a meagre fourteen or fifteen hundred dollars a year or about twenty-seven or twenty-nine dollars a week. How far does that go for such a family, especially if they have some children going to school? What if they wish their child or children to have a higher education?

Yes, I know they have free rent, but, even so, let us do a little figuring and then let us freely admit that such a salary is indeed inadequate. Do not forget either that the minister has to buy books and read magazines. These books are his tools, so to speak, and certainly cost money, and he of all men must keep abreast of the times.

At any rate, we may not be satisfied to pay them just a mere living and deny them the little luxuries to which we seem to think we are entitled.

Now, as far as the practical end of this is concerned, we shall find it very easy in most cases to bring these salaries up to where they belong. We could sum it up in these few words: "Let everyone give according as the Lord has prospered him." But let us be specific. Again let us take a congregation of sixteen to twenty families. If each family contributes only half a dollar more a week, that would give the minister some four or five hundred dollars more per year. What a little that would mean to us and how much that would mean to him and his family. Certainly we are not overpaying him by giving him around two thousand dollars a year; let us not worry too much about this.

If our group is larger or if we can do more, so much the better. The very small congregations will probably need some support to accomplish this improvement, but also they should strive to bring it up to the proper level.

As far as bringing up the extra half dollar or so is concerned, it will be hardly a hardship on any of us. I doubt whether we would even have to deny ourselves any luxuries for it. But suppose there are some of our poorer families that are unable to contribute this much more, there are some that could give many times this extra amount without missing it. Be not concerned about the poorer or larger families. Doesn't experience teach that they are, in comparison, the more liberal givers? It is probably the individual who is making so much more than he needs who needs God's special grace to give that extra five- or ten-dollar bill every Sunday. Then, too, there are our young people, many of whom are earning good money these days. If presented to them in the proper way by their parents and exhorted by their example, they would be the first to willingly and gladly do their share.

If the government, to wage this war we are engaged in, takes one dollar out of five above the amount

pay this without murmuring, how much more should we voluntarily and gladly give out of the remaining four for the cause of God's Kingdom, as citizens of that heavenly kingdom, as co-laborers with God, waging the spiritual warfare in which the church is engaged under the leadership of her ministers.

Let us, when we make up our budgets in a few weeks, include this substantial increase for the minister, asking of the Lord to make us willing and cheerful givers. Let us not bicker about it, and do it without any fanfare. We are only doing then what we should have done long ago.

In conclusion, let us prove the Lord in this: Will He not spiritually prosper us; will He not bless us with a still more devout ministry, and a greater love in the Church, and a lesser inclination to seek the material things?

Yours for the work in God's Kingdom,
Peter Alphenaar
1850 S. Burdick St.
Kalamazoo, Michigan.

TREASURER'S FINANCIAL REPORT from AUGUST 1, 1942 to JULY 31, 1943

Dear Friends of our Standard Bearer:

Again another year has passed by for our Semi-Monthly Magazine. This year was different than other years, for this year we had the privilege of sending The Standard Bearer from East to West and from North to South, yea to the uttermost parts of the earth. There has not been a year in the past when our Standard Bearer visited so many states as this year. We sent to 48 states. Starting with Mr. Wm. Doezeema, who received our first free copy, we now have 230 on our list. Four soldiers pay for their own copy. So friends listen to our financial report for a few moments.

Stamps and envelopes for these copies, which were written twice a month, cost more than \$100.00. It was indeed a busy year. Financially we cannot complain, but there is room for improvement. This year we face an added cost of \$550.00, so that means we have to pay \$25.00 more per issue, 22 times \$25.00 makes \$550.00 this coming year.

So friends, if your treasurer pleads with you to remember this cause once more, please let it not be in vain. He has pleaded with you for ten years, and the Lord has blessed us. It is true, we had to struggle sometimes, but God's grace was always sufficient to bring us on top again. So friends, give Him the

praise and glory, namely, our Sovereign God.

Herewith we present to you our annual report for the year 1942-1943.

Receipts

Balance on hand, Aug. 1, 1942	\$ 91.29
Received for Membership Fees	195.00
Received from Subscriptions	1448.50
Received from Collections	950.12
Received from Adv.	16.00
Total	<u>\$2700.91</u>

Disbursements

Doorn Printing Co.	\$2327.61
Telephone	49.26
Plate changes	22.56
Stamps	33.75
Gas	8.00
Miscellaneous	26.86
Total	<u>\$2468.04</u>
Balance on hand, July 31, 1943	\$ 232.87

R. Schaafsma, Treas.

REFORMED WITNESS HOUR BEGINS THIRD SEASON

On Sunday, October 17, at 4 o'clock, Central War time, the Reformed Witness Hour, a Protestant Reformed Radio Broadcast, will begin its third season under the sponsorship of the Young Men's Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids. The broadcast will again come to you directly from the auditorium of First Church, and may be heard over any of these four stations: W-L-A-V, Grand Rapids, W-T-C-M, Traverse City, W-K-B-Z, Muskegon, or over our newest and most powerful station, W-J-J-D, Chicago at 1160 on your dial.

Rev. H. Hoeksema has again consented to speak for us, and he will begin the season with an interesting series on *Salvation By Grace*. Our excellent radio choir will again furnish music for the broadcast, this year under the direction of Miss Doris Van Dellen.

If you desire any further information, or if you would like to support this cause, write The Reformed Witness Hour, Post Office Box 8, Grand Rapids, Michigan. But be sure you don't miss any of the twenty-six broadcasts beginning October 17!

Radio Committee of the Y. M. S. of the
First Prot. Ref. Church of Grand Rapids.