

# THE STANDARD *Bearer*

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

VOLUME XX

MARCH 15, 1944

NUMBER 12

## MEDITATION

### As The Public Enemy

*For I say unto you, that this that is written  
must yet be accomplished in me, And he was  
reckoned among the transgressors: for the  
things concerning me have an end.*

*Luke 22:37.*

Dreadful hour!

The sinless One was to be numbered with the transgressors!

He that knew no sin, Who did no evil, neither was guile found in His mouth, the Son of God in the flesh, was to be considered, reckoned and treated as a public enemy!

Well might the Saviour warn His disciples in this darkest of hours, when the darkest forces of the powers of darkness would assemble to commit their darkest deed, that now they had better buy a sword, and sell whatever they had, if need be, to secure one!

For thus the Lord had spoken to the twelve!

And, though it must have sounded strange to them, coming from His mouth, the thing appealed to them, and they were ready.

Busily, very busily, the Lord had been instructing them in these last moments of His earthly presence and fellowship with them. Incessantly He had been speaking, exhorting, comforting them, praying for them and with them, preparing them for the things that were impending, warning them of the darkness of this hour in which they would all be offended in Him, and one of them, one on whom they were inclined to look as a leader, would even deny Him. In the upper room, where they had eaten the paschal supper with Him, and on the way from that room, through the forsaken streets of the Holy City, and toward the

garden of Gethsemane, He had never ceased talking to them.

And just now He was warning them about the danger of the "hour".

Ah, the time had been, when He had sent them into the villages and cities of Israel, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of heaven, without purse and scrip and shoes.

In those days, He now reminds them: had they lacked anything then? And they said: Nothing.

Gladly the people had received them, and supplied their need!

How popular was their Master in those days!

How well He was known as the one that went throughout the land doing good, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, firmness of limb to the lame, cleansing the lepers, and raising the dead! How ready they were to receive them in their homes, that they might know more about Him, about His marvellous works, and about the kingdom He preached and had come to establish! Was He not the Messiah that was to come? . . . .

Glorious days those!

But now! . . . .

Now they would not be able so to pass through the land! Now the inhabitants of the towns and villages of Israel would not receive them with open arms, ready to supply them with food and drink and shelter. On the contrary, fear, suspicion, enmity, hostility and opposition they would meet!

No time it was to go without purse and scrip and shoes, relying on the good will of the people.

No time it was at all to go through the land preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God.

It was time for the sword!

"He that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip". . . .

And if need be, let one sell his garment to buy a sword!

For it is the hour of the powers of darkness!

And in that hour must be accomplished in the

Christ of God, what is written of Him: "And he was reckoned among the transgressors!"

The sinless One must be delivered to the wrath of the ungodly, and He must suffer and die as a transgressor!

As a public enemy!

Hour of horror!

Reckoned with the transgressors!

Yes, indeed, you are, perhaps, ready to say: thus it must needs be, for the Saviour had to bear our sins, and to accomplish this, He must needs be made sin, that we might become righteousness of God in Him!

But wait! . . .

Do not as yet look at that awful hour of perplexity and offense in the light of our more perfect understanding of it, in the light of the gospel of the glorious resurrection and exaltation of our Lord, and in the light of God's infinite wisdom and clearly revealed purpose to reconcile the world unto Himself, and that, too, by causing His only begotten Son in the flesh to be reckoned among the transgressors!

O, to be sure, all this is true, we know!

But this "hour" is an hour of perplexity, not of clear understanding of the mystery of redemption! It is not yet time for the formulation of dogma's of forgiveness and atonement and reconciliation and the love of God. . . .

Wait! . . . .

It is the hour of darkness!

And the text in Luke, the word as the Lord addressed it to His disciples in that night of His deliverance into the hands of sinners, does not first of all signify that God numbered Jesus with the transgressors, but that this would be done by men!

That was the dreadfulness of the hour!

With the transgressors He would be reckoned, He the sinless One, by ungodly sinners! A transgressor is one that rebels against the established law. Such is the meaning of the word in the Scripture that must be fulfilled, and that, in its literal form is found in the twelfth verse of the marvellous fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. And the word used here in Luke signifies those that are lawless. With rebels against the law of God and man must He, the Son of God in sinless human nature, be reckoned. But even so the horror of this thing is not fully expressed. For "transgressors" or "rebels" or "lawless ones" is not to be understood here in its common and general sense. It has a special meaning. It refers to a special class of sinners, to those lawless ones that are set apart as such even by sinful men themselves. All men are transgressors before God. But even among men there is a difference. Men, sinful men, classify themselves. And according to this classification some are "members in good stand-

ing" while others are "sinners and publicans"; some are honorable and decent members of society, while others are criminals; some are good citizens, while others are public enemies. . . .

And with the latter the Lord was to be reckoned!

Sinners were to reckon Him as not worthy to live even in the society of sinners!

Transgressors were to set Him apart as One that was worthy of being judged and condemned even by transgressors!

He was to be numbered with the outcasts of society, with public enemies, with the scum of the world!

That was the dreadfulness of the hour!

And that, too, was its offense!

It was especially that element and aspect of the suffering of their Lord which the disciples could not understand, and which they would not accept. For it they were not prepared in that night of nights. O, plainly and repeatedly their Master had forewarned them that they must be prepared for just that dreadful event. Again and again He had told them in words a child could have understood, not merely that He would have to suffer in order to enter into His glory, but that He would have to be delivered into the hands of the leaders of the Jews, to be condemned as an evil doer, and that, therefore, He must be numbered with the transgressors, and as a public enemy He would have to suffer and die. But the disciples had not received it. Once, indeed, by the mouth of Peter, they had indignantly contradicted that saying. That would never be! But since then they had kept their peace whenever the Lord had spoken of His decease at Jerusalem. But in their deepest heart they had never believed it. Christ's words had not registered in their consciousness. The saying "was hid from them!"

And even in this darkest hour they did not understand, witness their reaction and their answer to Jesus' warning that this was an hour for the sword. For, with a certain joy of heart they had taken the Lord literally at His word this time, and had replied: "Lord, behold, here are two swords!"

They had prepared themselves, and exactly because of their preparedness they were not ready for the hour!

Dreadful hour!

Horrible prospect!

Their Lord numbered with the transgressors? Be it far from Him! That would never be!

O, perhaps, they vaguely understood that the Messiah would have to suffer somehow. Did not all the shadows of the old dispensation point to this suffering? Had not the prophets plainly spoken of the suffering Servant of Jehovah? Hardly could they be wholly ignorant in respect to the suffering of the Christ that was to come, and that had now been with them these three blessed and marvellous years. That somehow a sacrifice had to be made by the Messiah in order

to enter into His kingdom of glory, they must have apprehended, be it ever so vaguely.

However, it makes a world of difference how a man suffers!

Even suffering may be glorious!

Give a man a sword, and let him die on the battlefield, and he will be honored as a hero. Or let a man plainly and openly sacrifice himself for his fellowmen, and even men will praise his courage and nobility of soul and spirit. Or again, let a man die as a martyr for a noble cause, and the generations that follow will erect monuments in his honor.

But the Christ must not die as a hero. . . .

He may not die as a martyr. . . .

It may not even appear to men that He dies to sacrifice Himself for others.

He must die without glory, without the praise of men even in and because of His suffering.

He must be reckoned with the transgressors!

Die He must as a public enemy!

Frightful hour!

Unspeakable suffering!

Such, indeed, it was for our Saviour.

For, first of all, let us remember that He was the absolutely sinless One!

And who can fathom the suffering of Him that was without sin as He was numbered among the transgressors?

O, to be sure, that He was the sinless One meant that He was without guilt, that He was innocent of the crimes of which they would accuse Him, and on the basis of which they would reckon Him with the scum of society. It meant, moreover, that He had always done good, that He had been a public benefactor of men, healed them, blessed them, preached the gospel of salvation to them.

But it meant much more.

It implied that He knew no sin! Not merely men must fail to find any accusation against Him, but God Himself must pronounce Him blameless, the Judge of heaven and earth could only declare that this was His beloved Son, in Whom He was well pleased. He, the Lamb without blemish, knew no sin! His own conscience never accused Him. He hated sin and loved righteousness. He dreaded sin. He was filled with horror at the very sight of sin. The very contact with sin was repulsive to Him. His whole soul rejoiced in righteousness, and in the love of God! His very meat it was to do the Father's will.

He was to be numbered with the scum of a sinful world!

Who shall fathom the sorrow of His soul?

But, in the second place, consider the dreadful

way He must travel because with the transgressors He was reckoned!

For, indeed, it meant that He was set apart as a public enemy. It implied that those who had received power from above would book Him as a criminal. But it meant, too, that as a criminal He was treated! He was taken prisoner by those that were in authority. He was bound, indicted, tried, found guilty, condemned. He was treated as one whom every one had the right to despise, to reproach, to fill with contempt. He was beaten, buffeted, mocked at, spit upon, scourged, sentenced to death, publicly, by the law, in the presence of all men! . . . .

But even so, we have not said enough.

For the Scriptures must be *fulfilled*! What was written in the Scriptures must be accomplished, finished, perfected in Him!

And that implies that there had, indeed, been others, all through the old dispensation that, even as He, had been reckoned with the transgressors, and that, too, for the very cause He represented, and although they were innocent of the crimes of which they were accused; but that in Him this Scripture was to reach its end, its climax, its complete and ultimate fulfillment.

None had been perfectly sinless as He.

And none had ever been so reckoned with the transgressors as this sinless One!

He was condemned and treated, not merely as a criminal, but as the chief of all evil-doers, as public enemy number one!

He was condemned to the death of the cross!

And to make sure, that all that would might understand the meaning of this horrible thing, they crucified two other public enemies with Him!

And Jesus in the midst!

Unfathomable agony!

But why?

Why *must* this Scripture be fulfilled?

Why *must* the sinless One be reckoned among the transgressors and die as public enemy number one?

O, awful hour! The world must be exposed in all the horror of its iniquity, that it may be condemned, and God may be justified when He judgeth! If, in the hour of judgment, the world shall be asked: why did you number the sinless One with the transgressors? they will answer: because in our darkness we could not tolerate the Light!

Why?

O blessed mystery! God, too, had numbered Him with the transgressors, in His eternal good pleasure, that they might be made righteous in and through Him!

O, depth of riches!

H. H.

## *The Standard Bearer*

Semi-Monthly, except Monthly in July and August

Published by

The Reformed Free Publishing Association  
1101 Hazen Street, S. E.

EDITOR — Rev. H. Hoeksema

Contributing editors—Revs. J. Blankespoor, A. Cammenga, P. De Boer, J. D. de Jong, H. De Wolf, L. Doezeema, M. Gritters, C. Hanko, B. Kok, G. Lubbers, G. M. Ophoff, A. Petter, M. Schipper, J. Vanden Breggen, H. Veldman, R. Veldman, L. Vermeer, P. Vis, G. Vos, Mr. S. De Vries.

Communications relative to contents should be addressed to REV. H. HOEKSEMA, 1139 Franklin St., S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Communications relative to subscription should be addressed to MR. R. SCHAAFSMA, 1101 Hazen St., S. E., Grand Rapids, Mich. All Announcements and Obituaries must be sent to the above address and will not be placed unless the regular fee of \$1.00 accompanies the notice.

Subscription \$2.50 per year

Entered as second class mail at Grand Rapids, Michigan

### CONTENTS

MEDITATIE	Page
AS THE PUBLIC ENEMY .....	249
Rev. H. Hoeksema	
EDITORIALS —	
CONCORDIA .....	252
ANTWOORD ON BROEDER MEELKER .....	254
Rev. H. Hoeksema	
THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE	
EXPOSITION OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM .....	255
Rev. H. Hoeksema	
TIJDING UIT RANDOLPH .....	258
THE PSALTER, ITS REPRINT AND REVISION .....	259
Rev. A. Cammenga	
BARTHIAN ESCHATOLOGY .....	261
Rev. A. Petter	
HET GEBED EENS BEJAARDEN .....	264
Rev. G. Vos.	
DEBATE — Negative Rebuttal .....	266
Rev. J. De Jong	
DEBATE — Affirmative Rebuttal .....	270
Rev. R. Veldman	

## EDITORIALS

### Concordia

It is not necessary for the *Standard Bearer* to introduce to our readers the newest arrival in the field of current Protestant Reformed literature, *Concordia*. It introduced itself in the form of a sample copy of the first issue sent to most of our readers, if not all, together with the announcement that it is willing to visit them every two weeks for the small sum of one dollar in eight months.

We only write this editorial to welcome it, to recommend it to all our readers, to wish it a prosperous existence and a long life, to offer the *Standard Bearer* as an exchange paper as a matter of courtesy, and to make a few remarks about its contents and appearance.

The *Concordia* undoubtedly fills a need in our churches; among our people there is room for this paper. Even though *Our Church News* did not seem to enjoy the high esteem and hearty support of many of our people, when it appeared no longer in our homes, we all felt that there was something missing, especially in the line of news from our churches. Many felt that we should have something to take the place of that weekly. But while several of our people talked about the desirability of having some kind of Church News, six western ministers got together, deliberated upon the matter, took action, and the result is the *Concordia* with which by this time we have all made acquaintance.

And although it may appear somewhat bold to enter everybody's home without being invited, especially when you make a charge of three cents for the privilege of being visited, *Concordia* does not have to be ashamed of its appearance, and had pretty solid reasons to think that, once having gained entrance into the homes of our people, they would invite it to stay.

*Concordia* is a bi-weekly. It proposes to visit us in the weeks when the *Standard Bearer* does not appear.

It means to be a good deal more than a mere Church News. Besides news from our Churches, it offers a Meditation, Editorials, a Doctrinal Department, a rubric on Education, a Question Box, Current Events, and a "Children's Corner". The contents, therefore, are rich and varied, and not so heavy and, therefore, more easily readable than those of the *Standard Bearer*. And its originators very ably executed their design and gave the paper a pleasant

attractive, and artistic, even a somewhat poetic appearance. Instead of the commonplace and prosaic *Our Church News* we now have a *Concordia*, the doctrinal rubric has the heading *Among Our Treasures*, the educational department is entitled *Hearth and Belfry*, etc. The cuts that have been designed for each rubric heading add to the attractiveness of *Concordia's* appearance. Those six ministers that designed the new bi-weekly did a good job. Honor to them!

And now *Concordia* will bear with me, if I make a few critical remarks. The new arrival may as well get used to criticism anyway, for whoever makes a public appearance in this hard and cruel world must expect close and critical inspection.

First of all as to the name.

Whatever the editor may say in defense and explanation of it, except for its pleasant and poetical sound, I don't like it. First of all, the name is decidedly Lutheran. The Lutherans, perhaps due to the fact that one of their oldest confessions is the *Formula Concordia*, have almost appropriated this name for their institutions. For a specifically Protestant Reformed publication the name is hardly possible, surely not appropriate. From which follows, in the second place, that the name does not at all suggest the character and contents of the thing that bears the name. In fact, it would be more appropriate for a chorus or an orchestra, than for a Protestant Reformed paper. And the editor himself seems to have felt this, for he writes: "The 'Standard Bearer' is, purely and simply, a Theological periodical; the appeal of 'Concordia's' voice is in a different pitch, even though we purpose to sing the same melody. In 'Standard Bearer', 'Beacon Lights' and 'Concordia' we see the beginning of a symphony, a harmonious song, a mingling of pleasant sounds. No one is attracted to the monotone. In the 'Standard Bearer' we hear and are charmed by the 'Basso Profundo.' It is well. We intend to accompany you in 'Tenore di Grazia.'" Evidently, the name *Concordia* was even to him suggestive of a chorus rather than of a paper. With all respect, therefore, for its suggestion of poetical flights into higher spheres, and its musical sound, I am of the opinion that the name *Concordia* can hardly be considered appropriate as a designation of the contents and character of a Protestant Reformed publication. And the same objection I offer to the name of the publishing society: *The Evangel Society*. Anyone that is not acquainted with the real purpose of the brethren that have organized themselves under that name, will surely receive the impression that it designates a mission society. And mission societies are not Reformed. To preach the gospel is the task of the Church only.

In the first issue the news from our churches is predominantly western. But I have no doubt that this will be remedied in future issues. But with respect to the contents of this news, I would suggest that it be more strictly limited to church news, and that personal news be eliminated in as far as it does not concern the church. Trio's and calls extended, accepted or declined, serious illness of a minister that effects the church he serves, society news and news of other activities in which the churches as such are interested, should have a place in a publication like the *Concordia*. But one be careful with news of a strictly personal nature, such as that Mr. N. underwent an operation, and Mrs. N. is recovering from the flu, etc. There are many people who do not like to have their name published in connection with such incidents, while others delight in just such news. The result will be that some people will be offended because their names do appear, while others will feel hurt when their names are not mentioned when they broke a thumb, or had a tooth pulled, or sprained an ankle, or enjoyed a tea at the home of Mrs. So and So, etc. And before you know it, you will have a whole page of personal gossip, such as, for instance, used to appear (and, perhaps, still appears) in "Onze Toekomst," and in "De Volksvriend." If personal news is important enough to be published, let the Consistory of the church to which such a person belongs make an official report of it, but do not leave the choice of such news items to a correspondent or reporter.

The print, although rather clear, is too small. Already several readers have complained of this.

Finally, I think that *Concordia* should become a weekly as soon as possible. Not only would that make the news that appears in it less old, but I am sure that our people would like to receive a paper of this kind in their homes every week. And in connection with this, I would suggest that the six western ministers seek the cooperation of all our ministers, and enlarge the membership of their Society as well as their editorial staff. Otherwise, when the first enthusiasm for the undertaking has somewhat cooled off, they might find it rather hard to keep their nose to the grindstone, and write for and take care of a publication every two weeks.

I heartily recommend *Concordia* to all our readers.

H. H.

#### CLASSIS EAST

will meet in regular session Wednesday, April 5, at 9:00 A. M., at Fuller Ave.

D. Jonker, S. C.

## Antwoord Aan Broeder Meelker

Broeder Meelker schreef ons, dat sommigen den tekst in Matt. 19:9 verklaren als volgt: "De man verlaat zijne vrouw anders dan om hoererij, d.w.z., de man en de vrouw hebben geen van beiden hoererij bedreven. Nu gaat die man later wel weer trouwen, maar die vrouw, waarmee hij weer trouwt, was niet de oorzaak van het verlaten van zijne vrouw." En nu moet "Ds. Hoeksema eerst duidelijk maken, dat onze verklaring niet opgaat, voordat wij de zijne aannemen."

Laat ons dan eens zien.

Misschien is het wenschelijk, dat we de verklaring van die anderen, die door broeder Meelker hier wordt vertolkt, eerst goed duidelijk en concreet voorstellen. Als ik ze goed begriip, dan is ze als volg:

1. Een man verlaat zijne vrouw. Er is bij geen van beiden hoererij in 't spel. De vrouw heeft geen hoererij bedreven, maar ook de man is niet ontrouw geweest aan zijne huwelijksbelofte. Zelfs is er op het oogenblik, dat hij zijne vrouw verlaat geen gedachte aan hoererij in zijn hart. Hij heeft het oog op geen andere vrouw. Maar er zijn andere redenen. Hij heeft ontdekt, dat zijne vrouw niet zoo mooi is, als hij eerst meende: haar neus is wat te lang, haar mond is wat te groot, etc. Of, zij heeft het eten laten aanbranden. Of, hij mag haar karakter niet, en hij kan niet met haar overweg. Om dergelijke reden, zonder dat hij er ook maar aan denkt, om een andere te trouwen, verlaat hij haar.

2. Maar een tijd later, zeg, na twee jaar, begint het hem toch te vervelen om ongetrouwd te blijven, of zijn oog valt op eene vrouw, die hem beter schijnt te bevallen dan zijne eerste, nog altijd wettige vrouw. Hij besluit dus om weer te trouwen, en voert zijn besluit uit.

3. Zijne eerste vrouw (zijne eenig wettige vrouw) is óf weer getrouwd gedurende de twee jaren, dat de man, die haar verlaten heeft, nog niet getrouwd was met eene andere, óf gaat weer trouwen nadat haar wettige man met een ander getrouwd is.

Nu is het niet recht duidelijk of de verklaarders door broeder Meelker voorgesteld, bedoelen, dat de verlatene hertrouwt *eer* haar wettige man weer getrouwd is, dan wel *nadat* hij eene andere vrouw genomen heeft. Maar ik vermoed, dat ze het eerste bedoelen. We zullen echter beide mogelijkheden even nader beschouwen.

Als de verlatene weer trouwt *nadat* haar wettige man weer getrouwd is, maakt het natuurlijk hoegenaamd geen verschil, wat haar betreft, of haar man reeds bij de verlatening een ander op het oog had en hoererij had bedreven of niet. Feit is: de man is met een ander getrouwd, leeft dus in hoererij, en toch heeft

de verlatene geen recht om weer te trouwen.

Doch wat te zeggen van die eerste mogelijkheid? Een man verlaat zijne vrouw zonder *direkt* weer te trouwen, en nu trouwt een andere man de verlatene, *eer* nog haar wettige man weer getrouwd is. In dat geval is dus de verlatene vrouw niet onschuldig: ze tertrouwt, terwijl haar man geen hoererij bedreven heeft. Ze bedrijft dus zelf hoererij, en die haar trouwt bedrijft ook overspel. Hiervan zou ik het volgende willen zeggen:

1. Dit is wel een heel aardige uitweg uit de moeilijkheid aangaande de onschuldige verlatene, daar ze haar tot de schuldige maakt, maar de verklaring is toch meer inlegkunde dan uitlegkunde. Als de Heiland zegt: "zoo wie zijne vrouw verlaat anders dan om hoererij, en eene andere trouwt, die doet overspel, en wie de verlatene trouwt, die doet ook overspel," dan zegt mij de volgorde der woorden dat: 1. De man zijne onschuldige vrouw verlaat. 2. Trouwt met eene andere vrouw. 3. Daarna de onschuldige vrouw ook weer trouwt. 4. Beide schuldig staan aan overspel of hoererij.

2. Doch zeg eens, dat die verklaring gewettigd zou zijn, dan baat ze immers nog niets tot rechtvaardiging van de stelling, dat de onschuldige partij in eene echtscheiding op grond van hoererij wel weer mag trouwen. Want immers, dan wordt de man de onschuldige partij. Hij is wel schuldig aan het onwettig verlaten van zijne vrouw, maar hij trouwde niet met eene andere tot zijne vrouw weer getrouwd was. Zijne vrouw leefde dus in hoererij, toen hij weer trouwde. Ja, maar de tekst zegt ook van den man, *dat hij overspel bedrijft, als hij zijne vrouw verlaat en eene andere trouwt*. Ook al zou de verklaring als zoodanig opgaan, zou men er toch niets mee vorderen.

Een volgende keer nog iets over I Cor. 7:10, 11, D. V.

H. H.

## De Christelijke Cultuur

Dat Mozes in zijne dagen het vrouwelijk geslacht niet schouwde in het jagen naar man en mannendracht, laat reed'lijk zich omlijnen in d'ure van 't weleer, waarin het VROUW verschijnen meer SLAAFSCH was dan van EER. Maar, desniettegenstaande maakt Mozes toch bekend, dat straks, de ALVERWAANDE, de VROUW zich kleedt, als VENT\*. En dat hij in zijn reden, als GODS PROFEET, zeer klaar, het oog heeft op het HEDEN, blijkt ook maar al te waar. . . . Het is de EVOLUTIE, de KULTUUR van het thans—

de wereldrevolutie 't welk bracht de chaos-glans. Gods WIJSHEID en ZIJN STEMME, ZIJN GEEST, Zijn ziel, Zijn Woord, weet men geheel te remmen, te werpen overboord. En nu, wat is dan trouwer, en wat is dan zoo kloek? dan, dat de MAN wordt VROUWE. en de vrouwe draagt de BROEK? En zoo zien wij de wereld, de vrouw als MAN'TJE, braaf; het wijfje mooi bekereld, en mantje als haar slaaf. . . . Dat deed eens Rome vallen in puin en as en slijk, en vaagde uit de TALLen van 't OUD ROMEINSCHE RIJK. . . De pantalon als tooiing van 't zwakkere geslacht, ziet op des WERELD'S ROOIING het uur der bange nacht . . . . Mijn ziel hulpt zich in zakken wanneer zij op de straat een christen ziet in pakken waarin het manvolk gaat. Ik wil haar laten lezen wat Mozes daarvan zegt†, hetwelk haar kan genezen en wand'len doen oprecht.

\*) Deut. 22:5. †) Deut. 22:5.

Hans Hansen.

---



---

## The Triple Knowledge

---



---

### An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

#### PART TWO

#### OF MAN'S REDEMPTION

#### Lord's Day XI.

#### Chapter 3

#### The Effectual Saviour.

In the previous chapter we emphasized the truth that Jesus is a perfect and complete Saviour, i.e. that He perfectly accomplishes all that belongs to and is implied in the work of salvation from beginning to end. He not only performs that part of the work of salvation that must be accomplished for us, in behalf of us, our redemption; but He also is the Author of the wonder of salvation that must be wrought within us and upon us to lead us out of sin and death and shame to everlasting life and righteousness and glory. Now, this really implies that He must be an effectual Saviour, i.e. one that is wholly capable and powerful to save. For if He alone accomplishes *all* the work of salvation, if we really find in Him only *all* that is necessary unto our salvation, it follows that His alone is all the power to save, and that He is in no need

of help on the part of man. Hence, it would seem to be somewhat superfluous to write a special chapter on the absolute efficacy, the sureness, the unfailing power of Jesus as Saviour.

Yet, to cut off all possibility of misunderstanding on this point, and with a view to the prevailing and pernicious spirit of Arminianism in circles that profess to believe in Jesus the Saviour, it may be expedient to emphasize for a moment the truth that Jesus actually and effectually saves, and, that, too, without the will or consent of the natural man, yea, in spite of the fact that the latter will never give his consent to be saved, and will exert himself to the utmost to oppose this Jesus that saves him from his sin and death.

O, the difference between sound doctrine and the Arminian error on this point often appears to be so slight and insignificant, that it would not seem worth the effort to explain it! When you insist that Jesus is a complete Saviour, and that one must find in Him all that is necessary unto salvation, the Arminian seems to agree fully and wholeheartedly with you. Salvation is all of Christ, in no respect or degree of man, he will say. It is not of works, it is all of grace! Christ alone merited our redemption for us by His perfect sacrifice on the cross, and that, too, while we were yet enemies. And in Him are all the spiritual blessings of salvation. He bestows them upon us. He regenerates us and gives us faith whereby we may appropriate Him and all the blessings of grace. There is nothing of man in it. Of ourselves we can do nothing. We cannot believe, we cannot accept Him, we cannot fight the good fight and persevere to the end. Always His grace is first. And the Arminian will not even object if you insist that Christ bestows these blessings of salvation only upon the elect! Surely God has chosen them that believe in Christ, and that will inherit eternal life, from before the foundation of the world, and these are surely and infallibly and powerfully saved. Jesus saves!

You say, perhaps, that all this is sound doctrine, purely Reformed, and that no man confessing these truths can possibly be an Arminian?

But what about the Arminian document that was composed in Gouda the Netherlands, in 1610, known as the *Remonstrantie*? That document begins with an article on the doctrine of predestination as follows: "*Wij gelooven, dat God, door een eeuwig en onveranderlijk besluit, in Jezus Christus Zijnen Zoon, eer's werelds grond gelegd was, besloten heeft uit het gevallen menschelijk geslacht diegenen in Christus, en om Christus' wil en door Christus zalig te maken, die door de genade des Heiligen Geestes in Jezus gelooven en in dat geloof en in de gehoorzaamheid des geloofs door diezelfde genade ten einde toe volharden zouden.*" After all, does not this article plainly and explicitly teach that only the elect shall be saved, and



that election is an eternal and immutable decree? You object, perhaps, that this article teaches election of believers and of those that will persevere, but does not the article also definitely state that one can believe only through the grace of the Holy Spirit? Or consider the third article of this same document, and see whether you can find anything in it that is not sound doctrine: "*Wij gelooven, dat de mensch het zaligmakend geloof van zichzelf niet heeft, noch uit kracht van zijnen vrijen wil, alzoo hij in den staat der afwijking en der zonde niets goeds, dat waarlijk goed is (gelijk inzonderheid het zaligmakend geloof) wil en van zich zelve kan denken, willen of doen, maar dat het noodig is, dat hij van God in Christus door zijn Heiligen Geest worde herboren en vernieuwd in zijn verstand, genegenheden, wil, en alle krachten, opdat hij het ware goed recht moge verstaan, bedenken, willen en volbrengen.*" Would you suspect that men, who did not hesitate to express themselves so strongly on the total incapability of man to do any good, and on the absolute necessity of regeneration by the Spirit, could teach the doctrine of universal atonement and of the free will of man in the matter of salvation?

This would seem impossible.

Yet, this is exactly the truth. In the second article of the same *Remonstrantie* the Arminians declared: "*dat krachtens Gods eeuwig besluit Jezus Christus, de Zaligmaker der wereld, voor ieder mensch gestorven is, alzoo dat Hij voor allen door den kruisdood de verzoening en de vergeving der zonden verworven heeft, alzoo nochtans dat niemand de vergeving der zonden werkelijk geniet dan de geloovige.*" Here they teach the error of general atonement. Christ died for all. Yet, only believers actually enjoy the forgiveness of sins which the Saviour merited for all. And in the fourth article of this document, after they emphasized strongly that the grace of God is the beginning and end of all good, so that without it man does absolutely nothing, they declare that this grace is not irresistible: "*Maar wat de manier van de werking dier genade aangaat, die is niet onweerstaanlijk; want daar staat van velen geschreven: dat zij den Heiligen Geest wederstaan hebben. Hand. 7 en elders op vele plaatsen.*"

In this last statement may be found the reason why the Arminian can often use language that leaves the impression that he is perfectly sound, that he believes in an effectual Jesus and in sovereign grace, while, nevertheless, he rejects both. O yes, it is all of and through grace, but whether a man shall receive this grace or not depends on himself! For grace is not irresistible! And this means that it can be efficacious only if man consents. If the sinner resists, the Saviour can do nothing with him. Jesus is not an effectual Saviour. And because He is not an effectual Saviour, He is really not a Saviour at all. The slogan which the Arminian loves to write on billboards and over the

doors of his church, *Jesus Saves*, does not represent what he actually teaches. For his Jesus, the Arminian Saviour, is capable of saving only those sinners that are willing to be saved. And such there are not! *The Arminian Jesus does not save!*

And that is why it is so extremely important that we understand the difference between this Arminian error and the truth of the Word of God on this point. It appears so insignificant, but it is very fundamental. It is not merely a question as to whether all men or only the elect are saved: it is a question that concerns salvation itself. For in order to be able to present atonement as universal, and salvation as an opportunity for all men, the Arminian must deny the efficacy of grace; in order to be able to teach that Jesus is willing to save all, he must deny that He effectually saves any!

Let us clearly understand this.

Christ died for all men, the Arminian teaches. By His death on the cross He obtained the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation for every man. But did He really, according to Arminian doctrine? Did Christ by His perfect sacrifice really obtain salvation for all men in the sense that through His death all men were brought into a state of reconciliation and eternal righteousness before God? Or let us put the question thus: did Christ then, actually pay for the sins of all men by His atoning death? Not at all! The Arminian dare not teach this. He understands full well that, if Christ had actually and effectually paid by His blood for the sins of all men, all must be saved. For then the sins of all would be blotted out, forgiven for ever, and all men would be justified. And not only does actual experience as well as Scripture condemn such universalism, but such a doctrine would indeed make men careless and profane, seeing that their salvation and justification has absolutely nothing to do with their own attitude toward sin and righteousness, and toward the Christ of God. And, therefore, in order to be able to maintain the universality of the cross, the Arminian denies its *effectualness*. Christ did not pay for the sins of all, actually and effectually, but only as to His *intention*. *Effectually* he atoned for *no one*. As to His *intention* He atoned for *all*. In the death of Christ there is the *possibility* of forgiveness for *all men*. *Actually* there is forgiveness in that death for *no one*. And so it comes about that Arminianism is principally a denial of the blood of Christ and of vicarious atonement. A man that preaches salvation depending on the free will of man, and a Christ for all, may not be conscious of this, and he may not intentionally deny the atonement, in fact, he may appear to preach righteousness through the blood emphatically, it is nevertheless the truth that He denies the truth of vicarious atonement. For vicarious atonement means that Jesus actually and effectually blotted out



the guilt of sin for those for whom He died. Arminianism teaches that Christ did this for *no one*, but that *in His intention* He did it for *all men*. Jesus is not an effectual Saviour. For the majority of men He died in vain.

And the same is true of the Arminian error with application to the work of salvation as it is wrought upon us and within us. As we have learned from the quotations made above from the *Remonstrantie*, the Arminian emphatically teaches that grace must do it all. Man can of himself do nothing. It is only through the grace of the Spirit of Christ that he is regenerated and that he can believe in Jesus. And so it is to the end. Grace must not only save the sinner: it must also preserve him. Of himself he can do nothing to fight the good fight even unto the end, and to be faithful. But through the power of grace he is able to stand and to persevere. And all this grace is in Jesus. Is He then, according to this Arminian doctrine, an effectual Deliverer from the power and dominion of sin and death, and does He really liberate the sinner from the shackles of corruption? This the Arminian could never maintain, and at the same time defend the universality of salvation. For it is evident that if Christ would thus effectually and powerfully deliver all men from sin and death, no one could possibly be lost. And this is contrary to all experience. All men are not actually saved. The majority of men are lost. Even the majority of men that come into contact with Jesus through the preaching of the gospel, must have nothing of Him. And so, as we have seen, the Arminian introduces his doctrine of resistible grace. Christ died for all, not actually, but in His intention. And now, Christ is the Deliverer of all men, not effectually, but again in His intention! He is *willing* to save all men, if they will only let Him. He is ready to bestow His saving grace upon them all, if only they do not resist Him. He would like to enter the hearts of all men, if they will only open their hearts to Him, but if they refuse to open when He knocks, He is powerless to save them. He *offers* salvation to all men, well meaningly, earnestly, but He *effectually* saves *no one*!

And thus it is with respect to preservation and perseverance. To the end the Arminian Christ is the *willing* but *powerless* Saviour, powerless, that is, to overcome the resistance of the sinner. When once the sinner has consented to be saved, and Christ has come into his heart, it is by no means sure that he will be saved in the end. To be sure, Christ must preserve him if he is to be saved. And Christ is *willing* to keep him. But grace is never irresistible, and if the believer is not willing to let Christ continue to work in his heart and to preserve him by the grace of His Spirit, he will fall away and be lost. The Arminian Jesus is not an effectual Saviour. As they preach Him, the slogan *Jesus saves* does not apply to Him, is

utterly false! A Christ *pro omnibus* is a Jesus for *no one*. To maintain the universality of salvation the Arminian must change the certainty of salvation into a mere chance dependent upon the will of man. To preach a *universal* Christ he must present a *powerless* Jesus.

Let us see this clearly.

A universal Christ must needs be an impotent Jesus. And the converse is equally true: a *mighty and effectual Jesus must needs be particular*. Either you offer a Jesus that is *willing* to save *all men* but cannot, or you *preach* a Jesus that *effectually* saves *His people only*. And we may go a step further, and say: Christ either actually and effectually saves or He does not save at all! But the name *Jesus* means that He is an *effectual* Saviour of *His people*, not that He is a *possible* Saviour of *all men*. For thus even the angel interprets the name: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he *shall* save *his people* from their sins." Matt. 1:21.

And this is the teaching of Scripture throughout.

The name Jesus expresses that Christ is an effectual Saviour, because there is *election* in that name. He shall save His people! And this means that it is the eternal will and immutable decree of God that Jesus shall surely and infallibly save all those, and those only, whom the Father has given Him. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 6:38, 39. That is the reason why the Lord can assert so positively in the face of the unbelief and apostacy from Him of the Jews in Capernaum: "All that the Father giveth unto me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. He is the good shepherd that lays down his life for *the sheep*, and that, too, according to the commandment He received from the Father, John 10:11-18. He knows His sheep and is known of them, John 10:14. And His sheep are those whom the Father gave Him, John 10:29. They also hear His voice, and He knows them, and they follow Him, and He surely gives unto them eternal life, and they can never perish. Their ultimate salvation is absolutely sure, because He is an effectual Saviour, that holds His own in His hand, and no one can pluck them out of that mighty hand. John 10:27-30.

And thus this name of Jesus is preached and explained by the apostles after the resurrection. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified,

them he also glorified." Rom. 8:29,30. The purpose of election must stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, even as it is written: "Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated." Rom. 9:13. "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Rom. 9:15, 16. Salvation is not a chance, or a possibility, but an absolute certainty, for the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Eph. 1:3, 4.

Consider what this means. It is according to the pattern, and strictly within the scope of election that all the spiritual blessings of grace come upon us. These blessings are sure because they have their source in God's eternal election: they are certain because they are particular. This means that God has *reconciled* us in Christ, according as he hath chosen us, that He prepared the atonement of Christ for us, according as He has chosen us in Him; that He blotted out our sins, according as He has chosen us in Him; that He called us, bestowed faith on us, justified us, delivered us, sanctified us, according as He has chosen us in Him; and that He will surely preserve and keep us, and glorify us in the end, all according to the pattern and within the scope of His eternal election of us in Christ!

And so, Christ is an effectual Saviour, not of all men, but of His people, those whom the Father hath given Him: He *shall* save *His people* from their sins! His death on the cross is effectual redemption, i.e. by His perfect obedience Jesus actually paid for all the sins of all His own, and He effectually obtained for them all true and everlasting righteousness, and the right to eternal life and glory. Atonement is not a mere intention for all, but a certainty for the elect. Their sins are blotted out, and they cannot be imputed to them any more. God *has* blessed them with the blessing of forgiveness, not because they *willed* to receive it, for they did not will, neither could they possibly will to receive righteousness, but solely because on the accursed tree Christ truly represented the elect, and He really brought the perfect sacrifice of atonement for them. And He is an effectual Deliverer, that is not only willing, but perfectly able and powerful to bestow all the blessings of salvation upon us, and that not because we will or desire or pray Him to give us these blessings of salvation, but in spite of the fact that we do not and cannot will to receive His grace, and because He is the mighty and effectual Saviour, able to save whomsoever He will, and willing to save whomsoever He received of His Father, i.e. the elect. He enters into their hearts, the door of which they would keep shut against Him. He estab-

lishes His throne in those hearts of His own, breaks the shackles of sin and death, rules over them by His grace, justifies and sanctifies them, preserves them even unto the end, without fail, and without any possibility of failure, till He shall raise them at the last day, and lead them into the glory prepared for them before the foundation of the world. Yes, indeed, Jesus is willing to save, but He is also powerful to save whom He will. He is an infallibly effectual Saviour!

H. H.

## Tijding Uit Randolph



Reeds eerder werd in de Standard Bearer melding gemaakt van Randolph, Wisconsin. De redakteur van genoemd blad schreef toen in verband met arbeid door hem en anderen hier verricht van de "open door" die de Heere den Protestantschen Gereformeerde Kerken hier te Randolph gegeven had. Dat was meer dan een jaar geleden. Later schreef de Secretaris van de Zendings Commissie een nieuwsbe-

richt vermeldende het feit, dat een aantal geloovigen met hunne kinderen hier in Randolph tot eene gemeente waren georganiseerd. Zoo zag de gemeente te Randolph, die Protestantsch Gereformeerd heet, het licht.

Sedert dien tijd stond het leven hier niet stil. Predikanten van Classis East bleven per classicale regeling getrouw komen om voor ons het Woord te bedienen. En de kerkeraad nam maatregelen om een eigen herder en leeraar te verkrijgen. Randolph beriep Ds. G. Lubbers van Pella, Iowa. En op onze eerste beroeping kregen wij het antwoord: Roeping aangenomen.

Op den avond van Jan. 27 mochten we onzen nieuwen leeraar met zijn gezin in ons midden verwelkomen. Wij hadden dien avond ook het voorrecht om Ds. Hanko in ons midden te hebben. Zijn Eerwaarde was er op ons verzoek en nam het presidium waar voor dien avond.

Voor een programma was gezorgd. Oud en jong gaven van het hunne ter beste. Het was voor ons

eene blijde gelegenheid. O.a. mag het volgende uittreksel van één der stukken dien avond voorgelezen, dienen, om den geest te vertolken, die er dien avond in ons midden heerschte.

“Van avond is het een avond van groote blijdschap. Voornamelijk nu wij voor het eerst onzen beroepen herder en leeraar in ons midden mogen hebben. Wij lezen in Gods Woord: De mensch overdenkt zijnen weg maar de Heere bestuurt zijne gangen. Wij zeggen Hem dan ook allereerst dank, dat Hij in het hart van onzen leeraar gegeven heeft, om ons beroep op hem uitgebracht aan te nemen. Moge de Heere het kronen met Zijn onmisbaren zegen. . . .

“Het past ons dezen avond met den Psalmist uit te roepen: Looft, looft den Heer, mijne ziel met alle krachten. . . .

“Wij zijn wel klein! Maar heeft de Heere niet in Zijn Woord gesproken: Waar twee of drie in Mijnen Naam vergaderd zijn, ben ik in het midden van hen. In dat vertrouwen willen wij op dezen onzen ingeslagen weg voortgaan. Niet van den mensch, maar van den Heere onzen God alles verwachtede.

“Wij danken voornamelijk Ds. Hanko, onzen consulent, voor zijnen ijver en bemoeienissen aan ons als gemeente betoond, zoodat, mede door zijnen arbeid, wij hier nu als gemeente mogen bestaan en Zondag op Zondag het zuivere Evangelie mogen hooren verkondigd worden. Geve de Heere, dat dat Evangelie altijd voor ons moge zijn eene lamp voor onzen voet en een licht op ons pad.

“Ook zeggen wij onzen Classis dank voor hare hulp, die ze ons met raad en daad betoond heeft; vooral in het zenden van predikanten elken Zondag om hier het Woord te bedienen.

“Zegen de Heere ons als gemeente. Moge de woorden van eene zekere dichter ook de onze zijn:

Faalt aardsche vrienden vaak aan krachten,  
 “Nooit kan 't geloof te veel verwachten,  
 Des Heilands woorden zijn gewis,  
 Maar nooit een vriend als Jezus is.  
 Wat zou ooit Zijn macht beperken?  
 't Heelal staat onder Zijn gebied,  
 Wat Zijne liefde ooit will bewerken,  
 Ontzegt Hem Zijn vermogen niet.”

Op Zondag, Jan. 30, werd onze beroepen leeraar, onder leiding van Ds. Hanko, in het ambt bevestigd. Dit was in den namiddag dienst. (Morgen-dienst hebben wij in Randolph niet.) Onze aandacht werd bepaald bij Kolossensen 4:17. Beide leeraar en gemeente gevoelden, dat zij onder het beslag van het Woord kwamen. Het kwam met Zijn hoogen ernst en zware last! Aan het eind van den dienst sprak Ds. Lubbers den zegen uit over de gemeente, en in den avond dienst sprak hij tot ons over, “Acht geven op het Profetisch Woord”. II Pet. 1:19.

Verder mogen wij mededeelen, dat de catechesatie klassen voor klein en groot nu geregeld gehouden worden. De vergader-plaats is in de studeer-kamer van den leeraar. Er zijn ingeschreven: Elf catechesanten in de namiddag klas en zeven in de Dinsdagavond klas.

En nu, zooals boven reeds afgeschreven werd, onze hulpe en verwachting is van den Heere. Hij zal het maken.

Dank voor de plaatsing, Redakteur.

De Kerkeraad  
 der Prot. Geref. Gemeente te Randolph, Wis.

---

## The Psalter, Its Reprint and Revision

It is characteristic of our Protestant Reformed Churches that we adhere rigidly to our Reformed Church Order. This is also true with respect to our congregational singing in public worship. Barring a few exceptions, mentioned specifically in article sixty-nine of the Church Order, our singing in public worship is restricted to the Old Testament Psalms.

Most all of the various denominations of Reformed persuasion have either altered the sixty-ninth article of the Church Order or have ignored it altogether and have introduced hymn singing in their public worship. The reason for such action is based on the fact that restriction to the Old Testament Psalms deprives them of the light that the New Testament adds to the Old.

Our Protestant Reformed Churches are not at all in agreement with this since we are convinced that the Holy Spirit has shed the light of the New Testament throughout the Old Testament Psalms by means of the prophetic strain running through the entire book of Psalms. The Psalms, when properly studied, contain far more brilliant light of New Testament realities than any of the best hymns ever composed and published. The Psalms have always proven themselves as containing a far deeper and profound truth of spiritual realities than the hymns, due to no other reason than that the Psalms are infallibly inspired by the very Spirit of God while the hymns are not. For this reason it is our avowed hope that our Protestant Reformed Churches may continue to adhere faithfully to its purpose to sing only the Old Testament Psalms in public worship and never forsake this principle.

The Synod of our Churches has foreseen that if this principle is to be carried out then it will be necessary for our Churches to publish a new edition of “The Psalter”. This need is brought upon us because the

present stock of Psalters is rapidly dwindling. A committee on Psalter Survey and Reprint reported to the Synod in 1942 that the stock of new Psalters (large size) on the market numbered one hundred forty-six copies, compared to the fact that there were over two thousand copies in actual use in our Churches at that time. On the other hand, the need of reprinting "The Psalter" is brought upon us by the fact that the former publisher and copyright holder of the present day Psalter did not foresee a large enough market to warrant the financial liability to reprint the present Psalter since, to his knowledge, only our Churches and "The Netherland Reformed Churches" (the latter more commonly known as "De Oud Gereformeerde Kerken") were the only churches using said publication.

Were there another publication on the market containing the Old Testament Psalms fit for congregational singing our Synod might have considered the same rather than contemplating the reprint of the present Psalter. To the knowledge of the investigating committee there is no such publication. Besides, if this type of publication had been found, a reprint, in part, would still be necessary since such a publication would not contain our Reformed Doctrinal Standards and Liturgy, just as vital for the needs of our Churches as the Psalms themselves.

A number of Voices have been raised saying that we could better use the "Psalter Hymnal" published by the Christian Reformed Churches, rather than submitting ourselves to the tremendous task of reprinting "The Psalter". This, too, was considered by the Synodical committee in charge but it was finally turned down. The first reason for rejecting the introduction of "The Psalter Hymnal" in our Churches is because the committee thought it unwise to introduce a book containing hymns lest a weaker element in years to come might yield to the temptation of singing hymns and Psalms or of singing *more* hymns than Psalms as is the case in not a few Churches using said publication. The committee also felt that a Psalter, printed at a great expense and with ardent labors in the early years of our Church history, will serve as a monument and it will bear witness to our future generations of our stand with respect to the material to be sung in the worship of our Covenant God.

One other matter was considered by the committee of Synod before it advised to reprint and revise the present Psalter and that was to request and contract the printing of "The Psalter Hymnal" without the hymns which it contains in its present form. However, on studying this matter it was proven that the Psalter section of said publication was rather abbreviated and also showed a more or less tendency to eliminate such stanzas which would give a definite Psalter selection a place in the category of the "Imprecatory Psalms" (vloek Psalmen), a category frown-

ed upon by any who would choose to adhere to the doctrine of common grace.

In consideration of all these facts the committee of our Synod could do nothing else but advise the reprint of "The Psalter". This advice our Synod of 1943 adopted with this exception, namely, rather than deciding to reprint "The Psalter", Synod decided to print "A" Psalter. Why this difference in phraseology? Because the same committee which advised the reprint also advised a revision of the present Psalter.

The Synod was so advised by its committee not on the basis that a revision was *absolutely necessary* but rather because it was *wise* to do so. When one considers that our Churches will be required to spend approximately five thousand dollars in the reprint of The Psalter, together with the fact that this book will be used for many years to come in our public worship, it stands to reason that it is wise to correct any possible errors and weaknesses and produce a better edition than its predecessor.

Although "The Psalter" is a monumental work in the Church of Jesus Christ, nevertheless, the versification and music are the work of men and it necessarily bears that distinguishing mark throughout, namely, that it is not without flaw and can be improved upon.

Enumerating such flaws and weaknesses in detail, together with a detailed account of the improvements, is out of the question in this writing. However, to give an idea of the changes deemed necessary to improve the present Psalter we will give just a few examples.

In the first place, the wording in the versification is not always grammatically neither exegetically correct. It cannot be denied that Psalter number four, the fifth verse, has a definite Arminian tendency expressing the idea that today we have the chance of accepting salvation while tomorrow it may be too late, entirely inconsistent with the sovereignty of God and with the Psalm itself as recorded in Holy Writ. The same may be said of number two hundred thirteen, verse thirteen, and also of number two hundred fifty-five. With reference to the latter, how much more accurately the idea of the Psalm is expressed in the versification of number two hundred fifty-four.

With respect to the grammar used in the present Psalter one does not say too much when he states that in many cases it could be improved upon. The phraseology is sometimes obsolete and clumsy. We refer to such phrases as: "my heart was all on fire" found in number one hundred five, verse three; and, "If that the Lord had not our right maintained, if that the Lord had not with us remained" found in number three hundred fifty-three, verse one.

Besides this, no one will deny that "The Psalter"

contains a goodly number of tunes which have proven unsatisfactory and which could easily be eliminated and replaced by more favorable tunes. Then, too, some selections are duplicated as far as the versification is concerned without any definite advantage of the second tyne over the first.

Finally, it may be said that the present Psalter would be improved by adding a goodly number of chorales, so fitting for public worship. It would be wonderful if our new Psalter would contain a number of the chorales found in our Holland Psalm book which are so very dear to the older generation and which will, no doubt, find a hearty response in the hearts of the younger generation as well. Undoubtedly our Synod could obtain the right to incorporate into our new Psalter a number of the best translations of the Holland versification of the Psalms with the accompanying music now appearing in "The Christian Hymnal" and "The Psalter Hymnal". It may be possible that our own Churches contain sufficient talent to produce a still better translation of the Holland versification of the Psalms. If so, we would urge these talented folks among us to set themselves to this task and submit samples of their work to our Synod or its committee.

Possibly some of the younger generation, who have never learned to sing the old Holland Psalms, are not to greatly enthused about the incorporation of such translations into our new Psalter, but it might well be borne in mind that in the loss of the Holland Psalms we loose in part a precious heritage of the faith of our fathers as expressed in the chorales of the Churches of the old fatherland.

Considering all these things it is doubtful that many will be found in our Churches who would care to claim that Synod's great task of printing and revising "The Psalter" is a useless task. Singing in public worship is an integral part of the worship of our Covenant God whose praise must be expressed in carefully chosen words, with the best of music and conformable to God's own Word.

A. C.

#### TEACHER WANTED

The First Protestant Reformed School of Redlands, California, is in need of a Teacher to teach eight grades—man or woman. Those interested please correspond with Herman Joling, 845 W. Brockton Ave., Redlands, California.

## Barthian Eschatology

In writing on the above subject one is inclined to help the reader just a little by rendering the technical term Eschatology by our simple phrase "the Doctrine of the Last Things". However some caution is necessary here, for especially with Barthians, more than with other theologians we must be very careful in rendering his terms and concepts.

This is true with respect to all of his work for Barth often struggles for an entire page trying and trying to say what he means, using: that is, I mean, in other words, by manner of speaking, etc. But this is especially the case with his Eschatology and we shall see that Barth's doctrine is quite different from our Doctrine of the Last Things. And one hesitates as he goes along to say something definite.

In the first place we must not expect to find his Eschatol neatly laid out for us in the last locus in a Theology set, for in the prospectus to a promised Dogmatik Barth sets forth that the last volume will treat the doctrine of Redemption (Erlösung), after a volume on the Reconciliation (Versöhnung). And since he considers Ethics as an integral part of Dogmatics he will treat the will of God viewed as promise at the end of this last volume as an integral part of it. From this it may appear that Barth's Eschatol and our doctrine of the last things are not the same. In fact he rather sarcastically ridicules the method of present Dogmatics when it loosely adds at the end of its Loci "an innocent little chapter on the last things".

Now this difference between us and Barth is caused by especially two things: 1. His method of explaining Scripture (which is a subordinate part of his doctrine of the Word of God) and, 2. His idea of History. And these things make it so hard for us to understand Barth. I may mention my own experience as typical I believe. When I was at school his "The Word of God and the Word of Man" first appeared in English and several of us bought it. But after struggling with it for some time I sold it again. Later I bought a new copy and fared only some better and disposed of it also, yet since then, I have again had a copy and was able to enjoy it more. Since then, of course Barthian literature has flowed from the press in an ever-increasing stream. I believe this experience was typical because on the one hand the language and presentation is very elusive and trying, but on the other hand tremendously challenging. For although Barth is strange, provoking and exasperating and even disgusting, he is indeed a theological giant and he has compelled the Church to come back and listen to him after throwing him away in exasperation and disgust.

That the Barthian Eschatology is especially in-

fluenced by his method of explaining Scripture will appear in two phases. There is first of all his inclination to higher criticism. Any small detail which might seem out of place to Barth is very readily removed by calling it a mistake on the part of the writer. And this is not because he thinks to have found such mistakes, but apart from any actual mistakes he holds that Divine Revelation is such a tremendous thing that it can not at all be hampered by the littleness of man. Students of Scripture have often had some difficulty, for example, to harmonize the Apostles' apparent expectation of an early return of Christ with the fact that they and their generations have long since passed away without seeing the fulfillment. Such things would of course, give Barth no trouble whatsoever. He would simply ignore details and grasp the great central fact: Jesus is Coming!

But, further, there is also Barth's method of interpreting this permanent core of Scripture. The method is somewhat similar to the old allegorical method which sought several different meanings behind the evident meaning of the words. Barth, however, calls his method the mythologizing method. So he says in "The Word of God and the Word of Man", "What would it matter if Abraham and Moses were the products of later Myth-making, and again in his "Commentary on Romans" at 9:12 he says that the Reformers, when they applied election and rejection to individuals were speaking mythologically and suggests that this is in line with Paul. Thus the concrete historical characters and acts represent to us principles and powers and ideals just as the old "hero-and-monster" tales may point to some long-forgotten struggles for principles.

We may recall the Geelkerken controversy that arose in Netherlands in 1926. I do not know whether he was influenced by Barthianism, so I use it only as an illustration, but Geelkerken raised the question whether the serpent, the tree, etc. of Genesis 3 were true objects of sight and touch, etc. (zintuiglijk waarneembaar) and wanted to distinguish between mechanical rigidity and organic freedom in understanding the teaching of the Bible. Now this same method of approach and interpretation is used by Barth with respect to both the first and the last things as they are recorded in the Bible. Something of this method strikes us throughout his "Commentary on Romans" and his "The Resurrection of the Dead" which is commentary after a fashion on the First Corinthians. Always we see him getting behind the words and apparent meaning of the Apostle and finding a "spiritual", other-worldly meaning.

And yet this is not all, for the result is still further removed from our grasp by his idea of history, which I am rather hesitant to describe. Simply expressed, History is as it were a dark span of existence

alongside the eternal light existence of God. Now this night-span in which we find ourselves is sometimes touched by the light-life of God, and that is revelation. But this revelation is not history or a part of it. We cannot see it or, as a historian, talk about it. It belongs to another world. Perhaps we can say only that the spiritual man can "feel" it.

Now the greatest of these penetrations coming from the other world is the Resurrection of Christ. Barth does not weary of marveling at and glorying in the Resurrection. It is one of his greatest themes. And it is just the Resurrection of Christ that is the Eschatology. For Eschatology is not the end of time in days and years, but it is the reaching of the goal which God has in mind with penetrating our world by resurrection power.

This penetration Barth expresses as follows in commenting on Rom. 1:4: "In the Resurrection the Holy Spirit touches the world of flesh." However, it touches it as outside lines (tangents) touch a circle, without touching it. And precisely because it does not touch it, it touches it as its boundary, as new world." Barth hereby means to say that because of its wholly-otherness it barely touches, yea, really it never comes to us to be a part of history. The illustration requires, of course, to imagine the ideal-lines of the mathematician and not our crude pencil-lines, which lie visibly against each other.

Now in this vein Barth does not weary of emphasizing that nothing is of value that has no share in the Resurrection. This is, indeed, a beautiful idea and is perhaps all too easily criticized and hated by Pelegian and worldly-minded critics, for the antithesis of regeneration is surely as deep as that and is not furthermore limited to men only, but extends also to the restoration of the frustrated creature, as Barth so beautifully develops in his Commentary on Rom. 8. But it is surely not unbiblical to say that it transforms history and historical things. And so I do believe that Barth in his emphasis on the absolute difference between God and the creature, and between that of sin and grace, slips into an unscriptural dualism between nature and grace, between heaven and earth, between earthly and heavenly time (the antithesis between time and eternity to which some object is undoubtedly as absolute as that between Creator and creature). One needs only to read his comment on Rom. 13:8-11 teaching that government is a necessary evil to which we must be subject because of sin, and I Cor. 7 (see the "Resurrection of the Dead") where he contends that marriage is far from "sacred" as Luther taught, but rather a divinely ordained condition to prevent impurity.

This absolute opposition between the earthly and the heavenly causes Barth to speak very little of calendar time in Eschatology, and causes him to lay

all emphasis on the non-temporal workings of Christ's Resurrection Power. So he says that Dogma is, as far as we are able to know it, the knowledge of a traveller knowing through means, but it shall one day be immediate knowledge when we have arrived in the realm of Redemption where all contradiction between being and manifestation is removed not only in promise but as really as it is in God Himself (Dogm. 1st Ed. Vol. I, pp. 106-124ff.) Thus all that is said about a man who has the Holy Spirit is an Eschatological statement, that is, as a believer he is able to embrace that which is already true for him from God's side although it is not true from his side. We are redeemed, set free, children of God in faith. And thus the certainty of faith is the certainty of hope, for if we could indeed see it now as it is a reality, that would be our existence with Him in eternity in the Kingdom of Glory (Dogm. 2nd Ed. Vol. Ia, pp. 529-533.) Here also we must remember and observe that Barth is not really speaking of hope toward the future and faith toward the future, but hope and faith toward something that is already real from God's side but hidden from us.

Against this we must surely maintain that though we grant that some things are true in God's thought and imputation with regard to us and by the Holy Spirit an actual inward transformation already exists, yet it cannot well be denied that the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body is now a reality, not only from our side, but neither in the heavenly world nor is the new heavens and the new earth which is also a part of our redemption now reality.

Insofar as those things are real now they are in the eternal world of God and they shall never become ours until we receive them in the heavenly world of creaturely perfections, which is now a part of the creature with its space and time determinations, and shall also fully and finally be completed in the extension of our time into the future heavenly world.

Now this same dualism is maintained when Barth comes to the resurrection of our bodies, upon which he touches especially in his book "The Resurrection of the Dead"—a book that treats the First Epistle to the Corinthians, but in such a way that the whole book is Eschatological and chapter 15 is the great and main part with the other chapters serving only to come to chapter 15. Here it is emphasized that the resurrection of the dead is an indivisible point where time touches eternity and of that eternal who can speak! Always the same idea is found that the end is not a part of time but that which lies beyond time. Just as the last waves are not the end of the ocean but the coast is its end, or rather to bring out the idea of goal the eternal is the "end" that lies beyond time which is the "means". Indeed this idea of means and end is Scriptural and we do not usually see it sufficiently, but this cannot be remedied by an emphasis that be-

comes an unscriptural dualism.

Thus finally it is even questionable whether Barth believes in a judgment day in our sense, for also the return of Christ is conceived as belonging to that eternal world. In his "Credo" he says: "From thence He shall come" means that he returns from His concealment. . . .to be directly present. . . .as that was the content of the Forty Days. That will be a second Easter." But according to Barth the forty days were not earthly time but altogether different from the "time" of His earthly life.

But perhaps our greatest disappointment is his mythologizing of the Doctrine of the destiny of all men, that is of the doctrine of election and reprobation. For Barth really teaches the salvation of all men. This could be sustained by many passages. Thus: A psychologically observable individual could not be capable of election and rejection. He is only the stage where election and reprobation takes place. So love eternally overcomes hate and life is victorious over death. He repeatedly speaks of the rejection of the elect and the election of the rejected; Esau becomes Jacob. By Christ's righteousness there is justification for all men; for all men death is swallowed up in victory. And this lies precisely in the sovereignty of God who rejects all men historically and elects them super-historically.

How strange this all sounds to one who is accustomed to see in the Bible histories concrete fruits of individual election and of reprobation appearing! Surely we learn from Scripture a doctrine of individual election and reprobation and we are also given to see it manifested if we only believe that the Bible records real history and is not a mythology.

Thus I cannot see but what Barth teaches the salvation of all men as the end of history whether that be a calendar-end or an ideal end which is always going into realization. And although I realize that these things barely appear under Barth's vague paradoxical style and method of interpretation yet his doctrine of the relation of man and God does raise our expectation of such a general salvation. The antithesis of judgment as it is found in Barth never bears that sharply ethical quality that it does in Scripture. Man's creatureliness is his fetter. We have no probationary history as the Bible presents it and so man appears on the stage standing in judgment. For sin was not an event or historical happening but an inner destiny of human events: not a fall in, but with the life of man before it was manifested in the consciousness or sub-consciousness of this or that person.

From the side of God's sovereignty we have the wholly-otherness, distance, hiddenness that also detracts from the sharp ethical light in which the controversy of God with man stands as it appears to us in the Scriptures.



Thus with all respect for Barth's emphasis on all these things that are especially dear to the Reformed Christian he has a reprobation from which he himself undoubtedly feels that man must somehow be saved.

Whether Barth still holds these views, I cannot say, but they are indeed taught in his "Romans" and his Volumes of Sermons "God in action", and "God's Search for Man".

There is a ray of hope in that in his "Dogmatic" of which the first half volume on "The Word of God" has appeared there is a greater emphasis on the ethical relation but also the full development of that view will not appear until he comes to his final volumes.

A. P.

## Het Gebed Eens Bejaarden

(Psalm 71; Derde Deel)

Het eerste vers van dit derde deel van Psalm 71 doet ons sidderen.

Ik zal het afschrijven: "Laat ze beschaamd worden, laat ze verteerd worden die mijne ziel tegen zijn; laat ze met smaad en schande overdekt worden die mijn kwaad zoeken." vers. 13.

Wie zou niet sidderen bij het lezen van zulk een oordeel. Want een oordeel is het. En het is ook uitgevoerd. Deze woorden zijn door den Heiligen Geest ingegeven. Ik weet wel, dat er zijn die zich stooten aan de vloek-psalmen, doch ten onrechte. Dat volk vergeet, dat God met grimmigheid vervuld is en met gramschap gadeslaat alle verworpenen.

En dewijl David ook profeet is, en hij al die vloeken profeteert en vooruit uitspreekt ziende op den Christus, sidderen we bij het lezen ervan.

Laat ons nooit vergeten, dat Christus Jezus de verworpenen bij God aanklaagt al die lange jaren van de geschiedenis.

En dat hebben we hier.

Jezus klaagt Zijn nood bij God. David ook, doch het is slechts in zeer betrekkelijken zin, dat men het op David toe kon passen.

Neemt slechts de proef. Wie is er onder U die dit vers na kan bidden en het dan ook toe durft te passen op concrete gevallen; wie kan vloeken en om den vloek bidden van nu levende personen? Neemt nu maar het ergste geval: durft ge dan den Heere aan te loopen en vragen: Heere, laat hem met smaad en schande overdekt worden!?

Neen, maar we sidderen. Want Jezus durft en kan het wél doen. En Hij doet het nog. En God gaat het zekerlijk doen. Jezus heeft het ons gezegd toen Hij

op aarde was, dat Hij niet bad voor de wereld. Maar vergeet het niet, dat Hij wel *tegen* de wereld bidt. En dat is verschrikkelijk.

Weet ge wat ge wel moogt bidden als men het U benauwd maakt? Dit: ge moogt den Heere alles vertellen, wat men U aangedaan heeft. Klaagt Hem vrijelijk Uw nood in alle oprechtheid. En dan moet ge ook nog vragen of de Heere dien broeder of zuster wil bekeeren en dat hem of haar de zonde vergeven mochten worden. Want, en hier is het punt: wij weten niet of het menschen zijn waarop de Heere vergramd is tot in eeuwigheid.

Daar komt nog één belangrijk punt bij: wie is er die ooit geheel onschuldig voor den Heere komt te staan? Daarom, ziende op onze kortzichtigheid en domheid aangaande den vollen raad Gods, ter eener zijde; en op onze zonden, ter anderer zijde, past het ons niet om den vloek over iemand af te bidden.

Doch Jezus kan dat wel.

Hij kent degenen die de Zijne zijn; en Hij is gansch onschuldig. Als gij een zaak hebt tegen Christus, dan verliest ge het eer ge begint. Dan wordt Uw deel: beschaming, verteerling, smaad en schande. Dat leert de tekst. Uiteindelijk is dat de hel. Nogmaals: wie zou niet sidderen?

Hoe dom is het om Christus en Zijn volk te belagen! Het vers sprak van ongelukkige menschen die tegen de ziel waren van David en Christus. Datzelfde volk zocht hun kwaad. Duivelsch werk! En hoe ijdel! Er komt toch niets van terecht. David zal het U leeren.

Daarom volgt er op: Doch ik zal geduriglijk hopen! en zal al Uwen lof nog grooter maken.

Dat, geliefde lezer, is het geheim van Christen's overwinning. En hij overwint al gaat hij op den brandstapel. Hij blijft geduriglijk hopen. Hopen is het verlangen der liefde naar haar voorwerp. Als gij al grinnekende en al schaterlachende Uw prooi aan stukken rijt, ziet zulk een ziel op tot God en ziet al Zijn wijsheid. Denkt gij, dat Jezus niet gezien heeft, dat Zijn Judas, Herodus, Kajafas en de benden Hem van God geschonken waren? Het kruis was een geschenk van God aan den bloedenden Jezus.

En gij dan?

Al uw tranen en smarten en schreeuwen in bangheid en vreeze vanwege de duivelen, de goddeloozen en vanwege de machten der zonde, zijn naar U toegesonden van God. David wist dit. Op een andere plaats traant hij tot God en zegt: "Leg mijne tranen in Uwe flesch". Daar zijn ze veilig bewaard. Hun bloed, hun tranen en hun lijden zijn dierbaar in Zijn oog! Geen wonder: Hij heeft dat bloed, die tranen en dat lijden naar hen toegestuurd. Hij had er een doel mee. Zij bleven geduriglijk hopen. Het was de beproeving van hun geloof. En als het geloof in al zijn dierbaarheid tevoorschijn treedt in al zijn goudglans en schoonheid en pracht dan verandert het geloof op

wordt het de hope. Beide zijn liefde in wezen. Het geloof is de klevende liefde aan het Woord en de hope is de verlangende liefde naar God.

Vertrapt dan Gods volk en hun Christus: zij gaan zooveel te meer naar God. Ze gaan Zijn lof nog grooter maken.

De volgende twee verzen voeren dat plan uit. Hij zou Gods lof nog grooter maken, ook door een weg van vertrapping. Welnu, hier is het: Mijn mond zal Uwe gerechtigheid vertellen, dan ganschen dag Uw heil, hoewel ik de getallen niet weet! Ik zal henen-gaan in de mogendheden des Heeren HEEREN; ik zal Uwe gerechtigheid vermelden, de Uwe alleen!

Hier hebt ge het geheim van des Christens groote vreugde: Hij verlustigt zich in Gods deugden. Gods gerechtigheid is Zijn wil ten goede. Hij is de eenigste norm van het goede. Zijn gerechtigheid is die deugd waarin Hij in al Zijn willen en begeeren in overeenstemming is met het hoogste goed, en dat hoogste goed is Zijn Eigen Wezen. Dat is Gods gerechtigheid. Voor zulk een volk zijn er eigenlijk geen Bijbelsche en Theologische problemen. Voor zoover zij de dingen kunnen benaderen en kennen, zingen zij Zijn lof. En als het op den duur hun gaat duizelen van al die grootheid en hoogheid, als zij op den duur de vreeselijke diepte zien van de mysteriën dan zeggen ze: ik loof Hem nog, hoewel ik het niet geheel en al begrijpen kan. De getallen weten? Die zult ge tot in eeuwigheid niet weten. Als ge miljoenen maal miljoenen jaren in de eeuwigheid geweest zijt en al maar gezongen hebt van Zijn gerechtigheid en heil, dan zult ge nog zeggen: de rivier Gods is vol waters. Er komt nooit een einde aan de hemelsche verrassingen! Daar zal immers 't goede van Zijn woning verzaden *reis op reis*!?

Dat kon David en Christus zoo maar niet doen.

En daarom zeggen zij: Ik zal henen-gaan in de mogendheden des Heeren HEEREN.

Gaat maar met mij mede naar Gethsemane. Er was niets van terecht gekomen als God Jezus niet versterkt had door een Engel uit den hemel. En de Heere God heeft geduriglijk Zijn groote mogendheden aan Jezus gegeven, anders had Jezus dien vreeselijken weg van vertrapping nooit hebben kunnen bewandelen tot het vreeselijke einde. Die weg lag door alierlei verschrikkingen naar de hel heen. Aan het einde van dien weg hooren we een bange schreeuw! Zware theologie, zei een goed mensch! Hij had gelijk.

Laat ons dan vragen, neen, smeeken om die mogendheden. En dan zal 't gaan. Dan zaaien we met tranen hier. Het is wel. Doch aan het einde van den weg, in den hof van Jozef, is Jezus begonnen om zeer vroolijk te zijn. En Pilatus? We sidderen.

Waarom was David zoo wijs en verstandig in het bewandelen van de wegen des Heeren? Hoe kwam hij bij die mogendheden van Adonai Jehova?

Hij zal het U vertellen. En dat is in den hoogsten zin van toepassing op Jezus.

Ge vindt het in de volgende verzen.

"O God! Gij hebt Mij geleerd van mijne jeugd aan, en tot nog toe verkondig Ik Uwe wonderen."

Leest nu maar eens wat Lukas U vertelde van Jezus: "En Jezus nam toe in wijsheid en in grootte, en in genade bij God en de menschen." Lukas 2:52.

Niemand komt er toe om al die groote ding van lof te verrichten zonder dat God hem bekrachtigt. Dat is zoo ook met Jezus naar Zijn menschenlijke natuur. Zijn belijdenis was: Ik ben een worm en geen man. God heeft Jezus door den Heiligen Geest van den beginne in de baarmoeder tot den laatsten snik op Golgotha geleerd en bekrachtigd. Het heil, geliefden, is des Heeren. Alles, letterlijk alles, is uit Hem, door Hem en daarom ook tot Hem. Aan het einde van de geschiedenis ga ik een zucht slaken. Dan zal ik eerst ten volle gelukkig zijn. Waarom? Dan zal God alles en in allen zijn. Dan zijn we allen volleerd. Dan zal Juda Efraim niet meer benauwen. Dan zal alle klagen ophouden. Dan zal men niets doen dan zingen, zingen, zingen.

Daarom ook, terwijl de ouderdom en grijsheid daar is, verlaat mij niet, o God! totdat ik dezen geslachte verkondig Uwen arm, alle nakomelingen Uwe macht.

Als ge uitgekeken zijt om den ouden David te beziën en te beklagen (?), ga dan eens met Johannes naar Patmos. Daar zult ge een groote ouderdom zien. Luistert: "en in het midden van de zeven kandelaren eenen, den Zoon des menschen gelijk zijnde, bekleed met een lang kleed tot de voeten, en omgord aan de borsten met een gouden gordel; en Zijn hoofd en haar was wit gelijk als witte wol, gelijk sneeuw!" Openb. 1:13, 14a.

Een vraag: hoe is de drie-en-dertigjarige Jezus zoo spoedig grijs en wit geworden?

Geliefden, leest Jesaja 64:5.

Jezus is wit en grijs en oud geworden in de eeuwigheid. De eeuwigheid is gekomen met Jezus en in Jezus. En die eeuwigheid van onbegrijpelijke liefde Gods in Jezus heeft Zijn eigen gramschap en toorn aangevat, alsmede de zonde van Zijn volk. En het gevolg is een oude Jezus. Hij is daar in de eeuwige dood zeer oud en wit en grijs geworden.

Doch, o wonder, zijn grijze haar misstaat Hem niet!

Wij hebben het vaak lachende gezegd met elkaar, als we een oude man bespraken. Dan haalde men Salomo aan: "De grijsheid is een sierlijke kroon." Sommige van ons hebben dan wel eens gezegd: Ge moet verder lezen. Want er volgt dit op: "zij (dat wil zeggen, die sierlijke kroon der grijsheid), "zij wordt op den weg der gerechtigheid gevonden!"

Wie zal het durven ontkennen, dat dien tekst van

toepassing is ten finale en in absoluto op den Christus Gods?

Terwijl dan de ouderdom en de grijsheid daar is, verlaat mij niet, o God! totdat ik dezen geslachte verkondig Uwen arm, allen nakomelingen Uwe macht!

En God heeft het verhoord.

Daarom onderricht Jezus Christus met Zijn sneeuw-witte haar Zijn geheele kerk van eeuw tot eeuw. Hij is er voor geschikt. Hij wandelt nog steeds in de groote mogendheden Zijns Heeren. Hij is er voor geschikt. Zijn sierlijke kroon van wit haar is een symbool van groote wijsheid, eeuwige wijsheid. Hij kan ons leeren.

Daarom is het nu eenmaal een feit, dat de Heere ons oude mannen geeft in de huisgezinnen en in de kerk op aarde. De oudsten in Israel. Die zitten in de poort. Daar wordt recht gesproken.

Daarom moet ge nooit de oude mannen vertrappen. Nooit de oude mannen te zamen rapen in een gesticht. Dat vloekt tegen Jezus met Zijn witte haar.

De beste plek voor grootvader. Tot de laatste snik.

Die oude man (en vrouw) heeft een sierlijke kroon. Zij wordt gevonden in den weg der gerechtigheid. Zij getuigde van levenswijsheid en stervenswijsheid bij den Christus. Jezus heeft lang geleefd. Mar Hij is ook lang gestorven in den eeuwigen dood. Daar in die vreeselijke gerechtigheid heeft Hij wijsheid geleerd.

Veracht daarom nooit de oudsten. Eert hen.

Want zij zijn bij uitnemendheid geschikt om te leeren. Als gij gaarne wat weten wilt van Gods armen groote macht, dan leert dit vers U dat ge naar Christus moet gaan allereerst. En dan naar de ouden in Christus. Zoo loopt de lijn.

Dat oude volk kan roemen.

Luistert naar één van hen. (En wat een wondere Oude!)

"Ook is Uwe gerechtigheid, o God! tot in de hoogte; Gij die groote dingen gedaan hebt: o God! wie is U gelijk?"

Deze oude man roemt in God. Het steeds wederkeerend refrein in dien roem is: Wie is U gelijk? Dat is eigenlijk de naam van Micha en van den Archangel Michael. Dat is een mooie naam om mee rond te loopen. Als Michael zich beweegt door de zalen des hemels, dan fluistert men elkaar toe: Daar zweeft "Wie-is-gelijk-aan-God!" Wat een heerlijke naam om te dragen.

Nu dan, dat is ook de roem van Jezus, van U, van allen die uiteindelijk zalig worden. Ze zingen dan van de hoge gerechtigheid en van de wondere dingen die God gedaan heeft.

Een Pelegiaan zou daar versmoren. Die roemen van wat de mensch doet. En Anti-Christ hoort de menschen zeggen: Wie is gelijk het Beest! Doch die stemmen verstommen in den tweeden dood.

Geliefden, wilt ge gaarne zingen tot in eeuwigheid?

Dan is er maar één antwoord: Looft, looft den Heer, o ziel, met alle krachten!

Dat doende, zult ge zingen tot in eeuwigheid!

In de wazige verten der tijden hoor ik de eerste hallels.

G. V.

## Resolved that we should Establish our own Schools Wherever Possible:

### DEBATE — Negative Rebuttal

There are of course a good many things in the article of my opponent with which I can heartily agree. A number of things are simply not debatable among us. We knew this before the debate ever started. After all both the affirmative and the negative claim to love the Protestant Reformed truth and the cause of our churches. Besides in our debate we must and do assume that all of us have the true interest of the cause and the spiritual welfare of our people at heart. But even though the foregoing is true, that does not mean at all that both parties would come to the same conclusion.

The concluding sentence of my opponent's article was: "Wherefore, if we love our Protestant Reformed truth and church, if we are duly concerned about the spiritual welfare of our children, there can only be one answer to the question we are discussing: the answer the affirmative was privileged to defend." —Naturally the negative side does not at all agree with this closing statement. Neither would we subscribe to the inference which may be drawn from the sentence we quoted that those who do not subscribe to the affirmative have no love for the Protestant Reformed truth and are not duly concerned about the spiritual welfare of our children. I know that there are some people who take that stand and who have no scruples in making remarks to this effect. Which, by the way, is a very poor method of trying to win people over for the affirmative side.

Let us now proceed to examine some of the arguments which my opponent has set forth to defend his proposition. His first affirmation deals with the doctrinal difference between us and the Christian Reformed brethren. Of course there can be no argument about it that there is a marked difference between us and the Christian Reformed brethren on a number of doctrinal points which are indeed fundamental. And as doctrine is basic to all instruction it stands to rea-

son that also these doctrines in question, as enumerated by my opponent, certainly cannot be divorced from the instruction our children receive in the christian schools. However, a fatal weakness in my opponent's argumentation is that he drags the "Three Points" into the discussion, as if the christian schools had officially adopted these Three Points. Fact is, the common grace issue has as yet never been an issue in the christian schools. Perhaps this is partly due to the fact that we Protestant Reformed people have not been as consistent as we should be. But the same can be said about the Christian Reformed people. Fact is, the Christian Reformed school people have never officially adopted the Three Points, neither have they tried to force them down our throat, nor have they ever told us that if we did not agree with them we would be cast out of the schools. Hence, let us not run ahead of history. By simply stating that the church controversy is also the school controversy we make broad statements that cannot be proven and that contradict the actual existing realities. And in as far as the actual influence of the Three Point doctrine is concerned I like to state the following: (1) In many cases that is over-emphasized; (2) In some cases there is cause for alarm; (3) My opponent knows very well indeed that a number of Christian Reformed teachers do not draw the conclusions which follow from the doctrine of the Three Points. They do not drive this doctrine at all; (4) Where there *is* cause for complaint, what have *we* done about remedying the situation? We cannot just run away, can we? (5) It is the conviction of the negative that by and large those Christian Reformed people who are christian school minded are the better, soundest Reformed element in the Christian Reformed Church. Seeing that there are about fifty percent Christian Reformed people who send their children to the Christian School, we can freely conclude that the Christian Reformed School people are indeed less Three Point minded than the Christian Reformed Church is officially. And the rule is also that these Christian School people are the most promising prospects to win over for our cause and our churches. (6) In view of the fact that we still have many things in common, having also the same background, in view of the serious times in which we live, including the uncertain future, in view of the fact that it is sinful to unnecessarily break ties that bind together, we must be very careful and take no unwarranted steps. Why deliberately seek a split in the ranks of a movement that needs all possible support if it is to exist, if it is to flourish?

Of course we agree with our opponent when he states that the School is of paramount importance as an agency for the instruction of our covenant seed. But if by means of some statistical figures he tries to frighten us, he certainly overemphasizes the point in

question. If it were actually so frightening we might well shudder to ever send our children to the present christian school. Fact is, however, that we always recommend the christian school to our people, we tell them that it is wrong to send the children to the public school. But now we find out that when it really comes to the point the thing is so frightful?—Of course there is an element of truth in the contention of my opponent as he describes this particular point in his article, but he certainly overemphasizes the point which of necessity weakens his argument. If it were actually as bad as my opponent claims that it is, how then did our people ever become Protestant Reformed? How then does he explain that there are still such a goodly number of young people that are so thoroughly Protestant Reformed in spite of the fact that they attended the christian school? I firmly believe that if they had attended the public school they would not stand where they stand today. Not as though the Christian School made them Protestant Reformed, but the School was indirectly a contributing factor.—What then is so frightening about the christian school? I am glad we still have them. I wish they were much better. I think we could do a good deal more for them.

Again we agree with our opponent that the instruction our children receive must be based upon our Protestant Reformed truth; that is ideal. And Church and Home must exert their influence on the spiritual character of the School. And the latter should willingly cooperate with the former. However, idealistic as this may be, fact is that we do not have such schools at present. It would be folly to deny the facts in the case. But now we must approach the matter of the school issue realistically. I have more to say about this in the sequence of this article.

My opponent claims: "Our present schools can not and do not meet the educational needs for our children and our obligations as covenant parents." He further states: "They *cannot*, and my opponent will never be able to prove the contrary. The present Christian Schools are *Christian Reformed* schools. Don't deny this by saying that our schools are not church schools, etc.—Again, of course, there is much in these statements of my opponents with which I agree. However, as I stated already in a different connection, I do deny that the present Christian School is Christian Reformed. (Understanding by Christian Reformed the official doctrine of those churches as it was adopted in 1924). As we said before, the schools never adopted these points and told us to get out if we could not subscribe to them. In the second place my opponent knows very well that there are a number of teachers who do not even know what the Three Points imply. Of course this is not to their credit, it's rather weakness than strength. Nevertheless they do not deliberately teach the Three Points as would be the case were my oppon-

ent correct in his contention. They are more 'generally' christian (we have them in our churches too). Naturally that can not satisfy us, but neither is this a matter wherewith Christian Reformed school people can be satisfied. Yes, I do believe that a number of our christian school teachers are not distinct enough in their teaching, not Reformed enough, but neither do they make the pupils swallow the doctrine of common grace.—On the other hand my opponent also knows very well that there are also a number of teachers, both from our churches and outside of our circles, who do understand the implications of the Three Points but who certainly do not agree with this general- and common grace doctrine. In stating our case we must also do justice to our present teachers.—My opponent further states: "a. The Christian Reformed doctrine is the basis of all the instruction. b. *Our* principles are not taught, but rejected and ridiculed." I would emphatically deny both assertions. Of course here again is an element of truth, but my worthy opponent is certainly overstating the matter. I have here in front of me six type-written sheets with the main heading: "PRINCIPLES OF PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION." These 'principles' were composed by Protestant Reformed men in conjunction and cooperation with Christian Reformed brethren. I assure my opponent that they are quite soundly Reformed. These 'principles' have been adopted by one of the christian schools and it is according to these principles that the teachers have to instruct the pupils. Would Rev. R. Veldman or any of those who so strongly advocate 'A School of our own' have any objection to such a matter of procedure if it could be brought into practice more generally, particularly in areas where we have children attending the present christian schools? Did the affirmative side ever try anything like this?

Of course at times confusion is created in the minds of our children due to the fact that there is conflict between the teaching of home and church on the one hand and the school on the other hand. However, this is not the rule but the exceptional case. And some of these things might be easily remedied too if we manifested a little more concerted action. (I am sorry that I lack the space to broaden out on this point.)

My opponent is not enthusiastic about the schools as they are today. I can understand that, and I can even subscribe to it. But again that is not saying everything. I am sure that if we worked a little harder for the present Christian Schools, showed a more active interest in them, and sought more their real welfare we would become more enthusiastic. You can not be enthusiastic about a thing, if you do not work hard for it.

Ideally, yes, the Protestant Reformed home and the Protestant Reformed Church call for a Protestant Reformed School. Once again I will quote the conclud-

ing sentence of my opponent's article: 'Wherefore, if we love our Protestant Reformed truth and church, if we are duly concerned about the spiritual welfare of our children, there can be only one answer to the question we are discussing: the answer the affirmative was privileged to defend.' As I stated before, with this conclusion we of the negative can not agree. It is the conclusion which is based upon the idealistic. It denies any moral responsibility with respect to the existing Christian Schools. It is a virtual denial that we have any rights in the present Christian Schools. It advocates the 'weglopende protestanten' policy in the sphere of the schools. It does not reckon with 'het historisch gewordene'. And neither does it reckon with practical reality.

Let me finish this rebuttal by making a few observations and conclusions.

The question of school training is a matter of the parents and not of the church. Hence, we should cooperate with the existing Christian schools as long as possible. And where the necessity does not exist we should not build schools of our own. Why deliberately go in the direction of 'verbrokkeling van krachten'?

We of the negative fear that the narrower interest in a Protestant Reformed school will result in a disinterest in the broader cause of christian instruction. I am informed that we have a genuine example of this in our own good city of Grand Rapids. Here we have a separate Christian School. But what is it and what fruits does it bear? Among the evil fruits are those, I am told, that practically none of the children attending this grammar school finish their studies at a Christian High School. There is a distrust, perhaps we might call it a despising of the larger Christian School movement. And the result is that practically all the children receive their high school training, which is compulsory in Grand Rapids, in the public schools.—Is that what we want? I should say not. But is there not a real danger that we steer in this very direction if without provocation we insist in building our own schools because they are 'ideal'? Indeed that danger exists.

If the matter of a school of our own is so all important, then we have several questions, the answer to which must be supplied by the affirmative. For example: If it is so *all* important, why was this matter not taken care of the moment our churches came into existence? And how is it possible that our churches ever did come into existence? And how is it possible that we ever could organize new churches, these people all having been reared in communities where there was no Protestant Reformed School? And what must we tell our smaller congregations which can never hope to establish a school of their own? Must we on the one hand with all our might denounce the present christian

school, and on the other hand must we tell our smaller congregations: "You better cooperate with the existing christian schools and by all means send your children there?"—If our own schools are so vital and if our churches are lost without them, why then establish or even attempt to establish any churches in communities where we can see with our eyes shut that they can not have a school of their own? Wouldn't such churches be doomed from the start?

If the affirmative side is so positive of its case how then can it be explained that by far the majority of our people are either against it or lukewarm toward it? How do you explain it, that most of what I would call 'our christian school men' are opposing the idea? And a goodly number of these men certainly can talk from experience for they have worked for the existing christian schools. They, if anyone, should see the need of schools of our own.

Why despise and agitate that which we so long have defended as Protestant Reformed people? What brings this sudden change about? Of course the Christian schools are not what they should be, but we certainly can thank the schools for many things which our children learned there. We are indebted to the present schools. To mention one thing: I am positive that my child will appreciate it all his days that he went to a christian school where he was taught Biblical History. And I challenge any Protestant Reformed school to teach my children more thoroughly the Biblical history than my oldest child has learned it in the present christian school. Even my opponent knows very well that as a rule you can pick out the children in the catechism class that have had christian school training. They are far head of those that were deprived of this. That is the rule. Should we not appreciate these things?

My opponent is positive that we *have* the teachers. However, he did not prove his point. Personally I have every reason to doubt this. Not as though we do not have teachers who are members of our churches. But how many have evidenced a genuine interest in a school of our own and how many are enthusiastically supporting this cause? After all we would want teachers that are capable and teachers that are heart and soul favoring the cause. Do we have enough of them? It has not been proven.

I have no room to say much against the contention that it is the fault of our present christian schools that our children become Arminianists and worldly minded. (My opponent did not make this statement, but I have heard it more than once from the affirmative side, hence the point I like to make). Our schools are far from perfect, but such sweeping statements put it on too thick. I would say this: "If our youth is not indoctrinated in the Protestant Reformed truth and becomes Arminian and worldly minded let us not blame

the christian schools first of all, but let us place the blame squarely where it belongs, namely, in the Home. And next in line would be the church. Let us never make the christian school the goat of our failure to instruct our children in the Protestant Reformed truth. Besides, schools of our own would not remedy this. For if the home is gone and if the church should become delinquent, the school, which is not even directly supposed to teach doctrine, can not remedy the situation.

But there is still another matter closely related to the foregoing. I am indeed afraid that some people think too highly of a Protestant Reformed school as if such a school would be the cure-all and solve all our educational problems. Even such schools of our own would be very imperfect. Such schools would be no more perfect than the aggregate spiritual condition of our homes and churches. Water does not rise higher than its source. I believe we do better to first consolidate our homes and obtain more ideal conditions in our churches instead of trying to force the issue of a school of our own. The time is definitely not ripe now because our people are not ripe for it. They still must be educated with a view to, and won for, the ideal of the affirmative. It is indeed a question how much better our own school would be compared with what we have at present, some symptoms are not too reassuring in this respect. And the question may well be raised if the actual betterment would warrant all the expense, all the trouble and friction it would cause, the damage it would do to the school movement in general, and the internal troubles it would cause among brethren that belong to the same household of faith.

Lest we be accused that we are merely negative, let me propose the following suggestions:

1. Wherever this is possible let us organize societies for christian instruction based upon Reformed principles.

2. Let us as Protestant Reformed people compose a work-programma of "Principles of practical christian instruction," covering all the branches of study in our christian schools.

3. Then let us propagate these principles in the christian school circles, and let us do that in the spirit of love.—If we succeed, even partly, we have gained much, we become a vital part in the christian school movement and we have done it a great favor.

In the above mentioned method of approach we are positive and not negative. we build instead of destroy: we start where we should start, namely, at the right end and not at the wrong end. And if these principles should be wholly rejected so that the situation becomes practically unbearable, then we can talk about a school of our own. But in the meantime we have witnessed, maintained and saved our principles, we have lost nothing, and in the end we can count on the

wholehearted support of practically all our people, whatever course may be necessary.—I hope that the brethren of the affirmative may seriously consider these suggestions. They still can change their present plans and methods of approach.

Should we establish our own schools wherever possible? By no means, but let us with the maintaining of our principles approach this whole matter realistically and not idealistically or fanatically. And let us build schools of our own whenever it is *necessary*. And it is only necessary if there is no other christian school or if there is no longer a place for us in the present christian schools.

J. D.

#### DEBATE — Affirmative Rebuttal

Often, in worldly contests, the remark is made: and now, may the best man, or the best team, win. In this discussion I care nothing about that. My sole desire is that the truth may win out in the minds and hearts of our Protestant Reformed fathers and mothers, and that this debate may serve as a means to bring us to a clearer understanding of our covenant calling with respect to our children. With that only in view let us read carefully all that has been written thus far on this subject. Nothing else matters.

The negative side states, "The point at stake (in this debate) is not at all whether an instruction based throughout upon Protestant Reformed principles is not ideal for our children. There can be no difference of opinion among us on this particular point." I knew we agreed on this. Nevertheless, my opponent is not correct in writing, that this is "not at all the point at stake." Notice, that he himself agrees, not that Protestant Reformed instruction would be *better*, but it is the *ideal*. The moment you speak of *the ideal* with respect to anything fundamental you have yourself stated your calling. We must strive for the ideal; nothing less will suffice. That means, that we must strive for schools of our own, *unless*: 1) There are other things, other ideals, greater in importance than that of Protestant Reformed instruction for our children, and to which the latter must be subservient, or: 2) It is possible to realize this ideal in the present schools. If this latter were possible the need of a school of our own would be eliminated, of course. As to the first of these alternatives, I feel safe in assuming that no Protestant Reformed man or woman would want to maintain, that in the sphere of education there can be a higher ideal for us, than that all the instruction our children receive should be permeated with our Protestant Reformed truth. And the second alternative is a definite impossibility. It should be

clear to us all, that we can never hope to approximate our ideals in our present schools. The latter are too thoroughly *Christian Reformed*. I hope for the truth's sake, for principle's sake, that the negative will not becloud the issue by denying this. Nothing can be gained by denying facts. *I know very well that they are not church schools*. But is a church all that can be Christian Reformed? Societies, boards, teachers, instruction, too, can be Christian Reformed. Thus schools can be and are Christian Reformed if they are controlled by men and women from the Christian Reformed church, who sincerely believe that our covenant children should be instructed on the basis of the truth as they confess it. And in such schools we cannot hope to approximate our ideals of education. That leaves us only one course: schools of our own.

In the main the Rev. De Jong presents three reasons why we should not establish schools of our own. How valid are they?

I—*We have a calling and moral responsibility with respect to our present Christian Schools*. Many people seem to stumble over this obstacle. Still, how valid is this objection?

Let us briefly consider some of the statements made by the negative in this connection. "We are members of the societies, we send our children to these schools." Yes, we do, and as long as this is the case we should cooperate as much as possible. However, this will no longer be said of us if we have schools of our own. Neither does membership in a certain society obligate one to continue such membership forever. From a society we can withdraw at any time, the more so if that society has forsaken the principles of the Word of God. "We helped to erect and maintain these schools." That is an argument based on pure sentiment, and therefore no argument at all. We may not permit such considerations to determine our course of action. Certainly, we helped erect them long, long before our Christian Reformed brethren departed from the truth and the lie of common grace swept the Christian Reformed world like a prairie fire. And after they departed from the Reformed truth we continued to support them,—for twenty long years. For two decades more we permitted the Christian Reformed brethren to educate our children! Isn't it time, then, that we dismiss this sentiment from our minds as a reason for not establishing our own schools? Permitting mere sentiment to determine our policy in matters of principle is a dangerous practice. If that which we helped erect becomes corrupt, as is always the case with the manifestation of God's covenant in the world, we must have the courage and the strength to leave such an institution for the truth's sake. No school or institution can be as important to us as the principles for which they were erected in the first



place. Continues the negative, "The Christian schools are no church schools, they may not teach doctrine, much less the common grace theory." Even the negative cannot believe this. That question of "church schools" we may now dismiss from consideration. On this point we agree, I think. The affirmative does not claim that our present schools are church schools, and the negative will not gainsay the intimate relation between church and school. But, since when do our Christian school constitutions say that they may not teach doctrine? High schools have courses in Reformed doctrine, taught by ministers of the gospel, and Bible instruction is given in the grade schools. Moreover, is Christian instruction ever possible without doctrine? Remember what my opponent once wrote in the Standard Bearer, "After all doctrine, false or true, determines the religious character of all the instruction, life and discipline of the school."

The negative continues, "If this is done (that is, if doctrine, particularly "common grace" is taught) we can appeal to the constitution, bring in our protests and complaints, and attempt to make the boards and teachers see the error of their way." The constitution, I'm positive, will be of no help here. And as to bringing protests! We might conceivably protest against some outstanding error in doctrine or practice. However, how many of these things come to our attention? After all, the children themselves must report them. And again I ask: how can we protest against what is *not* taught? That is our main concern. *Our* principles are not inculcated, that is certain. Nor can we expect Christian Reformed teachers to consider this their calling. How can we protest against this? And we must make the boards and the teachers see the error of their way? The error of common grace? After all these years? That means that the Christian Reformed brethren must instruct our children to the end of time. Every so often new board members are elected and new teachers are hired to teach in our schools. Where is the end of this responsibility and how can we ever hope to succeed? And then my opponent writes, "Leave these schools where we were educated ourselves, which we maintained in the past, which are founded upon the truth of God's Word?" Of course we shall if it is for the sake of the truth, of God's church, and of the spiritual welfare of our children. And as to being founded upon the truth of God's Word! From the Protestant Reformed point of view, is that true? "Leave these schools," writes he, "because they are minus the Protestant Reformed label?" For the sake of the principle involved I'm happy my opponent made this statement. That is precisely the point, the admission that should settle the matter for every one. *They are minus the Protestant Reformed label.* The boards, the societies, the teachers, the instruction, the hymns, prayers, pro-

grams,—generally speaking everything in our present schools is minus the Protestant Reformed label. That does not mean, of course, that they bear no label at all. They do. The Christian Reformed label. Shall we leave, asks the negative, for no more reason than that; for such a relatively unimportant thing as that? Anything I might try to say in answer to this question can only weaken the argument the negative here adduces in support of the affirmative.

To my mind the Rev. De Jong makes one serious error. Apparently he puts the institution of the school on a par with the institution of the church, that is, as far as our obligations toward both are concerned. However, a school is the property of a mere society and does not bind like a church. At any time it pleases, a group of people may form a separate society and start a school of its own. That need not even be for principle's sake. How were many of our present schools started? People simply moved away from the schools their children attended to a neighborhood where there was no school. As soon as there were a sufficient number of such families a new society was organized and a new school erected. If new schools may be erected for no greater reason than that; shall we be denied the right to establish a society and school of our own for the sake of *the truth*? Think this over soberly and carefully and let us ask ourselves in all sincerity whether this entire moral argument is not an excuse rather than a sound objection. That even the leaders of the Christian Reformed Churches do not at all agree with my opponent on this point seems to be indicated by what the Rev. J. J. Hiemenga wrote in the Banner of March 3 under the caption "A Calvinistic University". Wrote he, "We all know that any one, or any group, has the right to establish an educational institution. Of course, there is no question about that."

It is in this connection that the negative speaks of "weglopende Protestanten". It is evident, however, that this was written in haste and must not be taken too seriously. On second thought my opponent will see that this comparison does not apply here at all. Who are "weglopende Protestanten"? Are they people who leave our churches for the sake of conscience and truth, because they earnestly believe the pure doctrine is taught elsewhere? Of course not! They are people who leave the church for all kinds of trivial reasons, while they confess that we have the truth. Were we to leave the school for such insignificant reasons the comparison would hold. But surely, brother, you would not apply the term to those who leave the present schools for the truth's sake.

## II—*The present Christian Schools do not cast us out.*

Also this seems to present an obstacle to some people, although I cannot see in all good conscience why we must wait until we're set out before we begin

to instruct our children as we should. Of course they have not cast us out, partly because we do not oppose them as we should, and partly because the schools are their own. "They seek our help and cooperation", says the negative, "They desire to cooperate with us for principle's sake." For whose principle's sake, *ours* or *theirs*? We all know the answer. They seek our cooperation, but for *their* school, that *their* teachers (a few exceptions notwithstanding) may apply and maintain *their* doctrine. They are satisfied that we be yoked together, but under *their* yoke. Mind you, this, too, is written without bitterness; we can expect nothing else. "Many christian school people are sincerely interested in us and our children," writes my opponent. I believe that, but they are interested in instructing our children in the truth as they see it. Can we be content with such interest? We, too, are interested in their children, and if ever we should see our ideal realized we should be happy to receive them into our schools. Our Christian Reformed brethren who read this must not be offended. You must be able to see our viewpoint. You realize very well, that from the Protestant Reformed point of view the stand of the affirmative is the only consistent one. Surely you don't believe that we are bound to stay where we are.

III—*We have no moral right to leave the school unless we first bring our grievances to the proper authorities and attempt to improve the christian character of the instruction.* A brief reply should suffice here, essentially this is the same objection as the first.

Notice how weakly my opponent expresses himself here. We must "attempt to improve the *christian character* of the instruction." Does my opponent mean by this that we must strive to make that instruction *Protestant Reformed*? If so, he should have stated it. If not, I cannot agree with him at all. I make bold to say, that my opponent chose these words deliberately for he himself must realize the utter impossibility of working for Protestant Reformed instruction in our present schools. What do our children really need: "christian character" or "Protestant Reformed instruction"? To me only the latter is Christian, for what is not Protestant Reformed is not Reformed, and what is not Reformed is not Christian. But certainly, it cannot be our calling to stay where we are until we make these schools Protestant Reformed.

This also points to one reason at least why our people do not bring more grievances to those in charge of the present schools. What grievances can we bring? We could, perhaps, protest against a few isolated statements and practices, at most. But that would hardly scratch the surface; would not bring us closer to our ideal; would in no way satisfy our needs. First, how many of the things to which we object come to our attention? Very few. We cannot protest against

things we do not know. Yet, we do know, that our children are in the hands of Christian Reformed men and women. Secondly, so much in our schools is colorless, so much like public instruction. How shall we remedy that? One cannot be at every board meeting. Thirdly, how shall we lodge grievances against what is *not* taught, and what we cannot reasonably expect to have taught? From the viewpoint of our ideal it is hopeless to protest. To approximate our ideal we should have to make the teachers Protestant Reformed. My opponent once wrote, "The spiritual quality of your teaching depends on the doctrinal conceptions of the teacher". How must we go about this? Where is the end? In a large school there are many teachers, and every few years the personnel changes. Besides, to reach our ideal the boards and societies must be made to see our point of view. We should have to catechize them, and this, I'm sure, they'd graciously refuse. In fact, to reach our ideal the whole Christian Reformed Church would have to be made to confess her errors. Where's the end? And while all this goes on we must let them instruct generation after generation of our children?

Even so, have we not done much to fulfil this calling? 1924 is already 20 years ago. Since that time we raised our voices against the errors of our Christian Reformed brethren, also those in control of our schools. Also here you cannot separate church and school. The same brethren and sisters are members of both. For 20 long years our Standard Bearer explained our position. For 20 long years our churches in many localities stood as a witness for the truth. For 20 long years our ministers spoke whenever the opportunity presented itself, and I know that they did not hide the truth. And the Christian Reformed brethren know exactly where we stand. These are the facts.

A few remarks in closing my side of the debate. First, let us not forget, that if we leave all we helped erect and maintain behind. All we do is start anew and take our children out of the present schools. Isn't that fair enough? Secondly, my opponent made some statements that should not have been made, and that could easily "leave scars". That is easily done in a debate. Let us weigh our words, whether we favor a school of our own or not. This applies also to those who side with the affirmative in this debate. Let us never think that offensive, derogatory remarks will further this cause. On the road to Kalamazoo there's a sign that reads: "Use soft words and hard arguments". Enough said. Finally, may this debate by the grace of God bear its good fruits. Let us study this vital issue in faith, without prejudice, free from carnal and selfish motives, only asking: Lord, what wilt thou have us do? Seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, the way, I'm confident, will become plain.

R. V.

## Report of Classis West — Convened March 1, 1944 at Hull, Iowa

### Morning Session

The Rev. A. Cammenga conducted the usual opening exercises. It appeared from the credentials that all the consistories were represented. Rev. H. De Wolf who had come and was already in Hull, received a telegram from his congregation notifying him of the death of Mr. N. Kimm, and the brother had to return before the Classis convened. A word of welcome is addressed to two minister brethren present for the first time. Rev. De Boer coming from Classis East now pastor of Redlands and S. Cammenga, pastor of Orange City. Rev. S. Cammenga becomes president for the day and Rev. A. Cammenga secretary. Minutes of the former meeting are approved as recorded. The Classical Committee reads its written report. A new sermon committee is appointed, namely, Revs. P. Vis and J. Blankespoor. The church visitors from California could not report; the report for the West and Montana was read and accepted.

Manhattan comes with a request that Classis overture Synod to investigate the possibility of Mission Work in foreign fields, by supporting some already existing reputable mission or to establish a fund to enable our churches to carry out such work whenever we shall be able to do so ourselves. Classis adopts this instruction but amends it to the effect that Synod appoint a committee to take this matter into study, make a report, mimeograph this report and distribute it to the various consistories for study. And also Classis decides to add to the phrase "reputable mission" the words, "e.g. of the Netherlands Ref. Churches". A communication from Edgerton's pastor asking for a credential of ordination to comply with certain Minnesota legal requirements for marriage records, is received and Classis instructs its moderamen to send such a credential. Also an instruction from Sioux Center requesting Classis in re the matter of publishing and distributing the Acts, asking her to overture Synod accordingly. The instruction seeks to have Synod expedite the compiling and printing of the Acts,

print a current summarized report in Standard Bearer and Concordia and finally to print enough copies for all families of the various churches to be distributed free of charge. Classis decides to overture Synod as requested, but amends to the effect that the Moderamen shall compile the Acts immediately after the session and that the Acts shall also be printed immediately after the session.

Pella asked for classical appointments and they are given her as follows:—  
March 5, Rev. Vander Breggen, 19 A. Cammenga, April 2 M. Gritters, 16 G. Vos, May 7 J. Blankespoor, 21 S. Cammenga, June 4 P. Vis, 18 J. Vander Breggen, July 2 A. Cammenga, 16 M. Gritters, Aug. 6 G. Vos, 20 J. Blankespoor, Sept. 3 S. Cammenga.

After appointing a committee for the subsidies and reading the concept minutes the morning session is closed by C. Vander Molen.

### Afternoon Session

After the usual opening and prayer by the Rev. De Boer, Classis undertakes the consideration and granting of various subsidies. First of all Classis adopts the advice of the subsidy committee to advise the consistories to establish a minimum salary of \$1400.00. Classis further, after much deliberation, decided to give Synod the following information: "At our March meeting we advised certain consistories who asked for support to raise the salaries of their pastors to the fourteen hundred dollar minimum scale because of the present economic situation. This advice, however, if carried out, may necessitate another subsidy. Hence we further overture Synod to consider raising the subsidy of those churches who request the same and who act in harmony with our advice to the extent of the raise of salary granted." In re Point III of that Committee's advice Classis expresses itself as follows: "That in view of the debate which ensued in considering various subsidies requested, Classis advises the consistories to seriously study and consider raising of their pastor's salary above the minimum, so that the pastors may be freed

of financial worries and enable them to live according to the standards of this present day." A consistory requests the revoking of a former minute, giving its grounds. Classis acts as requested. Another consistory requests Classis to begin a Mutual Help Fund from which a church in emergency can draw funds. Classis rejects this on basis of DKO 30. Still another consistory requests Classis to overture Synod to reduce assessments in such synodical funds as show a substantial surplus. Classis rejects this upon the grounds that the latest financial reports do not show such a surplus. Orange City asks a collection in the churches, she is reminded to apply for this help on her subsidy request. Manhattan petitions Classis to change the dates of its Fall and Spring meetings, the Spring meeting to be held the last part of March and the Fall meeting the first part of Oct. Classis rejects this, but decided to change its Fall meeting so that we meet the last Wednesday instead of the first Wednesday in Sept. Edgerton invites the Classis to meet there for its Fall meetings. Accepted. Hence Classis meets next Fall, D. V. the last Wednesday in Sept. in Edgerton, Minn.

Classis proceeds now to vote its delegation to Synod, the voting results as follows:

### Ministers

Primi	Secundi
L. Doezeema	P. Vis
M. Gritters	J. Vander Breggen
G. Vos	H. De Wolf
A. Cammenga	J. Blankespoor
Primi	Secundi
C. Vander Molen	N. Buyert
M. Flikkema	H. Kuiper
G. Rijken	J. Dokter
M. De Jager	J. Broek

Rev. Vos thanks the ladies for their splendid catering. Concept minutes are read and Rev. L. Doezeema returns thanks to God for all His many benefits unto us.

M. GRITTERS

Stated Clerk, Classis West.