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MEDITATION

God's Woord Ontvangen

Daarom, afgelegd hebbende alle vuiligheid en overvloed van boosheid, ontvangt met zachtmoedigheid het Woord, dat in u geplant wordt, hetwelk uwe zielen kan zalig maken.

Jak. 1:21.

Gods Woord en Gods kind!

Deze twee hooren bij elkander.

Op het Woord Gods is Gods kind aangelegd, en dat Woord, maar dan ook dat Woord alleen, is zijn levenssfeer.

Immers is hij, naar den wille Gods, door dat Woord gebaard en een levend kind Gods geworden, opdat hij alzoo een plaats zou hebben onder de eerstelingen van Gods schepselen. Door de levende en levendmakende kracht van dat Woord schoot het zaad der wedergeboorte, dat door den Heiligen Geest in hem werd geplant, op, en werd hij een bewust, levend kind van God.

En zooals hij door het Woord gebaard werd, zoo kan hij ook bij den voortduur slechts door dat Woord leven.

Als een kindeke naar het vleesch geboren en uit het vleesch geboren wordt, dan is het vleesch, beide in den bloot natuurlijken en in den geestelijk-zedelijken zin des woords. En dan is het daardoor op de wereld des vleesch es aangelegd. Van de natuurlijke wereld is het voor zijn bestaan en leven afhankelijk. In de sfeer dier wereld groeit het op. Hare lucht ademt het in, haar brood eet het, haar water drinkt het. En in geestelijken zin vindt het in die wereld, wat het zoekt: de begeerlijkheid des vleesch es, en de begeerlijkheid der oogen, en de grootschheid des levens. Want de wereld des vleesch es schept haar eigen levensvormen, en haar eigen levenssfeer, de sfeer der leugen, der ijdelheid,

der onreinheid, der ongerechtigheid, de sfeer der verderfelij kheid, waarin, onder den toorn Gods, hij, die daarin verkeert, ten verderve gaat.

En het pas gebaarde kindeke is op die wereld aangelegd.

Wat uit het vleesch geboren is, dat is vleesch! En het vleesch leeft in de sfeer van het natuurlijk-vleeschelij ke.

Maar wat naar den Geest geboren is, dat is geest!

Als er, en dat wil midden in de sfeer van het natuurlijk-vleeschelij ke, het zaad der wedergeboorte door den Geest geplant wordt in het binnenste hart door het wonder der genade, en door de werking des Woords ontspruit dat zaad der wedergeboorte, dan wordt er een geestelijk kindeke gebaard. En dat geestelijk kindeke vindt niet, kan zijn levenssfeer niet vinden, in de wereld van het natuurlijk-vleeschelij ke. Daar is in heel de tegenwoordige wereld, waarin hij van nature geboren werd, niets dat hem kan doen opwassen, en dat hem tot onderhoud van zijn leven kan dienen. Immers is dat nieuwgeboren kindeke als zoodanig in de tegenwoordige wereld een vreemdeling. Hij is vreemd aan de wereld der vleeschelij ke lusten en begeerlij kheden, want hij is uit God geboren, naar Zijn evenbeeld, in ware kennis, gerechtigheid, en heiligheid. En Hij is van boven geboren, en daarom behoort hij tot de eerstelingen van Gods schepselen, maar dan van eene andere wereld, de hemelsche, waarin de tabernakel Gods bij de menschen zijn zal.

Als wedergeboren kindeke is hij een vreemdeling in de wereld, en dat wel beide uit natuurlijk oogpunt, en in geestelijk-zedelijken zin.

Ook dat geestelijk kindeke heeft behoefte aan voedsel en drank, maar in heel de tegenwoordige wereld vindt hij niet, wat hij tot zijn levensonderhoud heeft. Ook dat leven der wedergeboorte, dat door het Woord gebaard werd, is een leven der kennis, doch de wetenschap der wereld kan hem de kennis, waarnaar dat nieuwe leven dorst, niet schenken. Ook dat nieuwgeboren leven heeft zijne begeerten, doch heel de tegenwoordige wereld kan die begeerten niet vervullen.

Ook dat geestelijk kindeke heeft zijn wilsleven, doch daarmee staat het lijnrecht tegenover het wilsleven der wereld.

Aan het brood des levens heeft Gods wedergeboren kind behoefte; naar het water des levens dorst zijn hart; in het licht des levens wil hij wandelen; slechts de waarachtige kennisse Gods kan hem bevredigen; zijn begeeren gaat uit naar de dingen die boven zijn.

Daarom vindt hij, naar het leven van zijn inwendigen mensch, in deze wereld nergens, wat hij behoeft.

Alleen Gods Woord kan hem baten.

Uit onvergankelijk zaad, door het Woord, werd hij gebaard.

Op dat Woord is zijn leven aangelegd.

Zonder dat Woord, zeg, dat het mogelijk ware, zou hij omkomen.

Dat Woord alleen is zijn levenssfeer!

Ontvangt het Woord!

Het Woord! Nadere bepaling van dit Woord was voor de gemeente van Christus niet noodig.

Immers, afgedacht nog van het feit, dat in het achttiende vers het Woord reeds was omschreven als "het woord der waarheid," waardoor de geloovigen gebaard waren ten leven, kent de gemeente geen ander woord, dat het ontvangen kan.

Het Woord,—dat is voor haar het Woord Gods.

En dan wel bepaaldelijk het Woord, dat God gesproken heeft, en spreekt, in Christus Jezus haren Heer.

Want ook spreekt God wel door de dingen, die gezien worden. En zijne onzienlijke dingen worden van de schepping der wereld aan wel door de schepselen verstaan en doorzien, beide Zijne eeuwige kracht en goddelijkheid. En wel vertellen de hemelen Gods eer, en verkondigt het uitspannel Zijner handen werk. Zelfs stort de dag aan den dag overvloediglijk sprake uit, en verkondigt de nacht aan den nacht wetenschap. En ook dat is eene sprake Gods. En ook die wetenschap is Goddelijke openbaring.

Maar de natuurlijke mensch houdt deze sprake in ongerechtigheid ten onder.

En, ofschoon het wedergeboren kind van God gaarne ook op deze sprake let, en zijne oogen opheft naar den hemel, om daar te lezen den Naam van Hem, Die al deze dingen geschapen heeft; toch kan hem dat Woord alleen, zonder het licht dat straalt van het aangezicht van den opgestanen Heere, niet baten. Zonder de instraling van dit laatste licht toch, verkondigt de schepping wel Gods heerlijkheid en eer, en blijven de dingen, die gezien worden, wel getuigen van eeuwige kracht en goddelijkheid, doch is en blijft het toch eene sprake van toorn en groote gramschap, van vloek en dood, die slechts met schrik vervullen kan.

Doch God sprak Zijn Woord in Christus Jezus!

Hij sprak en het Woord werd vleesch, en heeft

onder ons getabernakeld, Zich met ons vereenigd in de intiemste gemeenschap; en tot ons gesproken, niet slechts van eeuwige kracht en Goddelijkheid, maar van genade voor genade, woorden eeuwigen levens. Hij sprak, en die Zoon in het vleesch nam al onze ongerechtigheden op Zich, en droeg ze voor ons, in onze plaats en ten onzen behoeve, voor het aangezichte Gods naar en op de plaats des oordeels, aan het bange, vreeselijke kruis; en droeg die ongerechtigheden voor eeuwig weg. Hij sprak, en de Zoon in het vleesch werd uit de dooden opgewekt om onze rechtvaardigmaking, en werd verheerlijkt aan des Vaders rechterhand, bekleed met alle macht in hemel en op aarde: Christus de Heer!

Dat is het Woord, dat God van den aanbeginne der wereld heeft doen verkondigen door Zijne heilige profeten en patriarchen, dat Hij in de volheid des tijds heeft vervuld, dat Hij verder door waarachtige getuigen heeft verklaard en bevestigd, dat Hij in de Heilige Schriften voor de gemeente van den nieuwen dag heeft bewaard, en dat Hij nog altijd spreekt door de bediening van dat Woord, die Hij heeft ingesteld.

Want Hij is het, Die Zijn eigen Woord spreekt, ook als het tot ons komt door de bediening van menschen.

En alleen als Hij het spreekt, door den Geest van Christus, is dat Woord eene kracht Gods tot zaligheid.

Hij alleen, door Christus, in den Geest, vergadert en vermeerdert en bewaart Zijne Kerk.

Door Hem wordt dat Woord in u geplant, als een levend zaad, ook als het naar de Schriften tot u komt door de prediking.

Nooit baat een menschenwoord. Bij Gods Woord leeft de gemeente, en bij Zijn Woord alleen.

Ontvangt dat Woord! Ontvangt het met zachtheid!

Maar is er dan ook maar eenig gevaar, dat de geloovigen dat Woord niet zullen ontvangen? Is het dan mogelijk, dat dit machtige, onwederstandelijke Woord Gods door ons wordt afgewezen? Of, indien het waar is, dat het wedergeboren leven van Gods kind op dat Woord is aangelegd, en dat het voor hem is het brood des levens, waarnaar hij hongert, het water des levens, waarnaar hij dorst, het licht des levens, waarin hij begeert te wandelen, is het dan wel denkbaar, dat ditzelfde wedergeboren kind van God zal weigeren om dat Woord te ontvangen, om dat brood des levens te eten, en om dat licht des levens in zijn hart en op zijn pad te laten schijnen?

Zoo gesteld, moet de vraag beantwoord worden met een nadrukkelijk neen!

Gods Woord overwint altijd. En het wedergeboren hart als zoodanig begeert en ontvangt dat Woord zeker.

Maar vergeet het niet, dat er metterdaad een ontvangen onzerzijds is van het Woord Gods, dat door de prediking tot ons komt. De werking van het woord, dat in ons geplant wordt, is nimmer zoo, dat de ge-

loovigen het lijdelijk in zich opnemen. Integendeel, zij ontvangen het door een bewuste daad. Zij eten het brood des levens, waarnaar ze hongerden; zij drinken het water des levens, waarnaar ze dorsten. Door het geloof reageeren zij op dat Woord, zoodat ze het opnemen in hun hart en verstand en wil en al hun begeeren. En tot die reagerende daad des geloofs worden ze in dit Woord Gods opgewekt.

En, tweedens, vergeet het ook niet, dat datzelfde wedergeboren kind van God in deze wereld, dat naar het beginsel des nieuwen levens naar dat Woord verlangt, naar het brood des levens hongert, en naar het water des levens dorst, dat nieuwe leven nog slechts als een beginsel bezit; dat hij nog altijd met zich om draagt zijne oude natuur, waarin de bewegingen der zonde nog altijd werken; en dat naar zijn ouden mensch dit wedergeboren kind van God uitgaat, niet naar het Woord Gods, maar naar de leugen der wereld, en de begeerlijkheid des vleesch en der oogen.

Naar zijnen ouden mensch ontvangt hij het Woord nimmer!

En die oude mensch is dikwijls machtig, streeft krachtiglijk om weer op den troon te komen, om den boventoon te voeren, in het leven van den wedergeborene.

Vooral, waar het Woord eischt, dat we daders, niet slechts hoorders zullen zijn, spant die oude mensch al zijne krachten in, om het te wederstaan.

Vandaar, dat er metterdaad reden is voor deze vermaning.

Het richt zich tot den nieuwen mensch!

Het wil hem aansporen om te waken en te bidden!

Het wil hem sterken in den strijd tegen de bewegingen der zonde in hem!

Ontvang het Woord!

Met zachtmoedigheid ontvangt het Woord!

En: "afgelegd hebbende alle vuiligheid en overvloed van boosheid," ontvangt het Woord, dat in geplant wordt.

En wat wil dit nu anders zeggen, dan dat ge het Woord alleen in den weg van voortdurenden strijd tegen de bewegingen der zonde, die in u zijn, en die ook in u werken, kunt ontvangen?

Zachtmoedigheid is immers eene genadegave, eene geestelijke deugd van den nieuwen mensch, die lijnrecht staat tegenover den hoogmoed en de zelfverheffing, die den ouden mensch kenmerken; en zij, de zachtmoedigheid alleen kan u doen staan, en doet u staan in die verhouding tegenover het Woord Gods, waarin ge het kunt ontvangen. Het is die deugd, waardoor gij u vernedert onder de krachtige hand Gods; waardoor gij, en dat wel tegenover dat Woord, altijd traag zijt om te spreken en rasch om te hooren; waardoor ge u kunt en wilt verootmoedigen, ook als dat Woord u veroordeelt: waardoor ge verstand en wil aan dat Woord

gebonden legt; en waardoor ge een dader van dat Woord kunt zijn, en wilt zijn, ook dan, wanneer de gehoorzaamheid aan dat Woord u in moeilijke wegen voert naar het vleesch, zoodat ge in de wereld verdrukking hebt, en het u uit genade gegeven wordt in de zaak van Christus, niet alleen in Hem te gelooven, maar ook met Hem te lijden!

Zonder die zachtmoedigheid voert de hoogmoed van ouden mensch den boventoon, en kunt ge het Woord niet ontvangen.

En als hieraan nog toegevoegd wordt, dat ge zult afleggen alle vuilheid en overvloed van boosheid, wat wil dat dan anders zeggen, dan dat ge gedurig op uwe hoede zijt tegen de werking van den ouden mensch, dat ge waakt en bidt, dat ge dien ouden mensch en zijne werken bestrijdt en doodt?

Alle vuiligheid! Dat is de smet, die u aankleeft, in uwe oude natuur. Ze kleeft aan uw verstand, aan uwen wil, aan alle uwe begeerten. En ze werkt in u. En gij zijt geroepen, haar af te leggen, haar het recht te ontzeggen over u te heerschen, haar den mond te snoeren, haar ten onder te houden. Neen, niet alsof ge ook maar één smetje van de zonde zoudt kunnen wegzuiveren. Niet alsof ge met dat afleggen van die vuiligheid, en dan wel met nadruk van *alle* vuiligheid, ooit in u leven zoudt klaar komen. Maar wel zoo, dat ge door de kracht der genade den ouden mensch en zijne werken het opperbewind in uw leven volstandiglijk ontzegt.

En alle overvloed van boosheid!

Neen, dat beteekent niet, dat ge met dat afleggen zult beginnen, als de werking der boosheid zich wat al te overvloediglijk openbaart. Doch het wil wel zeggen, dat de vuiligheid, die nog in u en aan u kleeft, zich geduriglijk in allerlei boosheid wil openbaren, in uw denken en willen en begeeren, zoowel als in uw spreken en handelen, in geheel uwen wandel; dat het wil "overvloeien," en dat dat overvloeien der boosheid zult bestrijden met al wat in u is!

Dat is de weg. Een andere weg tot het ontvangen van het Woord Gods is er niet, eenvoudig omdat geheel uw oude mensch dat Woord vijandig is.

Hij moet er onder!

Afgelegd hebbende den ouden mensch, altijd weer opnieuw, en met zachtmoedigheid. . . .

Ontvangt het Woord!

Zalig hij, die alzo doet!

Hij is een hoorder, en ook een dader des Woords. En dat Woord maakt zijne ziele zalig!

Ook thans, want door dat Woord wordt al de volheid des heils in Christus Jezus in zijne ziele ingedragen! Genade voor genade! Vergeving en gerechtigheid, vrede en de liefde Gods, hope en blijdschap vervullen dan de ziel!

En straks wordt die zaligheid volkomen ons deel!

In eeuwige volmaaktheid!

H. H.

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EDITORIALS

The Text of a Complaint

If I should refer to all the passages of Holy Writ that prove that the complainants contradict Scripture when they insist that God sincerely seeks the salvation of the reprobate through the preaching of the gospel, this discussion would become practically endless.

And I intend to conclude it in this article.

Hence, I will just make a few selections, in order that it may become abundantly evident that my position is not based on human reason, but on the revelation of God in the Holy Scriptures.

Let us attend to Matt. 11:25-27, the context of that well known passage: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." We read there: "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Father will reveal him."

Let us, in connection with this passage, briefly notice the following points of importance:

1. That Jesus here *answered*. Answered whom? Evidently, the Father. But to what do His words and thanksgiving here contain an answer? To something the Father had done, and that, too, through the preaching and labors of our Saviour. This is evident from the context. While the Lord preached the gospel of the kingdom and performed His mighty works, a two-fold effect had become evident. There were the mighty, who always took the kingdom of God by force, whether it was John or Jesus that preached its gospel; and there were the miserable men of that generation, whom Jesus compares to the children on the market, calling unto their fellows: "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented." Never did they enter the kingdom of heaven. John preached it, but they said that he had a devil, because he came neither eating nor drinking; Jesus came eating and drinking, and they called Him a glutton and winebibber. To John they piped, and he would not dance; hence, they must have nothing of his gospel. Before Jesus they lamented, and He would not mourn; and, therefore, they rejected His gospel. And in connection with this latter effect of His preaching, the Lord upbraids the cities, "wherein

most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not." vs. 20.

A twofold effect, therefore, had become manifest under the same preaching.

2. That Jesus ascribes this twofold effect to the work of the Father. He is the Lord of heaven and earth, sovereign also with respect to the work of salvation. The preaching of the gospel becomes effective only through His power and operation. And that operation is twofold: He hides the things of the kingdom of God, and He reveals them.

3. That all this is quite in harmony with the truth, that no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; and that no one can know the Father, but the Son, and to to whom the Son will reveal Him.

4. And that the ultimate reason and cause of this operation of the Father, according to which, even under the preaching of the gospel, He hides and reveals, is the good pleasure of God: "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Now let the complainants make plain that they do not flatly contradict these words of Jesus, when they insist that God sincerely seeks the salvation of the reprobate through the preaching of the gospel.

May I, further, just remind the complainants of the passage in Rom. 9:1-18? And let it suffice to point out the main line of the apostle's argument. He explains the fact that many Israelites had not obtained salvation, while the remnant obtained it, from the sovereign purpose of God concerning election and reprobation. The Word of God had not become of none effect, even though many Israelites were not saved, for only the children of the promise are counted for the seed. And these are the elect in distinction from the reprobates, Jacob in distinction from Esau. Even in relation to Israel as a nation God remains sovereign to save whom He will: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." vs. 15. And, after he referred to God's sovereign dealings with Pharaoh, he concludes this section with the words: "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

I would very much like to see the complainants explain this passage in such a way, that it becomes plain that they do not openly contradict the Scriptures when they hold that God sincerely seeks the salvation of the reprobates.

One more passage, II Cor. 2:14-16: "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph, and maketh manifest the savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are a savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient unto these things?"

The point here is: 1. That the apostles in their

preaching of the gospel, are both, a savour of death unto death, and a savour of life unto life. And 2. That in both cases they are a sweet savour of Christ unto God. And the preacher of the gospel that is not willing to be such a sweet savour unto God in them that are saved and in them that perish, simply cannot be a minister of the Word of God.

But what then?

What becomes of the contention of the complainants that God sincerely seeks the salvation of all men, the reprobate included, through the preaching of the gospel?

And what to think of their final statement: "The supreme importance for evangelism of maintaining the Reformed doctrine of the gospel as a universal and sincere offer of salvation is self-evident."?

Do they, in this statement, not reveal their real intention? They first claimed that the Reformed doctrine of the gospel honors the paradox, the contradiction: God wills to save all men; He wills to save only the elect. Must they, then, not preach that paradox, if they would proclaim the full gospel, according to their own contention? Must they not do justice to that gospel, and hide nothing of it, whether in "evangelistic" work, or in the ministry of the Word in the Church?

But no; here they tacitly admit that, for evangelistic purposes, their paradoxical gospel is not suitable. And so they propose to forget the one side of their paradox, and to present the gospel only as a "universal and sincere offer of salvation." And that means that they intend to limit themselves to the proclamation that God sincerely seeks the salvation of all men.

In practice, they intend to preach an Arminian gospel.

They are afraid of their own paradox.

H. H.

The Liberated Churches In The Netherlands

Before I proceed to offer our readers more information concerning the schism caused in the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands, I want to say a few words of clarification in regard to a statement I made in the previous issue of our paper, and on which the Rev. H. J. Kuiper reflects in *The Banner* of Sept. 14, 1945. The editor writes:

"When we explain the nature of the objections which the schismatic group made against the official stand of the Reformed Churches (and of our Church as well) on the significance of the covenant of grace

for the children of believers, it will become clear how utterly inconceivable it is that the Christian Reformed Church should react to the position of the Schilder group as Rev. H. Hoeksema predicts in the Standard Bearer of September 1 when he writes:

“In fact, as we receive more and more items of reliable information, we came to the conclusion that it will not be an easy matter for the Christian Reformed Church in honesty to determine with which part of the divided Church they will maintain the relation of sister churches.”

“On the contrary we make bold to say that after the Protestant Reformed Church learns that Dr. Schilder made no objections against the decision on Common Grace by the Netherland Synod of 1942 (a decision which agrees in every essential with our Three Points of 1924) it will no longer feel sympathetic toward him. Nor are we at all sure that Rev. Hoeksema will feel inclined to agree with the covenant conception of Schilder *cum suis*; namely, that the blessing of the covenant is purely an *external* one so that *all* who are in the covenant receive its full blessing. At all events there is not the slightest possibility that the Christian Reformed Church will hesitate for a single moment to reject that position.”

A few remarks:

1. First of all, we may be thankful that the Rev. H. J. Kuiper admits, though only indirectly, that he was wrong when, writing prematurely on the matter, he suggested that the schism in the Netherland Churches concentrated around *Schilder and common grace*. The wrong impression that was left is, at least, removed. And that is the main thing.

2. Let it not be deemed presumptuous by the editor of *The Banner* when I caution him once more not to rush into print with strong expressions of opinion, until he has the official documents and information from both sides, and thoroughly digested it. He may have to alter his stand once more.

3. That I felt personally attracted to Dr. Schilder I will not deny. However, so were many of the leaders in the Christian Reformed Church. And my sympathy for Dr. Schilder was not based on the conviction that he agreed with us on the matter of common grace, although after he gave us a hearing, and especially after the meeting in the Pantlind, he seemed to come closer to us. And there may be several reasons why he did not protest against the decisions by the Netherland Synod on common grace. I will suspend my judgment until I know all the facts.

4. I agree with the Rev. H. J. Kuiper, as far as I can judge now, that it is not very likely that I will agree with the covenant conception of the Liberated Churches. Nor do I agree with the stand taken by the Netherland Synod in this respect. The discussion of this point must wait till later. It is my conviction

that the decisions of Synod were taken prematurely, i.e. before the questions involved were fully discussed.

5. I am quite sure that the Rev. H. J. Kuiper states the position of the Liberated Churches incorrectly and quite ambiguously. This, I think, I am in a position to prove even now. And I hope to clarify this point fully in the near future.

6. My statement that it would not be an easy matter for the Christian Reformed Church in *honesty* to determine with which part of the divided Church they would remain sister churches, was not made rashly, but was rather well motivated before my own mind. And here is my explanation of this motivation:

a. Fact is that the Liberated Churches do not take the stand that they cannot live in fellowship, i.e. in the same Church-communion, with those who take the stand that all the children born within the scope of the covenant are to be considered regenerated until the opposite appears. But they want freedom to believe and maintain their own view on this matter. This the Synod denied them by raising the compromise conclusions of Utrecht 1905 to a dogma, binding upon all ministers and candidates for the ministry, and other officebearers as well as members. Those that were not in harmony with the synodical decisions had no longer a place in the Reformed Churches. As far as I know, the Christian Reformed Churches never took this stand.

b. Fact is, too, that the covenant conception of the Liberated Churches, as far as I can judge now, is essentially the same as that which for many years was taught by Prof. W. Heyns in the Theological School of the Christian Reformed Churches. He taught this at every opportunity, in his Gereformeerde Geloofsleer, in his Genadeverbond, in his Catechetik, and his Liturgiek. And I am sure that a large number of ministers have thoroughly imbibed his teaching, and that his covenant conception is widely taught and preached in the Christian Reformed Churches.

c. Now, I have no doubt, and never had, that for ecclesiastical reasons the Christian Reformed Churches will remain sister churches with the synodical group in the present schism. But if they will judge *honestly*, will they not have great difficulty to decide that they agree with those who make the decisions of Utrecht strictly binding, and leave no room for those who adhere to the Heynsian conception of the covenant?

But about this question more later, D.V.

H. H.

Behold, the potter moulds the clay,
His vessel forms himself to please:
Such is our God, and such are we,
The subjects of his just decree.

The Triple Knowledge

An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

Part Two.

Of Man's Redemption

LORD'S DAY XVIII

Q. 45. What doth the resurrection of Christ profit us?

A. First, that by his resurrection he has overcome death, that he might make us partakers of that righteousness which he had purchased for us by his death; secondly, we are also by his power raised up to a new life; and lastly, the resurrection of Christ is a sure pledge of our blessed resurrection.

1.

The Fact Of The Resurrection Of Christ.

Strickingly brief is the chapter of the Catechism on the resurrection of our Lord from the dead. No less than eight questions and answers were devoted to the suffering and death of Christ in the preceding two Lord's Days. Four more questions are answered, in the next Lord's Day, concerning the ascension of the Saviour into heaven. And only one question and answer are considered sufficient for the exposition of the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Besides, this one question looks at that resurrection exclusively from a soteriological point of view, as expressed in the question: "What doth the resurrection of Christ profit us?" The fact, the meaning, the central significance of this important wonder of grace are left entirely outside of the scope of our instructor's conception.

It cannot be denied that this brevity is a weakness in the Heidelberg, that it betrays a want of proper evaluation of this important truth, which the preacher would seem to be quite justified to supply.

We do not say this, primarily, because we consider it necessary that the minister of the Word enter into the field of apologetics, to defend the truth of the resurrection of our Lord before the Church of God over against various forms of modern philosophy and so-called theology that either deny the reality of the resurrection outright, or give the term a new content that deprives Christ's resurrection of its significance and power. The truth needs no apology. The Church proceeds from faith in the risen Lord, Whose Spirit she received, and of Whose life she partakes. And the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit, for they are spiritually discerned.

But it would seem that the brief discussion by which the Catechism dismisses the resurrection of Christ from the dead is disproportionate to the great significance Scripture attaches to this glorious wonder, and the central place given to it in the economy of salvation.

Without the resurrection of Christ, the cross remains the darkest page in history.

If Christ is not raised, our faith is vain, we are still in our sins; then there is no way out of our death.

It is not even too much to say that Christ's resurrection, according to the Scriptures, has cosmological significance, for precisely as the firstborn from the dead He is the firstborn of every creature, by Whom and for Whom all things were created.

The resurrection of the Crucified One,—that is the Gospel.

Hence, the apostles, in obedience to their charge to preach the gospel to every creature, do, indeed, proclaim Christ and Him crucified, but always as the One Whom God raised from the dead on the third day. On the day when the Holy Spirit was poured out into the Church, the apostle Peter preached unto the amazed multitude the Christ, whom, according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, they had crucified and slain, but "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." Acts 2:32. And again: "This Jesus God hath raised up, whereof we are all witnesses." When the impotent man, sitting daily at the gate of the temple, was healed, and the multitude that witnessed this miracle were "filled with wonder and amazement at that which happened unto him," and "ran together" unto Peter and John, Peter once again preached unto them Jesus, Whom the Jews had killed, but "Whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses." Acts 3:15. And when, on the following day, the rulers of the Jews call the apostles to account for what they had done, Peter boldly testifies: "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole." Acts 4:10. And when they were released from prison the same apostles "with great power. . . witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." Acts 4:32. Also in the preaching of the apostle Paul, the resurrection of Christ occupies a central place. In Perga he proclaims that the Jews condemned and slew Jesus: "But God raised him from the dead. And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again: as it is also written

in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Acts 13:30-33. Notice that here the resurrection of the Lord is presented as the fulfillment of the promise of the gospel; and even as the realization of that significant word from the second psalm: through the resurrection of Christ, God has begotten His Son. In the synagogue in Thessalonica, Paul "as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ." Acts 17:2, 3. On the Areopagus in Athens, he proclaims: "Because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Acts 17:31. Before King Agrippa, the apostle witnesses: "That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." Acts 26:23. And in the well-known fifteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, the apostle writes: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel, which I preached unto you," and this gospel is briefly summarized in the words: "how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." I Cor. 15:1, 2, 4.

But what is the meaning of that resurrection on the third day? What happened on that marvellous first day of the week that was able to raise the spirits of the disciples of our Lord from the slough of despondency to the height of jubilant and triumphant faith, expressed in the shout: "The Lord is risen indeed!"?

To answer this question we can do no better than, first of all, to turn our attention to the gospel narratives concerning the resurrection of Jesus, and to let the Word of God speak to us through the first witnesses of that marvellous event.

There were many such witnesses. There were the women who, in the early morning of that first day of the week, went to the sepulchre to finish the embalming of their Lord's body. There was Mary Magdalene to whom the Lord appeared separately at the sepulchre. There were Peter and John who, upon the first report of Mary, went to inspect the grave. To the sojourners to Emmaus the Lord appeared, in the late afternoon of that first day, through the word which He spake unto them, and through the breaking of bread. And in the evening of the same day, the Lord manifested Himself to the disciples, without Thomas, as they were gathered with closed doors for fear of the Jews. A week later, He appeared again unto them, now particularly to Thomas, who was with them. Then there is the ap-

pearance to seven disciples at the Sea of Galilee. There were the appearances to Peter alone, and to James, the brother of the Lord; there was the manifestation on the mount in Galilee, to more than five hundred at once; and, at the end of that marvellous forty days, He appeared unto them for the last time, when he was taken up from them on the Mount of Olives. "And last of all," Paul writes, "he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." I Cor. 15:8.

In all Scripture, there is, perhaps, nothing more marvellous and exquisitely beautiful than these gospel reports concerning the resurrection. They are the testimony of the faithful witnesses, wholly unprepossessed as to the testimony they bear, simply reporting that which they could not fully understand, but which they saw and heard, and believed.

If, somehow, as superficial and profane critics have alleged, these narratives had been invented by the imagination of the witnesses, we would have had something entirely different.

No human artist, were he of the most consummate skill, could possibly have designed them. There is only one possible, adequate explanation for them: the testimony of these witnesses has its source only and wholly in the risen Lord Himself.

For, let us notice, first of all, that all the witnesses were wholly unprepared for the revelation of the risen Lord which, on that first day and after, they received, and of the which they became the faithful witnesses. Not one of them looked forward to the resurrection on the third day. In spite of the fact that the Lord had repeatedly assured them that He must suffer, and on the third day rise again, when that third day dawned, they all stood in the gloomy darkness of the cross, and could not see, nor did expect, the way out through the resurrection of Christ. The women went to the sepulchre to perform a last act of loving service upon the body of their dead Master; and when they reported to the apostles what they had seen and heard at the grave, and how the Lord had met them on the way back, their words were to them as idle tales. Yet, they one and all believed, and gave testimony of their faith that the Lord had risen indeed.

And then, consider the contents of their testimony. How wonderfully it bears witness of the fact that they simply reported what they saw and heard! For, let us remember that the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead was not a return to us, but an advance into glory. Had the Lord been raised as was the young man of Nain, or the daughter of Jairus, or Lazarus, the matter would have been simple, and the narratives of the resurrection would have been quite different from those we now have in the gospel. At the grave of Lazarus, there were eyewitnesses, that could and did see the dead become alive again, and ascend out of the grave. Besides, they could produce the living

Lazarus who had been dead, at any time, as evidence of the fact of his resurrection. He had returned to his former, earthly life. Men could have fellowship with him again, eat and drink and speak with him. Not so the resurrection of Christ. His resurrection was no return. It did not consist in a resumption of His former mode of living, in the earthly house of his tabernacle, but in an advance into the glory of immortality and incorruption. A mortal and corruptible body had been sown, but it was raised in immortality and incorruption. A natural or "psychical" body had been stored away by Joseph and Nicodemus in the former's sepulchre, but it was raised as a spiritual body. Hence, the reports by the witnesses of the resurrection must testify of two facts: 1. the reality of the bodily resurrection of Christ; 2. the wholly "otherness" of the risen Lord, or the wonder of the resurrection on the third day. And it is precisely these two elements that make the reports by the first witnesses so marvellously beautiful.

Let us ask how this revelation of the risen Lord came to them, and how the testimony concerning the wonder of the resurrection was wrought in them.

First of all, we must call attention to the fact, that unlike the resurrection of Lazarus and others, no one was eyewitness of the fact as such: no one was present, no one saw the Lord issue forth from the grave. Closest to the moment of the resurrection approaches, it would appear, the narrative as given in the gospel according to Matthew. He tells us that "there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came, and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." Yet, even this narrative remains silent about the moment of the resurrection of the Lord. Almost, as we read this narrative, a feeling of disappointment takes hold of us, as, instead of the sober "and sat upon it," we expected to read: "and the Lord of glory issued forth from His dark abode." And yet, we soon realize that this must not be. The angel did not descend from heaven to aid the Lord of glory in breaking the bonds of death, and he did not roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre to make it possible for Him to issue forth from Hades. It is, in fact, quite probable that the Lord had risen before the angel descended from heaven. At all events, He that suddenly appeared in the midst of His disciples, gathered behind closed doors, had no need of a wide open door to come out of the grave. And the angel rolled away the stone, "and sat upon it," to open the sepulchre for inspection to the expected witnesses, and to guard it against profane intruders, that might destroy the wonderful testimony of the empty grave. But this fact, that no one was present at the moment of the resurrection of the Lord as an eyewitness, was a factor in producing in the minds of the witnesses the correct impression of that

marvellous event. It distinguished Christ's resurrection at once from all the typical resurrections that had gone before as something that transcends all our earthly experience.

Then, secondly, there is the testimony of the empty grave, and of the "place where the Lord lay." That the grave had been vacated certainly assured the witnesses, especially when taken in connection with the later appearances of the risen Lord to them, that Christ had really risen, that He was not merely alive in the Spirit, but that His body had been quickened and raised. They looked for Him in Hades, but they discovered that He was not there. But the testimony of the empty sepulchre was not only negative. It did not only leave with the eyewitnesses the indelible impression that their Lord had left the grave. The sepulchre contained a positive testimony as well. It spoke rather clearly of the "otherness" of the marvel, of the altogether transcendent nature of the resurrection. For let us note that the angel that awaited the women at the sepulchre emphatically invited them to "Come, see the place where the Lord lay."

But why this special invitation? Does the angel merely wish to impress deeply upon their mind that this was, indeed, the grave in which Joseph and Nicodemus had stored away the body of the Lord? But this was quite superfluous. The women had no difficulty to identify the sepulchre of their Lord. They had followed in the sad funeral procession on that sad late Friday afternoon before the sabbath. They had watched the two friends of Christ bury the body. They had seen how the great stone was rolled before the entrance of the tomb. But what then? Was it the purpose of the angel to render them doubly sure that the grave was empty? But this is absurd. They stood in the grave, spices ready for the last service of love they intended to perform upon the body of their Lord; and their first glance assured them that the grave was vacated, and that they could not accomplish their purpose. Besides, what was this special place where the Lord had lain? How was it discernible in distinction from the empty space of the grave as a whole? Why this special invitation to pay attention to the place where the Lord lay?

Here we must consult two other witnesses that, later in that same morning, came to inspect the grave.

Mary Magdalene had accompanied the other women on their journey to the grave early in the morning. But it is evident that she did not go with them to the grave, and that she was not present when the angel preached to them the first gospel of the resurrection of Christ. When, even in the distance, the women had noticed that the heavy stone, that somewhat belatedly had become an object of anxiety to them, was rolled away from the door of the tomb, Mary had at once, with characteristic inconsistency, drawn the con-

clusion that the body of Jesus had been taken away by human hands. And no sooner had she drawn this conclusion than she turned about to report both, her experience and her erroneous inference to the disciples. Peter and John are at once aroused by this report of the Magdalene, and hasten to the sepulchre. John being the younger of the two, outruns Peter, and coming to the tomb first, stoops down to inspect it, and is at once struck by the position of the linen clothes. Peter, the more impetuous, as soon as he reaches the grave, enters into it, and he, too, pays special attention to the linen clothes in which the body of Jesus had been wrapped. And as a special detail, he notices that the napkin that had been wound about Jesus' head, was lying somewhat apart from the rest of the linen clothes, in a place by itself. Evidently, the two disciples did the very thing to which the angel had invited the women: they saw the place where the Lord had lain. And we read that "then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed."

Now, what did John believe? And why?

That his belief was based on what he had seen in the sepulchre is evident.

But what had he seen?

H. H.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

The Exploration of the Tribe of Dan

As already has been pointed out, the age of the judges was characterized by lawlessness. In these final chapters, the sacred writer tells us over and over that every man did that which was right in his own eyes, and the reason he gives is, that there was no king in Israel. The final section of the book of Judges is formed of examples of such lawlessness to the number of three and the second of these is the exploration of the tribe of Dan, the first one being that of Micah's spurious sanctuary, which has already been dealt with. The history of this exploration is so closely interwoven with the narrative of the idolatrous doing of Micah, that the two form one connected whole.

The sacred writer prefaces also his narration of the doing of the tribe of Dan with the assertion that "in those days there was no king in Israel," because he wants his readers to know that he frowns upon what he is about to relate of this tribe. In those days the tribe of Dan, so we are told, sought them an inheritance to dwell in, the reason being that unto "that day

all their inheritance had not fallen unto them among the tribes of Israel. But they were at fault. For they had received an inheritance along with the other tribes and the proof of it is the fact that even at that time the tribe dwelt in the district of Zorah and Eshtaol. The territory that had been allotted to them, extended over Timnah and Ekron, as far as Joppa on the coast (Josh. 19:41-46); but they had failed to dispossess the enemy from most of this territory, despite the fact that Jehovah had commanded. So, instead of enlarging their borders by making war on their heathen neighbors, they resorted to other means of relieving the congestion in their homeland. They surprise an undefended and peaceful people that dwelt in the extreme north of Canaan. What was lacking to them is the enthusiasm of faith in Jehovah. So they looked about for a possession that had not been assigned to them. This, to be sure, was an unusual thing in Israel. It was another outstanding example of the lawlessness of the times. The resolution of the Danites to look for new possessions seems not to have been hastily made. Certainly, it was not arrived at by a few adventurers, who cut themselves lose from their people but by the whole tribe. The envoys to whom the execution of the scheme was entrusted, were chosen from among the whole. They were selected men, famed for their valour and thus, doubtless, rulers among their people. The commission that the five of them received—for their were five—was "to spy out the land and to search it." From the house that stood near by the place where, on the evening of their first day's journey, they came to rest, came a voice, which they recognized as that of the young Levite, who had hired himself out to Micah. It shows that they knew the man. They turned in thither, and said to him, "Who brought thee hither? and what makest thou in this place? And what hast thou here." They were surprised to learn from the Levite's answers that the house was a sanctuary and he its priest. But they were also pleased. He could consult his oracle about the success of their undertaking. For they were ill at ease, having addressed themselves to a forbidden task, and knowing, therefore, that the Lord was not with them in their venture. Yet they said to the Levite, "Ask counsel, we pray thee of God, that we may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous." Posing as the spokesman of God, the Levite framed the kind of reply that he knew they wanted to hear. "Go in peace," he said to them, "the way wherein ye go is before the Lord." And the five went, strengthened in their purpose by the favorable sense in which they explained the communication. The capacity of sinful men for self-deception is great.

There is a different explanation from the one given above of the statement, "When they were by the house of Micah, they knew the voice of the young man the Levite." It is this: The Levite in Micah's house wore

a priestly dress, which was provided—so the law required. Ex. 28:35—with bells, in order that their sound may be heard when he enters into and comes out of the holy place.” The Danites, having passed the night heard, in the morning, the bells of the officiating priest, and thus learned, to their astonishment, that there was a Levite there. If this is the right explanation, the question that the five put to the Levite, “What doest thou here,” has this in it, “Thou, a Levite, here in the temple of an idol.” If so, it is not likely that the cause of their surprise was their finding a Levite officiating in a spurious sanctuary.

Coming to Laish, the five did their work well. Their observations were remarkable. They find the city quietly devoted to industrial arts, after the manner of the Zidonians, from whom they had cut loose themselves. And it felt itself secure, that is, imagined that it had nothing to fear from any of its far distant neighbors and therefore it had not entered into relations for mutual protection with other cities and lived in a state of complete military unpreparedness. Such, doubtless, is the thrust of the statement, that there was no magistrate among them. The word found in the Hebrew text doubtless must be rendered not magistrate but tyrant, warlord, military chieftain, a man skilled in the arts of war, surrounded by armed troops. We are to think here of an oriental tyrant, who without the consent of the inhabitants had become their master. They lived without a despot to oppress them, “to put them to shame in anything”, in the language of the text.

But the sacred writer means to bring out that this had its advantages. They were without military leadership and therefore were doomed, should they be attacked from without. The spies observed this—observed that such a commander was absent, that powerful friends were far away and that military activity was altogether wanting. It was thus a gladdening report that they could submit to their brethren, so different from the report of the spies sent by Moses. They, too, had come to a good land; but to a land, whose people were strong, and whose cities were walled and great, a land peopled with giants even. But the five could report that the land to which they had come was occupied by an insignificant colony of defenseless Zidonians, without military leadership and without a single walled city, thus a people from which that good land could be freed with little effort. If ever men were bursting with good news, it was these five spies. Yet, on their arrival at home, they keep silence, until they are asked, “What have ye?” But once they were asked, they instantly replied, for their hearts were burning within them, as is evident from the glow of their words. They said, “Arise, that we may go up against them: for we have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good: and are ye still? be not slothful to go,

and to enter to possess the land. When ye go, ye shall come unto a people secure, and to a large land: for God hath given it into your hands; a place where there is no want of anything that is in the earth.” Mark the statement, “For God hath given it into your hands.” Judging them by this statement, they were God-fearing men, who perceived and gladly confessed that the victory is God’s and that in His strength they must conquer and that credit is due to Him alone for success in arms. Judging them from this utterance, they placed their trust in the Lord and not in the arm of flesh, and believed that He would give victory. But these spies must be judged by their deeds, as here, too, deeds speak louder than words. If they were men who feared God and placed their confidence in Him, they would have remained at home and have done their fighting there, freeing through warfare their allotments from their heathen neighbors, as God had commanded them by the mouth of Moses and Joshua. But from that warfare they shrink, the reason being that the enemy at home was formed of strong people with walled cities and great. Though the Lord had assured them victory, that warfare they dared not war, but they would unsheath the sword against a handful of defenceless people. These men did not fear God. They trusted not in Him but they trusted in their military might, which they knew, was far superior to that of the little colony of Zidonians in the extreme north of Canaan. This military might was their god. From this might and not from the mighty God of Israel, they expected victory. And this might, they knew, would not fail them. For the victory always goes to the superior might. So it was then. So it is today. So it always is. I speak now of man’s wars and not of the holy wars of God and His people. And the Danites were about to fight a man’s war. And because the god of the Danites was their superior military might, the five spies could assure them that god—the god in whom they trusted—would give victory. This god—the superior military might—always gives victory to his devotees, however godless and however godless the war. So it is well to judge these spies from their utterances, if only it be understood who that god was of whom they spake.

The Danites, having heard the report of the spies, took immediate action. Six hundred families either volunteered or were selected. “And there broke up from thence six hundred men, girded with weapons of war.” The expedition at that time was an unusual event. It reminded of the old marches of Israel in the desert but differed radically from these. The remark that “they went up and pitched in Kirjathyearim, in Judah,” and that, on this account “they called the place Mahanneh-dan—meaning, the camp of Dan—unto this day,” tells us that the event took place before the days of Samson and is therefore to be put between Gideon

and Samson. For the sacred writer, at chap. 13:25, connects the first awakening of Samson to his life of deliverer with this place. The road that was taken went over the mountains of Ephraim and led to the house of Micah. The five spies accompanied the colony of migrating Danites and formed the soul of the undertaking. "What houses are those? ask the Danites. The spies inform them and "do you know," they said, "that there is in these houses an ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image," in a word, that here there is a private sanctuary, fully provided with everything necessary to such an institution. "Now therefore consider what we have to do."

The manner of speech of the spies is revealing. They did not tell their comrades just what had to be done. For they reasoned that it was too obvious to all that there was but one thing that had to be done. The apparatus of Micah's temple had to be seized, the young Levite included. There was necessity. Hence, they had no choice. But why was there necessity? They had need of that Levite and his ephod and teraphim for learning God's will in order to be directed thereby. But they lied. That necessity was one of their own creation. For they could have inquired in Jehovah's temple in Shiloh. But before Jehovah they could not stand, for their hearts were filled with thoughts of robbery and death. Besides, they desired a god and a priest to whom they could dictate the responses to their prayers for success in arms and in whose temple they could celebrate, by appropriate religious exercises, the victory granted. The Danites would not face the truth about themselves. And to justify their robbery, they made a necessity of their desire for an idol and reasoned that it is right to steal or to commit any crime, if only there is necessity. So, having learned what was to be had in yonder idol-temple, they knew instantly what had to be done. Without further ado, they went thither. The six hundred, in their war-like array, took a position at the gate, while the families, the cattle, and the rest of the train moved off. The five leaders went to the Levite. They greeted him, and he permitted them to enter the sanctuary, while he remained at the gate. His lack of vigilance plainly reveals his lukewarmness. He was but a hireling. And his temple was but the temple of an idol, for which he could have no true affection. The five being alone in the temple, took all its treasures, image and image ornaments, ephod and teraphim and brought them forth, when the Levite addressed them, "What do ye?" as if he would raise an alarm to prevent the theft. But they knew how to deal with the man. They proposed to him to be priest to them, a whole tribe rather than to a mere individual, but in that case to be still and to come along with the idols, without making a noise. And he accepted the offer with joy, took the idols in his priestly hands and for security

inclosed himself in the midst of the warriors. What a strange thing is sin. The priest had first betrayed his God, and now, from mere vanity, abandoned his benefactor, who had treated him as a son, and left him in the lurch and joined himself to his spoilers; and yet he is eagerly snatched up as something valuable, and it is considered a great point gained, when such hands as his carry gods who allow themselves to be taken by robbers.

The Danites assume that thy might be pursued. Accordingly they put everything that could not defend itself before them, their little ones and their cattle, and they march along ready for instant action. Meanwhile Micah had been told of the theft. About the sanctuary was a little village that had formed itself, and the people are soon collected. They pursue, but not in the faith of Godfearing men, nor with the cause of such men. The Danites, when they heard the cries of the pursuers, acted as if nothing had happened. Turning them about, they said to Micah, "What aileth thee, that thou comest with such a company?" But when by Micah's anger they perceive that he knows all, they tell him that it were better for him to be quiet—he might otherwise lose more; for the people there, whom he saw, were fierce men. And the Danites went their way, and Micah had to yield to superior power. Coming to Laish, the Danites smote them with the edge of the sword. And they built a city and called the name thereof Dan, after Dan their father. And they set up the graven image and the Levite, whose name was Jonathan, and the Levites sons were their priests all the time that the house of God was at Shiloh.

G. M. O.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On September 20, our dear parents,

CORNELIUS PASTOOR

and

ANNA PASTOOR—Doezema

hope to celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary.

We are thankful that our God has spared them these many years. Our prayer is that God may be with them through their remaining days.

Their grateful children:

Mr. and Mrs. T. Helmus

Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Pastoor

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Pastoor

Mr. and Mrs. Otto Huizinga

15 grandchildren.

Grand Rapids, Michigan.

SIONS SANGEN

Een Gebed Davids

(Psalm 86; Tweede Deel)

Er zijn twee zaken waaraan ge een goed gebed kunt herkennen: het eene is de lof des Heeren en het andere is de nederigheid.

Hoe duidelijk komen die twee zaken op den voorgrond in dezen psalm dien we eenmaal eerder kozen voor een weinig schrijvens. vooral het prijzen van God is in dezen psalm scheering en inslag.

“Onder de goden is niemand U gelijk, Heere, en daar zijn geene gelijk Uwe werken!”

De goden hier zijn geen afgoden: de dichter zou er niet aan denken om hetgeen, dat niet bestaat ook maar te noemen in een adem met den grooten en vreeselijken God. Neen, hij bedoelt met goden het allervoornaamste en het alleredelste van wat ge op aarde ook maar kunt vinden; en dat zijn de rechters der aarde. Rechters zijn, meer dan eenige andere menschen in hooge plaatsen, de belangrijkste ambtsbekleeders. Zij zitten in den rechterstoel en moeten recht spreken als God. Elke rechtbank is een vooruitgrijpen op den oordeelsdag. Daarom worden ze goden genaamd.

Doch ook dat volk is niet te vergelijken met den God des hemels en der aarde. God is immers de geheel Andere? Alle dingen, het geheele heelal met al zijne schepselen in hemel en op aarde tezamen, zijn in vergelijking met God een niet en ijdelheid.

Dat gevoelt en ervaart de ziel die God kent. En ook heeft hij behoefte dit steeds onder woord en zang te brengen. 't Zal dan ook het groote thema der eeuwen eeuwigheden zijn.

“En daar zijn geene gelijk Uwe werken!” Dit laatste gedeelte van het 8ste vers bewijst het eerste. Wij kennen God alleen uit Zijne werken, hetzij ge blik op den werken der natuur of die der genade. Ja, wij werken ook; doch wat zijn onze werken vergeleken bij die van God! God schept de aarde en de hemel! Keer op keer als Gods volk in den Bijbel bidt, roepen zij Hem aan als de God die de aarde en de hemelen geschapen heeft. En wel mogen zij dat doen. Wat wondere daad is die schepping. Door een schepingswoord kwamen ze aan en sindsdien bewaarde Hij ze. Hoe groot is God!

Evenwel, des Heeren werken op het gebied der natuur mogen groot zijn, die der genade zijn grooter. En waar zullen we beginnen om U iets van die genade werken te schetsen? Denkt aan het kruis van Jezus Christus, waar God gewerkt heeft zoo als nooit te

voren. Daar werd een werk gedaan, dat bezongen zal worden tot in alle eeuwigheid. Daar werd het fundament gelegd waarop de nieuwe hemel en de nieuwe aarde zal rusten; daar verrees de berg van Gods heiligheid. Principieel werd daar het heil gewrocht, hetwelk U zal doen jubelen tot in alle eeuwigheid. Ik vraag U: wat werk van den mensch is daarbij gelijk te schatten?

Als ge het volgende vers beschouwt uit dat oogpunt dan ziet ge het toppunt van des Heeren werken. De heidenen, alle de heidenen, zullen komen om voor het Aangezicht van dien vreeselijken God te aanbidden. Want dat Aanschijs is Jezus Christus en alle die heidenen zijn de verlost menscheid, terwijl dat aanbidden de Hemel der zaligheid is.

En dan weerklinkt het nog eens weer in dezen zang: Want Gij zijt groot, en doet wonderwerken; Gij alleen zijt God!

Van werken wordt het hier wonderwerken, van de schepping gaat het voort tot de herschepping, van de aarde tot den hemel, van het tijdelijke tot het eeuwige. Want het Wonder, het groote Mirakel is dit, dat God in oneindige liefde een baan breekt door de angstige en nare donkerheden van zonde, schuld, dood en verdoemenis en in het Aangezicht van Zijn lieflijken Zoon voor ons komt te staan.

Wat kan de mensch daar tegenover stellen? Niets. Het eenige wat hij kan doen is de dingen, die ook nog van God zijn, te verknoeien. Eén groot knoeien: dat is de geschiedenis van de menschen op aarde.

En de dichter, die een geestelijk mensch is en daarom een geestelijk gezicht heeft, heeft dat gezien op aarde en hij is er moe van geworden. Daarom keert hij zich in zang en jubel tot God om Hem te loven vanwege zijn wonderdaden. En zingt hij: Gij, o Heere, doet wonderen, Gij alleen!

Die wijsheid en geestelijke wetenschap heeft hem één groot verlangen gegeven. Hij heeft geleerd, dat de mensch Gods geroepen is om op de paden Gods te wandelen. Van nature wandelen we ook op een weg, doch het is de weg die tot het verderf leidt. Daarom vraagt hij de Heere om Zijn weg te mogen leeren. Gods weg is de weg van Zijn deugden en wonderen. Gods weg is het pad waarlangs Hij alles voortstuwt tot het eenigste en schoonste doel: de verheerlijking van Zijn Naam. Daarom is Jezus Christus die weg. En zeide Jezus: Ik ben de Weg.

We hebben er van gehoord in de zendbrief aan die van Efeze. De Heere God gaat alle dingen wederom tot een vergaderen, beide de dingen in den hemel en die op de aarde zijn. En al dat wederom bijeen vergaderen gaat geschieden “in Jezus”. In den Heere Jezus Christus, zal de geheele schepping aan Gods hart liggen: God zal dan zijn alles en in allen.

Daarom is Jezus de Weg van God. Hij is de Weg van uit den Chaos tot de grootste harmonie en Eenheid:

“Ik in hem en Gij in Mij; opdat zij volmaakt zijn in één!”

Vanaf de paden des doods wil de dichter van dezen psalm door God geleid worden op den weg Gods: “Leer mij, Heere, Uwen weg!”

En praktisch is dat een wandelen in de waarheid, met een hart dat vereend is tot de vreeze Gods. Een wandel in de waarheid is het tegenovergestelde van ons natuurlijk pad. Van nature wandelen we op de paden der leugen, daar is de kronkeling van de slang. Doch als het licht van Gods pad ons bestraalt, en dat is Jezus, het Licht der wereld, dan wandelen we op rechte paden, de paden der waarheid. En terwijl we op die paden des rechts wandelen, is ons hart vereend tot de vreeze van Gods naam. Dan is er slechts één beginsel, dat ons beïnvloedt en dat is het beginsel van de Godsvreeze. Daar wandelen we met vreeze en beven, want dan is God daar zeer dicht bij ons, neen, in ons. Een vreeze, niet als van den slaaf, doch de vreeze van het kind dat opziet tot zijn vader in liefde.

Op dat pad, geliefde lezers,, is het goed. Daar zal het verdere van dezen psalm van gewagen. Hoort het maar: “Heere, mijn God, ik zal U met mijn gansche hart loven, en ik zal Uwen naam eeren tot in eeuwigheid!”

Godlof; ziedaar het eenigste medicament voor een bange en ellendige ziel. David ervoer dit meer. Het gebeurde eens, dat hij met zijn ziel een tweespraak hield. Ge vindt het in psalm 42. Zijn ziel was onrustig vanwege de baren en de golven van Gods bezoekende hand over hem. Het was hem bang. Met een doodsteek hoonden hem zijne wederpartijders. Kolk en afgrond loeiden over zijn bange ziel. Doch hij schreeuwde tot God. En God heeft hem verhoord, want hij besluit dien onvergetelijken zang met het heerlijk slot: Ik zal God, mijn God, nog loven!

Met zijn gansche hart zal David God loven.

Ja, dat is de eenigste weg om Gode welbehagelijk te zijn. Gaat toch nooit tot God met een half, een halfslachtig, hart tot God. God wil alles in U. Hij eischt den geheelen mensch op. Met een half hart tot God is den Heere een gruwel. Hij is jaloersch. Ook heeft Hij recht op den geheelen mensch. Dat leert Gods volk.

Dan worden we nooit moede of mat om den Naam des Heeren te eeren.

Wat wil dat zeggen: hoe eeren we den Naam?

De Naam van God, geliefden, is de openbaring van Zijn Wezen. God openbaart Zijn lieflijk hart in de werken Zijner handen. En wij eeren die Zelf-openbaring van God door het Hem aan te zeggen hoe lieflijk en hoe schoon en hoe glorieus die openbaring is. Altijd en overal waar ge de voetstappen van God ziet die van vettigheid druipen, zingt ge van dien Naam. Dat is Zijn Naam eeren.

En ook wederom hier is het toppunt van die open-

baring Zijn Zoon, onze Heere Jezus Christus. Dat is dan ook trouwens zoo tot in eeuwigheid, zooals de dichter het zegt. Johannes heeft het gezien op Patmos. In het midden van den troon (waarop de Heere zit) is het Lam, dus in het hart van God. En als de groote schare engelen en menschen dat Lam zien, loven en eeren zij God in Zijn Naam.

Zoo zal de dichter Gods Naam eeren tot in eeuwigheid.

Welnu, David doet dat nu, terwijl ik dit schrijf; en wij zullen het met hem doen totdat geen maan meer schijnt. Het is de hemel op aarde.

De dichter, David, heeft groote reden om zoo te loven en te prijzen. Hij zal van die reden spreken in het volgende vers. “Want, zegt hij, Uwe goedertierenheid is groot over mij!”

Goedertierenheid is die deugd van den God onze zaligheid, waardoor alles in Hem dringt en werkt om Zijn volk goed te doen tot in alle eeuwigheid. Wat heerlijke gedachte. Zoo groot als God is, zoo groot is Zijn hartstocht om mij goed te doen. Kunt ge daar bij?

En dat dit zoo is, zal David bewijzen. Luistert maar; hij zegt: “Gij hebt mijne ziel uit het onderste des grafs gerukt!”

Principieel liggen wij, Gods kinderen, in den eeuwigen dood van nature. Daar vond ons God. En van daar haalt Hij ons op tot in het nieuwe Jeruzalem om zoo altoos bij den Heere te zijn. Hij rukt ons uit het onderste des grafs. Het graf is het voorportaal van de hel. En de goedertierenheid Gods zijn Zijn armen van oneindige liefde die grijpen, neer-grijpen tot dat zij onder mij zijn om mij dan voorts omhoog te halen en mijn voeten te zetten op den Rotssteen. Halleluja! Mozes heeft er ook van gezongen toen hij jubelde: “Van onderen eeuwige armen!” En toen heeft God ons uit die poel van eeuwige weemoed gerukt. Dat is Zijn goedertierenheid. En ook hier weer eens: dat is Jezus. Jezus is die greep van God naar de diepte, waar wij gekomen zijn door onze zonde en schuld. En vanuit die diepte heeft Jezus, dat is, God, ons opgehaald tot in den hemel der hemelen. Juicht nu, kinderen Gods, allemaal.

Voorts wordt de dichter bepaald bij het tegenwoordige. Hij ziet zijn haters, een vergadering der tyrannen.

Wat ongelukkig volk is dat toch. Stelt het U voor: David, Gods volk, is het eelste dat op aarde ooit gezien werd. Later zal er van geschreven worden in den brief aan de Hebreërs: er staat, dat de wereld niet waard is om dat wondere volk in hun midden te hebben: “welker de wereld niet waardig was”. Dat volk van God heeft Jezus, den Zoon Gods in het diepe hart. En nu is er een ongelukkig volk, dat het altijd verzien heeft op het volk van God. Dat hoovaardig volk staat tegen ons op: ze haten ons omdat ze het geproefd hebben, dat

wij dragers zijn van Goddelijk zaad; en die God haten zij. Dan gaat de vergadering der tyrannen aan 't zoeken om onze ziel te vinden, opdat zij op hun gemak die ziel mogen trijteren en plagen, doen lijden en uiteindelijk doen sterven in groote smart. De aarde is rood geverwd met het bloed der martelaren.

Ongelukkig volk, zeide ik. Ge hebt het toch bemerkt, dat ik het goddelooze volk daarmee beduidde? Want ongelukkig zijn ze. Straks zullen ze zien Wien ze doorstoken hebben. Want elke marteling die ze Gods volk aandeden is een aantasten van God, een steken van hun vinger in Gods oogappel. Die Zijn volk aanraakt, raakt Zijn oogappel aan. Dat is centraal geschied in de kruisiging van Jezus. O, vreeselijke bloedschuld van Golgotha!

Gods volk is zelfs zalig in al hun lijden, want hun God is barmhartig en genadig over hen, lankmoedig en groot van goedertierenheid en waarheid. Zoo kan Paulus zingen en bidden in opgeruimdheid in een donder en vonzig kerkerhol. En zegt Jezus: verblijdt en verheugt U als ge om Mijn Naams wil lijden moet.

Hoe dat kan? Wel, omdat God sterkte in zwakheid op hen neerdaalt. Zoo daalt Zijn kracht op ons in zwakheid neer! Zongen wij dit niet vaak?

Dat weet David en daarom bidt hij voorts: Wend U tot mij en wees mij genadig, geef Uwen knecht Uwe sterkte en verlos den zoon Uwer dienstmaagd.

En dat doet God.

Van der jeugd aan hebt ge ervan gezongen: Zij gaan van kracht tot kracht steeds voort! Ook dit: Van wien het volk zijn sterkte heeft. Of ook: Hij is de kracht van hunne kracht.

En dan is 't goed.

Hij bidt en er komt een teeken ten goede. Het grootste teeken ten goede is de Zoon der maagd: Jezus Christus. God verlost Hem uit 't doodsgevaar. Zal Hij ons niet met Hem alle dingen schenken?

In Hem en met Hem geeft Hij troost en hulpe.

Woord en Geest fluisteren mij in 't diepe hart: Alles zal recht komen!

'k Heb het geloofd en daarom zing ik; daarom zing ik van gena!

Heere, hoe wonderlijk zijn Uwe werken!

Ook weet het mijn ziel zeer wel. Wij loven U tot in eeuwigheid.

G. V.

CLASSIS EAST

will meet in regular session D. V., Wednesday, October 3, at 9:00 A.M. at the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

D. JONKER, Stated Clerk.

IN HIS FEAR

Off To School

The Wrong Way.

As these words are written, the short but pleasant summer season has again come to an end, and school-days are with us once again. Throughout the country the schools have opened their doors to receive the nation's children. Our own covenant children, too, have returned to their respective institutions of learning, and on the whole they seem quite happy about it all. We parents are likewise happy. The summer months may be ever so pleasant from many points of view, there is nothing like the satisfaction one gets when home and church and school all come down to normal and spiritually profitable business once more.

Some of our children (not many, we are grateful to add) still receive their education in the institutions of this world. The majority of these, especially in these parts, are high school students; some, however, attend the public grammar schools. In other churches, sundry reports seem to indicate, this evil is increasing rather than decreasing. If so the situation is alarming, for this would mean that ultimately the Christian School is doomed. However, also among us there are still those parents who make themselves guilty of this sin against their children, their church and their God. How can they do it? How can people who are born and raised in the sphere of the covenant begin to speak of peace of heart and assurance of faith, when they are so negligent in their Christian calling with respect to the covenant seed Jehovah has entrusted to their care, and when they so deliberately walk in the way of evil? We cannot and may not look for the blessing of the Lord in that way. You parents are evil!

Excuses Galore.

These people have excuses, yes. Many of them. Shall we listen to a few?

The Christian School is too far from home for our children. This excuse is offered, naturally, where the younger children are concerned. The distance is too great for the children to walk, and it is too inconvenient for either of the parents to bring them. Besides, there are so many busy streets to be crossed and one cannot live in constant dread of possible accidents. Hence, they send their children to the public school which happens to be much closer to home. Now this excuse may carry some weight in certain localities, particularly in rural districts. Generally speaking, however, it holds no water. Did such people not move

to where they now live of their own volition? They had children at the time they purchased their homes; to say the least, they as Christian men and women looked forward to receiving children of the Lord; and they knew that at a given age children must go to school.

Christian education is much too expensive. "We just can't afford it. We can't spend our last penny for the school." This, if the truth were told (it usually isn't) would be found to be the main objection. On the whole this sin also is rooted in covetousness, the love of money. Now tuition is high, that is true; *too* high in many cases, not from the viewpoint of the education received, but from the aspect of family income and budget. The public schools are free. A tremendous difference, especially for those parents who work hard for every dollar and must count their pennies to make both ends meet. Still, also this excuse is without merit. Have those who were unable to pay full tuition not always been received and provided for in one form or another? Do not the poorest of the poor send their children to the Christian school, if only the will to do is present? However, as a rule it is not a matter of poverty with these people but of pure carnality. The money is there, but it seems to them such a waste of money to spend it on Christian education. They feel that they get so little in return. There is so much more satisfaction in spending precious money for houses and cars, for gas and oil, for candy and smokes, for cottages and trips, for fishing and bowling and a host of other things.

Most of us, at one time or other, have heard the excuse: if only the Christian schools were better, more Reformed; as it is they are so little better than those of the world. That is an ingenious way of covering up one's iniquity! Surely, people who send their children to the public school, to the world, to Babylon, outside the sphere of the covenant, for their education should not talk about the Christian schools. They have forfeited every right to do so. That does not mean, that there is no element of truth in what they say, but even this will not drive the conscientious Christian into the world. He may feel sad about prevailing conditions; he will never seek refuge and comfort in Babylon.

Occasionally the argument is advanced: the public schools are not so dangerous; we need not be so afraid to send our children to these schools for their instruction; the education they give is of a high character. In short, the public schools are good enough! On what basis? According to what standard can this be maintained? How can any one who is Protestant Reformed assume this position? On the basis of Common Grace one may conceivably find support for this position. After all, God is gracious to all men. He bestows many benefits, much knowledge and wisdom and virtue on all, and as a result there is still much good in the world,

also in the schools of the world. The knowledge of the world, its science and art and culture, and consequently its schools are the fruits of common grace. The public school is the gift of God's grace (common) as well as the Christian school (special). That makes the public school much more acceptable, even to the Christian, of course. Little wonder that Christian school interest and attendance are on the decline. On the basis of the truth and of the antithesis, however, this position is utterly impossible. The public school is the school of the world. It does not fly the banner of God's covenant, nor could it ever desire to do so. It rests, not on the basis of grace, but of sin.

In our own circles the objection is raised: the present Christian schools are so far from ideal, especially for us who are Protestant Reformed. They are controlled entirely by them who have cast us out. Many teachers do not know enough about Reformed doctrine to discern between Arminianism and the truth. Those who do know their doctrine are hostile to the truth as we see and love it. The principles, which would really provide the Christian schools with a sound and permanent basis for existence and would really make for distinctive education, are rejected. All this is true, of course. Even this, however, constitutes no reason to send our children to the schools of the world. Whatever Jerusalem may do, never may we forsake it to go to Babylon.

Many more excuses are offered. I shall not take time and space to discuss them. Have you never heard parents defend their position by saying, "I can't see what is so bad about the public school. After all, I went there too." The obvious implication is: and look at me now. Am I one step behind those who received their education in the Christian schools? The proper and honest answer to this question would be: you certainly are behind those others, especially in your Bible knowledge. To that rule there are few exceptions. Most of us ministers have had the opportunity in the catechism class to compare public school children with Christian school children. Generally speaking, there simply is no comparison.

And then there is the case of Johnny, who was taken from the Christian school and sent to the public school because he had some trouble with his teacher or his principal. One day Johnny came home crying. His teacher had slapped his face, or his principal had found it necessary to punish the boy. Who was to blame? Why, the teacher, of course! Who said so? Johnny did, and Johnny does not lie. He had done nothing wrong. He never does. All of a sudden and without any reason for doing so teacher had just slapped him in the face. As a consequence Johnny is taken from the Christian school and sent to the public school. He doesn't have to submit to such indignities! Did mother go to see the teacher or the principal?

No, why should she? Did father bring the matter to the attention of the board? Certainly not! Did either in any way seek to learn the truth of the matter? Not at all; they might discover that Johnny did not tell the truth after all. They simply took their child or children from school and sent them to the public school. Besides, look how much money is saved this way. Such parents! And such Christians!

Why Evil?

All these and many other excuses notwithstanding, it certainly should be plain to all Reformed parents, that the public school is not the school for our children. It is the world's school, and the world is enmity against God. There the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of all wisdom, has no place. There all is strictly this-worldly. Is that training the child in the way he should go? Is that providing the covenant child with the nourishment it should receive? Stones for bread; serpents for fish; that's what such parents give their children.

The schools of the world are institutions of the lie, built on the lie, and dedicated to the lie. They are such because they are purely humanistic, and pure humanism is the lie. They are this because they have no place for God, and God alone is THE Truth. They represent the lie because they have no room for Christ, and because they ignore and reject the Word of God, apart from which there can be no knowledge of the truth. Scripture alone reveals the truth with respect to all things, to God and man, to Christ and our salvation, to heaven and earth and all things. In its light alone we see the light. The Word of God is not a natural textbook on history, or geography, or science, or civics, or mathematics or biology,—yet none of these can be understood without the revelation God has given in His Word. The latter alone reveals the things not seen, without which the things seen are never apprehended in their proper significance or true perspective. Scripture alone lays down the fundamental principles; gives the directives; sheds God's light on God's world. That revelation of God the world rejects as foolish and irrelevant. Therefore the world always lies and its institutions are institutions of the lie. To deny this spiritual character of the public school is to deny the spiritual character of the world itself.

All this does not mean, that the world cannot give us certain facts, and be technically correct about them. It can teach that the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776, and this is correct. It can teach our children that a line is the distance between two points, and who shall deny the truth of this statement?

Nevertheless, the *education* of the world is false. Education is more than the inculcation of mere, naked facts. It explains them. It seeks to see them in their proper place and perspective. It inquires into the reason and purpose of things, the origin and the end.

Without God and His Word such education must of necessity be false. The Lord of hosts has no place in all the thoughts of the natural man. How, then, can he ever attain to the truth.

Such schools are not for our children, that's certain.

There are some things that should not even enter into the mind of the child of God; that a Christian should find it impossible to do.

Sending his children to the public school is one of them.

(To be continued)

R. V.

FROM HOLY WRIT

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

—Matt. 7:13-14.

We may definitely assert that the "Kingdom of Heaven" is the subject of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Throughout this sermon in Matt. 5:7 the spiritual character of this Kingdom receives all emphasis. It is spiritual in distinction from the earthy expectation of the disciples on the one hand and from the external and sham righteousness of the scribes and pharisees on the other. This Kingdom of heaven is established by Jesus' perfect fulfillment of the law, and it is worked spiritually in His people through the Holy Spirit. Needless to say, our entrance into that Kingdom is a matter of grave importance. This latter thought constitutes the Word of God in this text.

We must understand, I am sure, that the viewpoint of this text is not that of God as He leads His people into the heavenly glory. God encounters no difficulties. He knows no strait gate or narrow way. The viewpoint here is that of *our* entrance into this heavenly kingdom. We can enter into it only through a strait gate and upon a narrow way. And inasmuch as this is true, and these ways lead either to life or destruction, how urgent therefore is our calling to enter in at the strait gate.

According to this text we must pass through the strait gate to enter eternal life. Jesus does not exhort us to enter in at the strait gate and upon the narrow way. We are merely told to enter in at the strait gate. The gate receives the emphasis here. The way (narrow or broad) follows upon the gate and is deter-

mined by it. The strait gate always results in a narrow way. At the very outset we may ask ourselves three questions which call for an answer:

1. What is meant by life?
2. What is meant by the gate which leads unto life?
3. What is meant by entering in at the strait gate?

1. First of all, Christ speaks here of life and its contrast, destruction. Destruction in this text must, of course, not be confused with annihilation. Annihilation is taught by the Russelites and Universalites but is clearly denied in the Scriptures, as e.g., in Matt. 25:46. This destruction refers to man's conscious and eternal ruin. Man, while upon earth, lives in a dream-world. He imagines himself rich in the temporary possession of earthly treasures. But his destruction awaits him, when, at the end of time and forevermore, he will experience the unspeakable misery of being eternally forsaken of God. He will then be deprived of all his possessions and taste eternally the wrath of God. The contrast of this destruction is life. It is evident, in the light of the word "destruction", that our Lord here refers to the Kingdom of Heaven from the viewpoint of its eternal culmination. Only, He speaks of that Kingdom from the aspect of life. This life refers not only to our public justification before the eyes of all men, but positively to the eternal, glorious fellowship with God in Christ Jesus in heavenly glory, when we shall serve the living God perfectly and forevermore.

2. Secondly, what is meant by the gate which leads into life? The strait gate leads unto life and the wide gate leads unto destruction. The identity of this gate which leads unto life is beyond every doubt. The entire sermon on the mount throws light on this question, especially the Beatitudes, chap. 5:20, where Christ contrasts our righteousness with that of the Pharisees, and chapter 6:33 where we are admonished to seek the Kingdom of God and its righteousness. Our entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven can never be anything else than the perfect righteousness of Christ Jesus, our Lord. Righteousness signifies that we are declared by the Supreme Judge of heaven and earth to be in perfect harmony with His will and law. We can speak of righteousness in a judicial sense and thereby emphasize the truth that, upon the declaration of God as Judge, our guilt has been paid and we have obtained the right to eternal life. And we can also emphasize the spiritual aspect and thereby refer to the harmony between our own spiritual life and the will of God. The gate mentioned in this text refers to righteousness in this two-fold sense of the word. And this righteousness is ours in Christ Jesus. He alone restored us to favor with God. He alone works in us

the spiritual harmony between our lives and the will of God. And through this righteousness we enter life eternal, fellowship with God, now in principle and soon in eternal perfection. Hence, the wide gate of my text is the gate of sin and unrighteousness.

3. Thirdly, what is meant by our entering through the strait gate? It is evident that Christ here is speaking of our personal and conscious entering into the Kingdom of Heaven through the strait gate. This implies three things. It implies, in the first place, a conscious clinging unto the cross of Golgotha. By nature we are hopelessly estranged from God. That cross alone is our only hope. For on that cross Christ died and reconciled us with the Father. To enter through the strait gate means therefore that we consciously, by faith, embrace the crucified Christ. It implies, secondly, a conscious choosing for the holiness of the law of God. We must consciously forsake the way of sin, put off the old man, and turn unto the living God and reach forward unto the perfection in Jesus Christ, our Lord. And it signifies, thirdly, that this entrance through the strait gate must occur throughout our entire life. It is true that this choice, in principle, takes place but once. But this one choice must occur throughout our lives.

It is evident from the text that this entrance through the strait gate is extremely difficult. Does not the Saviour speak of a strait gate and of a narrow way? The reason for this difficulty is two-fold, subjective and objective. It is difficult, subjectively, because of us who must pass through it. It is true that we are renewed in principle. But it is equally true that we are but in principle holy. To be sure, our nature is renewed in principle. But this work of the grace of God has been wrought in an earthly tabernacle. Our old nature does not disappear. Sanctification does not imply the dying of the old man. But it refers to *our* dying of the old man. And this struggle against the workings of sin within us continues until the end of our earthly lives. It is difficult, objectively, because the gate is so strait and the way is terribly narrow.

We may also in this connection note the relation between gate and way. The concept "way" in the text refers to our walk, our manifestation and path in the midst of the world. The relation is that of cause and effect. The gate determines the way. My choosing for sin or righteousness determines definitely my "way" in the midst of the world.

In contrast with the difficulty attending my entrance through the gate of the Kingdom of Heaven the way of sin is easy. The gate of sin and unrighteousness is extremely wide. We pass through it so easily. To choose for sin and evil does not involve us in a struggle with the flesh. We merely follow our own nature, walk according to our own pleasures. It de-

mands of us no self-denial. And the way which follows such a choice is delightfully broad. To travel upon it is a pleasure. Then we can go everywhere and the entire world lies before us. Besides, many, we read, walk on it. We shall not lack company. We need not be regarded as outcasts and the offscouring of society.

On the other hand, it is extremely difficult to enter through the gate of the Kingdom of Heaven. The gate, we read, is strait, narrow. To embrace the cross of Golgotha implies that I must renounce myself. Nothing of ourselves can pass through this gate. The moment we behold any righteousness in ourselves we will find it impossible to pass through this gate into the Kingdom of Heaven. To cling unto the Christ of Calvary implies that we know ourselves as condemnable, utterly unworthy of the mercies of God and that Jesus alone is our salvation. And therefore we must pass through this gate naked, ever appearing before the living God in sackcloth and ashes. Besides, our entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven is also difficult because of the way which must inevitably follow. That way is terribly narrow. Having embraced the principles of the Kingdom of God we have renounced the lusts of the eyes and of the flesh, and the greatness of life. We are radically different from those whose god is their belly, who glory in their shame, who hate the cross of Christ. The children of the world proceed in all their activity from the principle of sin and that which is below. The children of the Kingdom are moved by the fear of God. For this reason their path in the world shall be narrow. It is narrow because they must deny themselves the pleasures of sin for a season. It is narrow also because the wicked world hates the Church of God and will persecute those who seek the things above. And there are few that find it, God's people are a ridiculed minority.

The extreme difficulty attending our entrance through the strait gate is further emphasized in the text when Jesus informs us that "few there be that find it." The implication is not that all men seek to enter God's eternal Kingdom of Heaven. Scripture teaches us differently. All men do, however, seek a certain peace and rest, a heaven of their own imagination. But, in all the world's seeking for peace and rest few find the strait gate. The wide gate, with its broad way, is the choice of the vast majority. Only a few will choose shame and reproach as the way to eternal glory and peace.

Finally, the tone of the text is such that it emphasizes the urgent necessity of entering through the strait gate. It is imperative for us to enter through this strait gate because the gate and way which lead unto destruction are broad and it is only through the strait gate and upon the narrow way that we are led into eternal life. The broad way leads to destruction. The narrow way is the way of Life. This must be.

God rewards according to works. Unrighteousness is the gateway and pathway to hell. The wages of sin is death. For God is the God of righteousness and the wicked therefore gather for themselves treasures of eternal wrath. The strait gate, on the other hand, leads to life. It leads to life not because of our own righteousness. Christ is our righteousness. He paid our debt and merited for us life. His work is our reward. To believe in Christ, to suffer for His Name's sake in the midst of the world demands eternal life on the basis of the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Urgently necessary therefore is this admonition. The gate and way of destruction are wide. The gate of life is narrow. Enter ye in, not at the wide gate, but at the strait gate.

H. V.

PERISCOPE

R. F. P. A.

We had in mind to begin this column in an entirely different manner, perhaps by introducing the writers and making a statement or two of our plans for this rubric. Since the evening of September 20, however, these have appeared irrelevant and this article *must* take precedence. The reason for this should become evident as we proceed.

On the evening referred to above, the Reformed Free Publishing Association held its Annual Membership meeting in the First Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids. The Board of the association had expended a special effort in an attempt to arouse interest in this gathering. Announcements had been placed in our papers well in advance of the date; urging all members, readers and friends of the cause to attend. Besides this, several hundred personal letters had been sent out to the members of our Churches living in Grand Rapids and vicinity, who, it was expected, would at least show enough interest to attend the meeting. It was certainly disheartening, therefore, to find only fifty members and one or two visitors present; which was not greatly above the average for this meeting.

We rather pitied these "feeble few" and would not have been surprised if they too would have decided to abandon the ship in hopelessness. Of course, we were wrong on both scores! As we listened to the beautiful and instructive "remarks" of the speaker for the evening our whole view-point changed. They, rather, were to be pitied who had missed this inspiring speech and

who failed in executing a glorious privilege which was theirs. The remarks made proved to be an incentive to re-newed courage and enthusiasm. The reason for this change of attitude should also become evident as we briefly review the remarks made by the speaker.

After the preliminary business had been disposed of the Rev. H. Hoeksema arose to "make a few remarks". As usual these "remarks" turned out to be an ordered and finished development of the theme: "The Standard Bearer as a Witness". By way of introduction the speaker recalled the occasion and purpose of the organization of the R. F. P. A. It found its occasion in the fact that in 1923 the existing Church papers were closed to the contributions of the Revs. H. Danhof and H. Hoeksema. Thus the R. F. P. A. was born with the express purpose of creating an organ through which the Reformed truth, as maintained by these two brethren, might be defended, developed and maintained. The name of the organization emphasizes that purpose and aim. Reformed—indicates what was wanted as the contents of the publication. Free—points out that it is under no institutional supervision or control. That it is a Publishing Association reveals ~~that its purpose is to make propaganda, within and without, as a free body of Reformed Christians, and that more particularly, as a witness.~~

In the development of the theme: "The Standard Bearer as a Witness", the speaker briefly asked and answered three questions: What was to be witnessed? What is it to witness? and, What have been the results of this witness?

It was pointed out that the content of that witness is the unadulterated Reformed Truth. Though this means the Truth as it is embodied in our Standards it does not mean that these be simply repeated, but that they are to be developed and defended against all attack, and applied to doctrine, church polity and every sphere of life. This is the general content of that witness. There is, however, a more specific content to Reformed truth and the *specific* aspect of it must be developed *specifically*. There is no longer a great love for, or development of, *specific* Reformed doctrine and principle, the speaker said. "Our calling is not to be general but *specific*." He continued by stating that there are especially two truths which are specifically and uniquely Reformed. The basic principle of all Reformed doctrine is the fact of God's Absolute Sovereignty in respect to all things. This is the truth that must dominate all Reformed doctrine. The second principle is the Covenant concept. Here the speaker expressed that as he continued study and grew older he was becoming more and more convinced that this latter truth is even more peculiarly and exclusively Reformed than even that of God's Sovereignty. There is no other group outside the Reformed Churches that gives to the Covenant theology the

integral part and place it must have. The reason for this is the existing relationship between these two fundamental principles. The Sovereignty of God necessarily includes that all things, also our salvation are motivated by the fact of God's glory as the only end of all things.

It is of that *specific* Reformed truth that the Standard Bearer wants to be a witness. And that in distinction from the official preaching or missionary task of the Church. Witness is testimony; and this witness of the Standard Bearer is not institutional but free. Therefore, the speaker emphasized, the Standard Bearer is YOURS! It does not belong to the institute but to all of the men (and the speaker saw no reason why the women should be excluded from this statement) to every believer as he is a part of the organism of the Church. Through their interest in, and publication of, the Standard Bearer, individual Christians have one of the most beautiful opportunities to exercise their office of believer—for the Standard Bearer is YOURS—OURS!

That the Standard Bearer is a "free witness" means that it can never come under the power, or be used in the influence of, a corrupted institution. "This organization is one of the most powerful means to maintain ourselves", the speaker said. It is every believer's witness overagainst all corruption—it is free—without entanglements.

Once again the point was emphasized that the Standard Bearer belongs to all of our men; all appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. Those present were urged to tell the brethren these things and urge them to function in their office of believers in this respect. Because of its very nature, the Standard Bearer, is one of the nicest forms and offers a most beautiful opportunity for every one of us to so function.

In conclusion it was pointed out that in the course of its history the Standard Bearer has enjoyed both criticism and honor. Because of limited means it has been easy to cast aspersion on its efforts and this adverse reflection was to be expected. Nevertheless, by God's grace a tremendous thing has been done and there are many reasons to be grateful. There is clear and direct evidence of the influence of the Standard Bearer's witness in our own Churches. Less evident, perhaps, but fully as potent, has been its influence outside our own denomination. Its witness has been heard and regarded among various Reformed groups in our own country as well as in the Netherlands. Hence, the closing directive: "It behooves us to be thankful to God and then go ahead; work for the Standard Bearer with all our might exercising the office of believer!"

W. H.

Dr. Gordon H. Clark - O.P.C.

Since our Editor has been criticizing the Complaint against Dr. Gordon H. Clark of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church we thought it might be interesting to inform our readers concerning both Dr. Clark and the disposal of the case.

In 1936 Dr. Clark was invited to become Visiting Professor of Philosophy at Wheaton College. At that time Dr. Clark was a member and ruling elder of the Redeemer Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia. After a year's probation at Wheaton College, Dr. Clark was elected Associate Professor of Philosophy and made a permanent member of the faculty. In June, 1942, a committee of the Board of Trustees of Wheaton was appointed to investigate certain questions which had arisen regarding Dr. Clark's teaching. This committee later reported its findings and came with several recommendations which were adopted by the Board. Conditions were laid down which attempted to bind and limit Dr. Clark in his teaching. To these Dr. Clark replied: "On the ground of religious and moral convictions. . . I am unable to comply with the requirements recently enacted by the Trustees, and I hereby present my resignation from the Faculty of Wheaton College". (Those interested may find a complete discussion of the case in the Presbyterian Guardian: March 25 and April 25, issues of 1943).

Subsequently, Dr. Clark applied to the Presbytery of Philadelphia of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, to be examined with a view to ordination. At a special meeting of the Presbytery (comparable to our Classis) in July, 1944, Dr. Clark was licensed and in August of that same year was ordained to the ministry. At that time Dr. Clark planned to teach at the Reformed Episcopal Seminary in Philadelphia for one year. At present, to the best of our knowledge, he is teaching in Butler University.

Against this action of ordaining Dr. Clark, 13 members of the Presbytery of Philadelphia brought the complaint being discussed by our Editor. This complaint was first treated at the regular meeting of the Presbytery in March, 1945. The result was, as stated by the Presbyterian Guardian: "The presbytery clearly demonstrated to the complainants that even their mildest request would be refused and that there was, in effect, no use in making further attempts to gain recognition for their position." This was evident from the final action of the Presbytery. A motion "That the presbytery acknowledge that various views of Dr. Clark as set forth in the meeting of July 7, 1944, are in error and that therefore the decision to sustain his theological examination, the decision to waive two years of study in a theological seminary, the decision to proceed to license Dr. Clark and the action of licens-

ing him, the decision to deem the examination for licensure sufficient for ordination and the decision to ordain Dr. Clark were in error" was defeated by a roll call vote of 16 to 20. Actually, therefore, the Presbytery upheld and approved all the actions set forth in this motion. The complainants, thereupon, appealed their case to the General Assembly. (Comparable to our Synod).

The General Assembly met in June, 1945, and spent a great deal of its time on the Dr. Clark case. You will recall, from the discussion by our Editor, that three main questions were involved. Two of these were of a Church political nature while the last concerned the doctrinal issues. Concerning these the General Assembly made the following decisions: 1. "That the action of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, in denying that its meeting of July 7, 1944, was illegal and its action thus null and void, be sustained." 2. "That the portion of the complaint which requests the General Assembly to ask the Presbytery of Philadelphia to declare null and void the actions of the meetings of the Presbytery of Philadelphia of July 7, 1944, re Gordon H. Clark, Pm. D., be declared unconstitutional because it seeks in effect to depose or to unfrock a minister of the Church in good and regular standing without filing charges or without due process of a trial." The third decision was the only concession to the complainants, and even this was limited for it makes no mention of Dr. Clark. It was decided that "a committee of five, none of whom are members of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, be elected by this assembly to study the doctrinal parts of the complaint . . . and report to the Thirteenth General Assembly." We look forward with interest to the Committee's report; especially in view of the thorough and exhaustive criticism of the complaint by the Editor of the Standard Bearer. Watch for it—you may find evidence of—"The Standard Bearer as a Witness"!

W. H.

IN MEMORIAM

It pleased our heavenly Father to take unto Himself our dear mother, grandmother and great-grandmother,

MRS. HOLWYN BATS

at the age of 82 years, September 9, 1945.

Having the blessed assurance that our loss is her gain, we are comforted in our bereavement.

Mr. and Mrs. John Ryskamp

Mr. James Vander Laan

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Bats

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bats

13 grandchildren

Grand Rapids, Michigan. 14 great-grandchildren

A Pioneering Movement

Approximately one week ago I was approached by a committee of the Auxilliary with a request to give a talk on this occasion, your annual picnic. And having accepted the invitation, I naturally began to ponder as to what was required of me, and as to what I should say; and I furthermore came to certain conclusions, which I shall pass on to you in the form of a declaration of intentions. In the first place, what you will hear tonight is not to be classified as an oration, nor even as a speech, but as a mere talk. For this I was asked, and such you will receive. And so also you may sit here this evening without any fears as to long-windedness, for such is the error, not of a seminarian, but of a minister. In the second place, my talk tonight is not to partake of a controversial nature. We are gathered this evening as Auxilliary Members or as members of our school society; in short, as friends of the movement for Protestant Reformed Education. A controversial talk would be out of place among friends. And finally, you are not going to hear anything new this evening. Such would be expecting the impossible; not only because there is nothing new under the sun, but more specifically because speeches and talks have been made in connection with this movement for some twenty years. And be it said to our shame, they have not yet brought forth any actual fruit. We have not yet, after twenty long years of independent existence as churches, and after twenty long years of instruction, acquired our own educational system. If we had, perhaps this evening's talk would be out of place. But since we have not, you cannot but hear an old story, and one that is fitting.

In our times we once more are hearing talk about pioneering, pioneering in the twentieth century. This is due to the fact of the social and economic problems which our country sees on the horizon of the future, and which shall loom up as soon as this war-induced prosperity of ours comes to an end, when heads of families shall once more face unemployment. The question has arisen whether America has not reached the peak of its development; whether perhaps she has not over-reached it; whether perhaps our country's population is not too large for our land and its resources to support it. And to that question two answers are generally given. On the one hand, are those who say that our ultimate frontiers have been reached. Pioneering has come to an end. And in that attitude is evinced an element of satisfaction, self-satisfaction. On the other hand, are the more progress-minded, who answer "not true". Geographically, they say, we may have reached our frontiers, although some, with their eyes on such rich territories as Alaska, for example, are even bold enough to deny this. But economically,

they say, this certainly is not true. Science and industry have certainly not reached the ultimate in development. Every day the old is being set aside, and the new is attained. And these men of vision see broad fields for future development. Pioneering, they say, although it can no longer be carried on in the old tradition of a Daniel Boone, or of a Lewis and Clark, or in the tradition of our own forefathers who not too long ago settled some 30 miles away from here on the shores of Lake Michigan—pioneering is not ended.

And thus also in the field of education, more specifically in the field of Christian Education, nominally at least there is a satisfied, self-satisfied, non-pioneering group. And there is a group of pioneers. And we stand with those who see new fields to conquer. Representing as we do the movement for Reformed Education, we are pioneers. For although the name Christian Education has its origin far back in history, yet that name as properly interpreted and understood has never yet become a reality, the First Reformed Christian School of Redlands, California, to the contrary notwithstanding. We are pioneers in the field of Christian Education.

And characteristic of all pioneers and also of us are certain factors. In the first place, that being dissatisfied with their present position, they have an ideal, a goal, for which they strive. In the second place, that in the seeking of that ideal, there are certain dangers peculiar to pioneers. And finally, that in the attainment of that goal, any pioneer has certain needs, needs which would not arise, were he not a pioneer.

And therefore I have chosen to talk for a few moments on the topic:

Pioneering in Christian Education.

and I would like to consider with you:

1. Our High Ideal.
2. A Lurking Danger.
3. Our Pressing Needs.

1. Before we picture to ourselves the ideal, which we as pioneers seek, it would perhaps not be amiss to consider what that ideal is not, to picture what we are leaving. This would perhaps not be necessary if there were not a possibility of a wrong conception of what we seek. But it is possible that in the mere excitement of pioneering, in the mere excitement of seeking something new, in the mere excitement of seeking something which has the name Protestant Reformed, a name which is undoubtedly dear to our hearts but which is nevertheless a name,—I say it is possible that we after all forget our basic ideal, forget the reason why we are pioneers, and thus set our ideal too low. And therefore, before we can really be inspired by our true ideal, any wrong one must be rooted out; and

we must be brought to rationally and calmly consider what we want.

And the position which we are about to abandon, the ideal which may not be ours, is referred to by the Dutch phrase, "De School met den Bijbel". Perhaps we of the movement for Protestant Reformed Education would more frequently characterize that ideal by referring to it as simply "the existing Christian Schools". Whether you are aware of it or not, and whether you really understand what it means, those are exactly the schools which we do not want: schools in which the Bible is an added something, schools which, very simply stated, are similar in every respect to the schools of the state, except that over and above the instruction given in secular subjects, there is one hour per day of Bible instruction, and classes are begun and ended with prayer. And added to that there is a certain Christian atmosphere in those schools, an atmosphere which is sometimes deprecated as being worse than the atmosphere found in the public schools. We will not consider the possibility that even the Bible instruction given might possibly be thoroughly rotten down to the very core. We will not consider the fact that some of these schools have made what are called concessions to the Protestant Reformed people in the form of allowing certain of them in the boards and some of their teachers in the staffs. We will not mention the fact that five or six year old children come home with some of the most corrupt and stinking Arminian hymns on their lips and in their little hearts. We are dealing not with incidentals but with principles: principles of Christian education. And though all the Biblical instruction and Bible history instruction should be absolutely correct (and we do not deny its necessity), and though every teacher should be a member of the Protestant Reformed Churches, and though the children should sing nought but the Psalms, yet if the phrase "de School met den Bijbel" should be applicable to those schools, those schools may not be ours. If you should take the Bible from such a school, you would still have a school; it is but an addition. It is such schools that we must very consciously and willingly leave, not for any incidental corruptions, but for the sake of principle.

Our ideal, and we would do well to remember it and make ourselves thoroughly acquainted with it, is much higher. It is as different, fundamentally, as light is from darkness, as the church is from the world. The world also will upon occasion allow the introduction of the Bible alongside of other works. We do not seek a "school with the Bible", but a school based on the Bible. We fall very fundamentally upon the basis of common grace if we have a school with the Bible. We fall upon a theory which holds to a division of life into two spheres: a sphere of the service of God, and a sphere separated from God's service. We would

stand upon a theory which holds that the ungodly produces good, and that we can use that good, provided we root out the evil parts of it before we give it to our children. A theory which has brought about the use of text-books which are crammed from cover to cover with evolution and materialism and pragmatism and from which the teacher has supposedly removed the harmful parts. We have had an educational system, which, be it consciously or subconsciously, has not been positively Christian as it has claimed, but fundamentally pagan, while it attempted to be something impossible, neutrally Christian.

And I would like to impress upon your hearts and minds this evening that as we believe that our covenant life embraces all, every sphere, all our heart and soul and mind and strength, so our schools must instruct our children in harmony with the precepts of God's word. We must have instruction which prepares our children for one life, not two. And no more than the ordinances of God can be excluded from any sphere of life, no more may they be excluded from any sphere of instruction which prepares for that life. Our ideal is instruction that is permeated with the principles of the Word of God.

Then we shall have schools to be sure where direct instruction is given in Scripture; schools to be sure, where there is prayer and Christian music and a Christian atmosphere. But, and this is important, schools in which every subject is carried out to the ultimate. Where, for example, history will be taught throughout with a view to its relation to the people of God and to the coming of God's kingdom; ancient history will then not be centered about the thoroughly materialistic idea of the growth and advancement of civilization but will be taught throughout with a view to the people of God in the Old Dispensation, with a view to the relation of the nations of the world and the development of these nations to the people of Israel and ultimately with a view to the coming of Christ. Thus also more recent history, will be centered about the idea of the preservation of the Church in the world and ultimately with a view to the coming of the day of the Lord. History would then be taught, but it would be reconstituted. And this must be done with every subject.

A high ideal? Extremely high. And one that is entirely different, one that has never before been reached. But not impossible of attainment. Pioneers we are, soldiers of the cross of Jesus Christ, and under His banner we must go forward!

2. But there are dangers in the path! Dangers which must be faced ere we reach the goal. Those who would keep us back from this expedition have often recounted them to us.

There is, for example, the financial danger. You've heard it explained as often as I. There is the danger.

some say, that the pupils of our school will not be admitted to advance schools, because our school will not be accredited. There is the danger that we will be small and unrecognized, a "Hastings Street outfit". There is the danger that we won't have sufficient teachers, and that therefore the instruction of our children will be inadequate. Perhaps you can add a dozen to this list. But did you notice, my friends, that none of these supposed dangers is a principal one? Did you notice that all of them are but carnal inducements to cause us to forsake this venture? Don't you feel that all of them, when tried by the standard of our high ideal, are found wanting? I will not say that we need not concern ourselves with those matters, for that would be denying reality.

But there is a far greater danger; greater for the reason that it is a matter of principle. The history of pioneers has too often ended in tragedy. It has too often ended in the tragedy of not attaining that for which they sought. Many of the early pioneers, seeking religious freedom, when they came to this free land were religiously sound. Many of the prosperity-seeking pioneers spent all their lives seeking a prosperity which they never found, but instead in their seeking found only hardships and poverty and finally a cruel death at the hands of savages. And many more, having come to a new land, were swayed from their purpose, and settled down and were satisfied, not having attained their ideal. And that is our danger. Not an external one, but a danger in ourselves. And a very real one. And an understandable one: We have been brought up in the tradition of the existing Christian Schools. We have never known anything different. What is more, only too often our attention has been centered on but incidental wrongs in those schools, for example, the errors in Bible instruction or the corrupt prayers and songs learned. And the danger is that we will be satisfied if we have a school in which these errors are not present. And then we shall not have attained our ideal. If you have followed me thus far, you will realize that then we would have a school which is fundamentally no different than any existing Christian School, however Protestant Reformed it may be. Of that danger we must beware, lest we falter in this crusade.

3. What then are our needs? Fundamentally they are one: Remain true to our ideal. Cling to our Reformed Conception of the truth. Cling to it with our whole being; and get busy. Get busy as Auxilliary members and as School Society members. It is our duty as well as the duty of the board to make ourselves understand what a truly Protestant Reformed, or shall I say, Reformed, education must be. We must not succumb to the idea that if we only are separate all will be all right. We may not succumb to the idea of two spheres, for that idea will ultimately wipe out every

line of demarcation between Church and world and would bring a tragic end to this pioneering movement as it will ultimately bring to the existing Christian schools. And we need not apologize for our efforts. We are not separatists, we are Christians. And our children shall receive a truly Christian education, but most emphatically also an *education*. And therefore our obligation as parents is first of all to study, in order that we may be sure of attaining our ideal. And as to supporting the venture financially, nothing, I trust, need be mentioned.

And with regard to a teaching staff our need and therefore our duty is also clear. Teachers in such a school are a thing unknown. They must be trained as yet. The existing colleges do not properly train them for our school. A college of our own is yet a dream. But this much is true. We must first of all, both parents and teachers, rid ourselves of the idea that teaching is the lowest among the professions, but must learn to look upon teaching as a high calling, and reward it as such also. And in lieu of a college, we must see that our teachers are men or women with the same ideal as ours, not only, but men and women with the ability and initiative to strive for that ideal, and ultimately to produce the necessary Christian text-books in the various fields. It is undeniable that our teachers must also be pioneers, and as time goes on, perhaps study groups could be organized to aid them in their task, in lieu of the training we are now unable to provide.

That then is the venture which we have joined. There is much reason for gratitude, for there has been progress and development already. But we have only begun. We may not lay down our burdens now. This cause, my friends, is God's cause. That is enough. Whether we shall realize our ideal perfectly or not, our duty is plain. We may not shirk. But as hardy pioneers we must press forward, every one performing his duty to the best of his ability until our God shall call us to the Church triumphant.

And may the covenant Jehovah, Who has laid this duty upon us, bless us and give us the grace to perform it!

H. C. H.

(The above was a talk delivered at the annual picnic of the School Auxilliary during Aug., and was published upon request)

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