

# *The Standard Bearer*

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## CONTENTS

|   |  |     |
|---|--|-----|
| <i>Meditation</i>                                 | The Royal Marriage Feast<br><b>REV. JOHN MARCUS</b>                              | 170 |
| <i>Editorial</i>                                  | The Sword and the Cause of Christ (concluded)<br><b>PROF. RUSSELL DYKSTRA</b>    | 173 |
| <i>All Around Us</i>                              | “Ghastly” Gospel Denial in the Church of Scotland<br><b>REV. MARTYN MC GEOWN</b> | 176 |
| <i>Search the Scriptures</i>                      | Robbing Christ of His Honor (16)<br><b>MR. DON DOEZEMA</b>                       | 179 |
| <i>When Thou Sittest in<br/>Thine House</i>       | Family Worship: Biblical Examples<br><b>REV. ARIE DEN HARTOG</b>                 | 181 |
| <i>Things Which Must<br/>Shortly Come to Pass</i> | Premillennialism (8)<br><b>PROF. DAVID ENGELSMA</b>                              | 184 |
| <i>Ministering to the Saints</i>                  | The Elder’s Ordination (5)<br><b>REV. DOUGLAS KUIPER</b>                         | 188 |
| <i>Activities</i>                                 | News From Our Churches<br><b>MR. PERRY VAN EGDOM</b>                             | 190 |

# The Royal Marriage Feast

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son...

Matthew 22:2

God will fill the wedding hall of Christ and His church. Although many will reject the gospel and be cast into outer darkness, every single one of God's people will be gathered together to fellowship with the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ.

The parable of the royal marriage feast is the third parable Jesus spoke to the chief priests and scribes picturing their refusal to humbly bow before Him as their King. This timeless parable warns us not to disobey the summons to follow Christ.



The king hosted a great wedding feast for his son. It was to be a wonderful occasion of joy and fellowship and sharing. He wanted to celebrate his son's wedding

with those citizens who delighted in the marriage. When everything was ready, the king sent his servants to "call them that were bidden to the wedding" (Matt. 22:3). So today, God calls men to the wedding feast of His Son, Jesus Christ, through the preaching of the gospel.

It may seem as if the king was merely inviting people to the wedding celebration, as if to say, "Come join us at the feast if you like." However, when the call comes from a king who rules over you, it is, in fact, a summons or a command. When God called Abraham to leave Ur of the Chaldees (cf. Heb. 11:8), that was not a mere invitation that Abraham might or might not obey depending on his mood. Abraham had a duty to obey God's call. So it is with the call of the gospel; all who hear have a duty to heed the call. The gospel is no mere offer to be accepted or rejected at one's whim. Rather, God *commands* all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30).

Tragically, many refused to come to the marriage feast. When other servants were sent to urge them to come unto the marriage feast, they "made light of it, and went their ways" (Matt. 22:4-5). They would rather pursue their own interests at the farm or other business. Even

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worse, some “took his servants and entreated them spitefully, and slew them” (v. 6). Their responses indicated they hated the king and his son.

The parable points to the self-righteous Jews, who were summoned to the marriage feast of His Son, Jesus Christ. When called by God, the Jews had killed countless Old Testament prophets. They refused to turn from their idolatry and submit themselves to God. Even when God’s only begotten Son came to earth and called them to turn from their sin and come to the feast, they hated Jesus all the more, finally nailing Him to the cross. In His perfect plan, God used that very sin to give to His people the righteousness we need to stand in God’s presence.

Although God has made it abundantly clear that He commands us to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, most people reject the gospel call. Some reject it outright and live to themselves, pursuing all the vain pleasures and treasures of the world. Others carry their hatred to great lengths, persecuting the saints even unto death. Still others, like the Jews, remain connected to the church, but their fields, commitments, cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, are so important to them that they refuse to take up their cross and follow Christ. One way or another, for many people, following Jesus Christ is too costly.



Nevertheless, God will fill the wedding hall. Our great desire ought to be that we are included in the guest list, manifesting obedience to the gospel call. We need to repent of our sins and receive by faith the righteousness that God provides for us in Jesus Christ.

Many prominent members of the kingdom showed themselves unworthy to be included among the guests. Amazing that they would think they had more important things to do than the wedding feast of the king’s son! Such was their hatred of the king that some would even count the king’s servants worthy of

death. Not surprisingly, the king destroyed these unworthy scoundrels and burned their city with fire. So too, many prominent people in the church world today show themselves unworthy to be part of the wedding feast by persecuting those who preach the gospel of sovereign, particular grace.

Despite being rejected by many, the king insisted that the marriage hall be filled. So he sent his servants to gather seemingly insignificant citizens out of the countryside. The servants “gathered all as many as they found, both bad and good” (v. 10). As far as the king was concerned, it was not an issue whether the people were considered socially worthless or whether they met a high social standard before their summons to the feast. Such is the gospel. It is used to gather those who have lived shady lives as well as those who are morally upright in society’s eyes. It is God’s means to gather poor and rich, servants and masters, Jews and Gentiles. The summons of the gospel must be proclaimed without distinction of persons.

Why did some refuse to come to the wedding feast and others delight to come? Why did some see the king’s rule as a drain on their lives, while others found their joy in the king? Why do some refuse the call of the gospel and others heed the call? The reason lies in the distinction between the external call and the internal call. Some are only called externally, so that to them the gospel is all so much nonsense. Those who lack the life of Christ in their hearts, see the duty to come to the wedding feast

as an impossible and cruel burden that would draw them away from the idols of their souls. Others God calls both externally by the preaching of the gospel and internally by His Spirit. These, who have been given life from above, rejoice at the call of the gospel and the privilege of coming to the marriage feast. Although the gospel call goes out promiscuously, only

those who by grace have eyes to see and ears to hear will truly heed the call.

The king in the parable rejected the prominent citizens

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of the kingdom. That reflects the fact that God chooses the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; the weak things to confound the mighty; and the base things of the world to confound the noble, so that no flesh should glory in His presence (cf. I Cor. 1:26-29). God must receive all the glory.

Not only does God choose unworthy sinners to be part of the great wedding feast of His Son; He also sees to it that we are gathered: “So those servants went out into the highways and *gathered together* all as many as they found” (Matt. 22:10—emphasis added). Through His servants, God exerts an irresistible force upon His elect that draws us to the feast. “No man can come” to the feast “except the Father...draw him” (John 6:44). “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37).



When the time of the feast finally arrived and the king inspected the guests, he saw a man who attempted to join the feast with no wedding garment. Apparently, the king took care to furnish his guests with a special garment for the grand occasion. But this man thought his own garment was good enough. He might have even thought that his garment was better than those furnished by the king. What an insult to the king and to his son!

When the king saw him, he did not say, “I’m so glad you came; everyone is welcome.” Rather, he asks him, “Friend, how camest thou in thither not having a wedding garment?” (Matt. 22:12). The term ‘friend’ merely has the idea of being associated with a particular group. Evidently, this man had come to be associated with the wedding guests, but in actual fact, he did not belong. When the king confronted him, he

was speechless. He could say nothing because he knew he had deliberately refused the king’s wedding garments. He deserved to be cast out of the king’s feast and separated from all fellowship with him.

The Jewish leaders imagined that entering into the wedding feast of communion with God could be based on the robes of their own righteousness. They were sorely mistaken. When God inspects us on the Judgment Day, anyone not having the pure white wedding garments of Christ’s righteousness will not be allowed in the feast. They will be cast into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called but few are chosen (v. 14). Many hear the summons of the gospel presented to them, but few have been given the spiritual ears to heed the call. How horrible will that feast day be for those without the King’s robes!

Only those “who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” will be allowed in the feast (Rev. 7:14). When we see the filthiness of

our own rags, how we will delight to be clothed with Christ’s robes of righteousness and to sit with Christ Himself at the royal marriage feast! Are we looking forward to that feast?

Although our sins reach up to heaven; although we have failed to love our neighbors as ourselves (even our nearest neighbors in our own houses and in the church); although our zeal for Christ and His kingdom is not what it should be, nevertheless the King has provided white robes for us. If we

are thankful for such a great privilege, we will turn from sin and bow before our King.

Having Christ’s pure linen robes, we can look forward to the marriage feast knowing that we belong at the feast!



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# The Sword and the Cause of Christ (concluded)

“...the cause of Christ is never, ever advanced by the sword.”

The statement above (found in the November 1, 2015 issue of the *Standard Bearer*, in the editorial “Learning from the Medieval Church’s History”) is the focus of a disagreement between Mr. Archie P. Jones and myself. Mr. Jones sent in a cordial letter and position paper objecting to this view. I desire to answer in a cordial manner, but also to convey the seriousness of the issue.

In the last editorial, it was noted that God has indeed used the power of the sword for the good of the church in various ways, even as God rules over all so that *all things* work together for the good of God’s people (Rom. 8:28). However, it is our contention that the use of physical power has not *advanced* the cause of Jesus Christ.

Mr. Jones makes the concept of “the cause of Christ” exceeding broad by referring to II Corinthians 10:5—“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”—insisting this is to be taken in the broadest sense. He writes “This necessarily includes

every thought, word, and deed; it necessarily includes all areas of life, thought, and action; individual life and corporate life; life in church and life outside of church; life in one nation or among every other people.”

Later he adds,

Christ Himself told His disciples to sell their garments and buy themselves swords (Luke 22:36), so it is obvious that He considered the sword—used in self-defense and defense of one’s family, one’s Christian brothers and sisters, and therefore the church—to be useful in advancing...the cause of Christ. As followers of Christ went into the world, protected by their swords, they would advance the cause of Christ by spreading the Gospel in its fullest sense, teaching the nations to do all that He has taught us to do.

First, in response, let it be said that the Bible has no record of the apostles or evangelists of Jesus Christ going out “into all the world...” with their swords. Nor is there any biblical record of any of Jesus’ missionaries fighting when they were opposed, imprisoned, beaten, or put to death. The opposite is recorded—submission to evil treatment for Jesus’ sake.

But more importantly, the logical end of this argument is disquieting. If every thought must be made captive to Christ, and if the preaching

of the gospel is not accomplishing this, why not use the sword of the magistrates for the advance of the gospel? And why should not a “Christian” nation subdue a “pagan” nation in order to stop the blatant disobedience to Christ? As noted in the previous editorial, Mr. Jones nowhere calls for this, and I am at pains not to impute this to him. Only, I point it out as a logical implication.

In fact, history has demonstrated this real possibility. As great a theologian as Augustine fell into this error. Early in the fifth century, Augustine (and the church of his day) advocated using force against the Donatists to compel them to leave their churches and come to the one true church, as Augustine put it. The churches of North Africa sent a request to Emperor Honorius, and he obliged them, banning the Donatist churches and adding his muscle in an attempt to eradicate this movement (which attempt failed). Centuries later, the Romish church went a step farther. Using Augustine’s ideas, the medieval church justified the torture and execution of heretics—ostensibly for the sake of their souls. In such a spiritual climate, it was possible for the church vigorously to promote sending out “Christian” armies to overcome the infidels in the many pointless, and sinful, Crusades.

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*Previous article in this series: January 1, 2016, p. 149.*

But is any of this justified by what Paul writes in II Corinthians 10? Are we to make thoughts captive to Christ... using a gun? Weapons of war may subjugate a people, may subdue them physically and bring fear and terror, but physical weapons will not make captive any *thoughts*. The use of physical force will utterly fail.

Besides, it is entirely the wrong means for subduing thoughts. Weapons of war are not God's means to produce the faith that makes every thought captive to Christ. Notice what Paul writes in the context. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)" [II Cor. 10:3-4]. The weapons of the great apostle to the Gentiles were not carnal (a sword), but spiritual, namely, preaching and Christian discipline. Notice also how the inspired apostle began the chapter: "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ..." (v. 1). Clearly, the sword is the last thing on Paul's mind in his determination to make every thought captive to Christ.

In reality, it would be sin to use guns to seek to advance the cause of Christ. Although the Lord did once give His disciples the somewhat obscure instruction, "he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one" (Luke 22:36), this was not instruction to use the sword to advance the gospel. When Peter tried to use the physical sword even for *defense*, Jesus forbade it and

rebuked His beloved disciple—"Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52).

History has noted the failure of the sword to advance the cause of the gospel. The Crusades not only failed, they made Christians utterly loathsome and gave "justification" to the Muslims to attack Christians from that time forward. The Reformation in France flourished under persecution. When the church took up the sword, the decline began. Eventually, the Huguenots lost their political and military battles, and the Reformed church in France became virtually extinct. The power of the church is the preaching, not the sword. Her defense is the Word, not physical weapons.

Mr. Jones does bring up a part of history that might seem to be an exception. He writes:

Was the cause of Christ not advanced by the Dutch resisting the attempts of the Spanish to massacre the Reformed during the Dutch War of Independence? Would it have been spiritually, morally, and practically better for the Reformed Dutch to throw down their arms and let themselves, their families, and their Reformed brothers and sisters be massacred by the Spanish troops?

I grant that this history is difficult to sort out. In a complicated course of events, the region of the Lowlands fell into the hands of Philip, King of Spain. Under the rule of his father, Emperor Charles V, the Netherlands experienced

decades of laissez-faire rule, being left virtually alone so long as they produced the taxes needed to finance Charles' military excursions. Under King Philip, all this changed. He began to oppress the Netherlands as a people, and violently to persecute the Reformed in the land. Philip wrote to the pope in 1566: "Rather than suffer the least damage to religion and the service of God, I would lose all my states and a hundred lives, if I had them: for I do not propose to be ruler of heretics."

Thus, there is no question that the cause of the Reformation and the cause of the revolt were intertwined. Even a careful study of this history can not always reveal the main reason why a man, an army, or a city did battle with Spanish forces—to protect their lands? or to protect their religion?

This history does reveal that the sword defended the land from Spanish, Roman Catholic oppression. In the providence of God, the Reformed churches escaped the obliteration that King Philip sought. Under the new provincial governments, Reformed churches had the freedom to develop in the Netherlands.

But the Reformed churches paid a heavy price for the entanglement of church and state. The benevolent state financed the churches and their schools. But control of the purse ultimately is control of the institution. Government involvement soon became a force for the devil to do significant damage to the Reformed churches of the Lowlands. When a local consistory convicted

a minister of heresy, the government in many cases did not allow his deposition, but rather continued to pay the man until he died. No synodical gatherings were allowed without government authorization. The Arminian controversy raged in the Reformed churches for years before the national Synod of Dordrecht was finally called to deal with the heresy. And it would be over 200 years before the government allowed another national synod. In that long period the Reformed churches apostatized. Eventually, King William took the churches under the complete domination of the state, and the government-approved apostasy rapidly advanced until the Lord reformed His church in the Afscheiding (Secession) of 1834.

The Bible and history clearly testify that the cause of Christ is not advanced by the sword. Christ Jesus is King over all the earth, and He rules sovereignly over the nations. But His kingdom is not of this world. It is a heavenly and spiritual kingdom. It is advanced by the unstoppable spiritual means of the preaching of the gospel. No sword advances that kingdom. But no sword can stop it either.

That raises an additional concern in today's increasingly violent world, a concern connected with self-defense. A Christian may defend himself against assault from a thief or a murderer. A church may prepare itself against attack from the deranged, perhaps drug-crazed murderers that America has experienced in the last few years. Many Christian churches have taken precautions against this, making

plans that include armed guards or members who are armed, ready to stop such evil intruders. Many Protestant Reformed churches have the same contingency plans. Love for the brother and sister, and the right to defend oneself from attack justify this.

But where does one draw the line in regard to attack, whether it be personal or ecclesiastical? Jesus' rebuke to Peter ("Put away thy sword"), the disciples' bearing of physical beatings for Jesus' sake, as well as Paul's obvious willingness to endure astounding suffering—physical beatings, imprisonment, and death—for the sake of the gospel, give important instruction to the church today. Christians are not to "defend" themselves or their

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churches from the evil *persecutors*. The day of physical persecution is coming to America. In many places of the world it is already reality.

Do you see the difficulty? In all free and democratic countries dwell people (terrorists, or thieves, or drug-crazed citizens) intent on doing harm to a *Christian congrega-*

*tion* on a Sunday, as they might do to *any gathering* of defenseless people on any day of the week. And yet, there are also those who desire to attack a Christian church because they hate Christ, and, thus His church. Using a gun to defend a congregation against terrorists, thieves, or drug-crazed intruders who intend to kill indiscriminately is one thing. To take up the gun to stop persecutors of the church of Jesus from killing Christians—that is quite another matter. Currently, the laws and police forces of America and of most democratic countries protect the church from these attacks. When that changes, the attitudes of Christians must adjust. We must think no longer in terms of defense of life. Rather, we must be ready to suffer for Jesus' sake.

Individual Christians and consistories will need to consider these matters carefully. But Christians must not think in terms of guns and physical force to escape the coming tribulation. This is Jesus' promise: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matt. 24:21). And His instruction? Never is it: Get physical weapons and defend yourselves. Rather, it is "Flee." And, "rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (I Pet. 4:13). ☞

### **“Ghastly” Gospel Denial in the Church of Scotland**

‘Do you believe Jesus died for your sins?’ “With grace I replied, no, no, no, no...that’s ghastly theology...you don’t want to go there.”

Those are the words of Rev. Scott McKenna, the minister of Mayfield Salisbury Church of Scotland (CofS) in Edinburgh, Scotland. The CofS is the national church in Scotland, a Presbyterian denomination dating back to the Protestant Reformation in Scotland.

If John Knox (1513-1572) knew the state of the CofS today, he would turn in his grave!

Rev. David Robertson, the Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland (FCofS) responded to McKenna’s gospel-denying heresy on his blog, prompting a meeting between the two men.<sup>1</sup> In the course of their meeting, they agreed to address the issues in a public forum. On September 30, 2015, the two men presented their arguments in Mayfield Salisbury Church on two important topics—the nature of the Bible and the nature of the atonement. McKenna, as a good liberal, came to dialogue. Robertson, as a convinced Evangelical, came prepared to preach and defend the gospel. Although Mayfield Salisbury CofS advertised it as a “public conversation,” Robertson knew that the issues at stake were very serious indeed. In his blog, he writes:

I found myself walking down South Clerk Street towards Salisbury Mayfield Church of Scotland. I was in a literal cold sweat to the extent that I wondered if I was going to collapse. Why was I in such a state? Because I felt I was walking into the lions’ den. I was there to debate Rev. Scott McKenna, minister of the Church, on the Bible,

<sup>1</sup> The FCofS split from the CofS during the “Disruption” of 1843 under the leadership of Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847). In 1900, the FCofS joined with the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland to form the United Free Church of Scotland, which then re-united with the CofS in 1929. The FCofS, of which David Robertson is the Moderator, is that part of the FCofS that remained outside the union and retains the name FCofS. Affectionately, by some, they are known as the “Wee Frees.”

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the atonement and the future of the church in Scotland.<sup>2</sup>

Upon arriving at the venue, the (former) Moderator of the CofS, John Chalmers, informed Robertson that the debate would not be recorded, contrary to what had been previously agreed. When Robertson insisted that a recording be made, they agreed. However, some days after the date, McKenna informed Robertson that, although the debate was recorded, the video had been destroyed on his (McKenna’s) instructions.

Why was the video of such an important debate destroyed? McKenna’s reason was Robertson “had hurt Scott [McKenna’s] feelings.”<sup>3</sup> What had Robertson done to hurt McKenna’s feelings? He had told McKenna to his face and in front of a live audience of over 250 people that he did not consider McKenna to be a fellow believer, and that, if McKenna were a member of the FCofS, he would “excommunicate” him!

This gives a fascinating insight into theological liberalism. Anything is tolerable, and dialogue is welcome, as long as no one takes a stand or insists that truth is truth. For Robertson (rightly) to call McKenna an unbeliever—even though he did it nicely, and with great reluctance and a breaking heart—is something that the theological liberal cannot tolerate. Listen to Robertson’s analysis:

Scott [McKenna] had said that at least we don’t excommunicate one another, to which I responded that if he was in my church, sadly, I would have to excommunicate him, because he does not recognise the body and blood of Christ. We do not worship the same Christ. That seems to be a fairly obvious and Christian position. Scott regarded the notion of excommunicating another Christian, as being so offensive that it could not be put on the Internet. He had no problem in putting on the Internet that the notion that Jesus died for our sins is “ghastly theology,” but suggesting that any church might excom-

<sup>2</sup> David Robertson, “The Scottgate Tapes—A Revealing Insight into the Current State of the Church of Scotland,” The Wee Flea Blog, October 6-10, 2015, <https://theweeflea.wordpress.com/2015/10/06/the-scottgate-tapes-a-revealing-insight-into-the-current-state-of-the-church-of-scotland/> [accessed December, 10, 2015].

<sup>3</sup> Robertson, “Scottgate Tapes.”



municate anyone for denying basic Christian doctrine was a step too far. Indeed, so appalling that the tapes must be destroyed.

I was under phenomenal pressure on Wednesday night. JC (John Chalmers) did not mind me arguing about theology; neither did Scott, as long as I was prepared to admit that we were all Christians who were on the same road, following the same Christ. I felt pressured and was tempted. After all, I could have been nice, said that whilst we disagreed we were all Christian brothers and sisters and gone home saying that I had stood for the Gospel by arguing for the atonement, the Bible, and Jesus. Everyone would have been happy. Except me. Because I know my Bible. And I know my Lord.... To stand in front of that crowded church and give in to the pressure to affirm the confused liberal non-existent Christ of Scott, as the same as the Christ of the Scriptures, would have been a betrayal of all that is sacred, holy, and beautiful. If my answer upset people (and some clearly were), and if it upset Scott, then I am truly sorry, but that is a price I have to pay. I actually hate upsetting people, especially those I like. But I am not going to deny Christ, in order to bow to personal or political pressure.<sup>4</sup>

Happily, Robertson was suspicious before the debate started. He asked a friend to record the debate on his phone, so that there would be a permanent record. In addition to that audio recording, Robertson's friends made a verbatim transcript of the entire debate. Both are available on Robertson's blog.

The CofS participants destroyed the video, but the evidence is intact. Robertson throws down the gauntlet:

As I warned John and Scott in the vestry before the meeting—any attempt to suppress the debate would rebound badly upon them. They either did not listen, or thought that the benefits of suppressing the truth were worth the risk of the bad publicity. Well now they have both the bad publicity and the truth. Spin that.

Given the importance of the debate, I quote from the transcript.<sup>5</sup> It shows just how “ghastly” the theology of

<sup>4</sup> Robertson, “Scottgate Tapes.”

<sup>5</sup> David Robertson, “A Theological Conversation with Scott McKenna—Full Transcript,” The Wee Flea Blog, October 8-9, 2015, <https://theweeflea.wordpress.com/2015/10/08/a-theological-conversation-with-scott-mckenna/#more-1819> [accessed December, 10, 2015].

McKenna is. The following quotations are from McKenna:

And so the first thing is, the Bible is something with which we interact, and it brings you, your soul alive. The Spirit in the Scripture can bring your soul alive and that's certainly my experience and I suspect it may be the experience of many people here this evening. It's amazing how powerful it can be. So I have this sense that it is inspired, or God-breathed.

So the Bible is in a sense, a God-inspired human document which has been shaped by the Spirit of God but written by these respective communities. And they were trying to express their faith, their experience of The Sacred, trying to put into words almost that which was inexpressible, and that seems to me what the Bible is about. It brings together mythology, spirituality, liturgy, fragments of history, and they're all woven together.

I hope the reader can recognise the liberal doublespeak here—when a liberal claims that the Bible is “inspired,” or even “God-breathed,” he/she does not mean that the very words of the Bible are truth, but that the Bible is *inspiring*, and that it moves the reader spiritually or religiously.

Here is what McKenna teaches about the cross:

I was talking about penal substitutionary atonement, which is the notion that, in order to satisfy the wrath, the anger of God who had been offended by the sin of man, Jesus had to die as a blood sacrifice to pay for this sin, in order to satisfy the wrath of God. Now I would be saying that I think this leaves us with a fairly despotic... despot of a god; a barbaric god who is vindictive and immoral.

Atonement is oneness with God; union with God; intimacy with the Sacred. That's what atonement is and I think that many people within the church crave that, absolutely crave that.

There were plenty of ways in which people could have their sins forgiven without a blood sacrifice. Most of the sacrifices at the Temple had nothing to do with sin. Nothing to do with sin at all. And Jesus teaches his own disciples. He says to them forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. No blood sacrifice. He taught his disciples that you can have your sins forgiven by prayer, by penitential prayer, by repentance, by acts of charity. So there are alternative models available.

So there is a lot of different perspectives on atonement and I think atonement at the end, and I'll finish with

this, at the end is all about our union and intimacy with the Sacred. God is able to forgive without requiring a blood sacrifice and the prophet said that, “I don’t want your blood sacrifices.”

Liberals believe in a relationship with God without the satisfaction of God’s justice. They are even happy to explore various “models” by which Christ makes us “one” with God—the “At-One-Ment” of which McKenna speaks. The Moderator of the debate, John Chalmers, sums up the liberal mindset with his question to Robertson, “Can you live with those differences of view on the nature of the Atonement?” (in other words, can we agree to disagree on the various “models”?). It was Robertson’s “No” that McKenna found so offensive, and led to an attempted burial of the debate. Robertson scandalized McKenna and all liberals with his uncompromising defense of the truth:

The scandal is not that Jesus says, “Oh, God will accept everyone, isn’t that scandalous?” I will go out on the street and ask anybody, “Do you think God will accept you?” “Oh, yes.” I’ll tell you what the scandal is. The scandal is that God won’t accept you unless your sins are forgiven through the death of his Son Jesus Christ on the cross. That’s what they hate. They hate the theology of the cross.

After the debate, Robertson excoriated the establishment of the CofS: “Its prophet is Machiavelli rather than Christ. It is deceitful, manipulative and political. As many who have left the CofS can testify, the establishment is also bullying and vindictive.” (At the same time, Robertson expresses deep love and concern for the people of the CofS, and especially for the evangelicals who choose to continue in the denomination).

Robertson challenges the members of the CofS: “The unpalatable truth for evangelicals and traditional Presbyterians is that Scott McKenna is not on the eccentric fringes of the Church of Scotland. He is one of its mainstream leaders who I suspect is being lined up for higher office.” This is the theology openly espoused in the CofS, for which there is no discipline. The CofS has (long ago) lost the marks of the true church.

Robertson’s words to those who hang on in such an apostate denomination are stirring. Do they want to re-

main in the CofS and fight for the gospel? “I am prepared to say, ‘fair enough, go for it,’ with one caveat. If God has called you to remain and fight—then fight!”

How deceptive is the conscience-soothing attitude of some! Robertson cuts through the pretense, explicitly stating what “fighting” means:

And please, “stand up and fight” does not mean go away and write another paper, have another conference, set up yet another evangelical group to talk to yourselves. You are Presbyterian men and women. Behave as such. Forget the politics and the quiet infiltration. Don’t fall for the fantasy of the “one more push and we will have the great evangelical victory.” Be open. Be up front. Love the Lord and his people and the people of Scotland with passion and purity. Pray. Repent. Have faith. Preach the Word.

You can just be honest and give up on any hope of the Church being reformed and renewed (even if you throw in a bit of pietistic revivalism to give the flock hope) and instead decide to stay to look after your own local congregation. You can decide to abandon any pretence of real Presbyterianism, act as an independent congregation, refuse to send up funds to central funds and prepare your congregation for being thrown out. Because that is what will eventually happen.


A few years ago I was told by a leading evangelical within the C of S that the strategy now was to get a seat at the table, get more evangelicals as conveners and even moderator. In one sense that has worked. In another it has been a disaster. What’s the point of having a seat at the table, if you don’t get to determine the menu? How can you be neutral or “moderate” in any position of power, when it comes to the basics of the Gospel? Political power in the church is not just about sitting on committees, attending receptions, kissing babies, and playing the game of telling everyone how wonderful they are, and how hunky dory everything is. It’s also about prophetic leadership and having the guts to challenge the status quo and the power cliques within the organization.<sup>6</sup>

To which I add my “Amen.” Or to paraphrase Elijah, “How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Christ of Reformed Evangelicalism be God, follow Him; but if the (non-atoning) Christ of Liberalism be God, then follow Him” (see I Kings 18:21).

<sup>6</sup> David Robertson, “The Scottgate Tapes.”

And then follow the true Christ *out of* the CofS!  
We need more Elijahs in the CofS, and in all departing churches. May those faithful few who still cling to wreckage of the CofS lead God's people *out of* that synagogue

of Satan, and *away from* Christ-denying heretics like Scott McKenna!

When they do, let them be prepared to bear Elijah's reproach: "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" (I Kings 18:17). 

## SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

## MR. DON DOEZEMA

Upon This Rock (24)

# Robbing Christ of His Honor (16)

**W**e were considering, you will remember, the penitential prayer of David recorded in Psalm 51, focusing in particular on verse 16. "Thou desirest not sacrifice," David prayed. And: "Thou delightest not in burnt offering." Having been brought to his knees by the prophet Nathan's withering pronouncement "Thou art the man," David understood, more profoundly than ever before, that no one can come to God with something in his hand. An expression of "absolute destitution of merit" is what Calvin sees in those words of David.

Remarkable insights, we said. But why so, we might ask, if David's recognition of the impotence of beasts' blood was but the lesson that the sacrifices were *intended* to teach, from the beginning—a lesson that the offerers were not only *expected* to learn but were also held accountable for not having learned if they came to God, instead, like Cain of old, with something in their hands? Nothing really 'new,' so it would seem, in David's prayer in Psalm 51. But something, we think, quite remarkable nonetheless. For a couple of reasons. First, as we explained, because what can be seen as *implicit* in the sacrificing of the saints of God from Abel on became *explicit* here in Psalm 51, and in language almost that of the New Testament. Language that can be seen almost to say: salvation in Christ alone, by grace alone, through faith alone.

Which brings us, now, to the second reason. For this one, too, I look to John Calvin—this time in his comments on Hebrews 10, where the writer to the Hebrews is speaking of the difference between Law on the one hand and Gospel on the other. The writer of the epistle makes special reference to Psalm 40, in which David says much the same thing as he did in Psalm 51. Psalm 40:6: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire;...burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required." Then notice verse 7: "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me." This latter, says Calvin, "has a particular relevance to Christ." Which must be the case because "we must come to the kingdom of Christ for it to be completely true that God does not wish sacrifice." Calvin therefore concludes that "in both places [Psalm 40 and Psalm 51] he [David] *looked forward to the kingdom of Christ* (emphasis added)...when not even the lowest place among the commandments of God is left for the sacrifices which God strictly requires under the law."

*Not even the lowest place left*, in the Gospel age, for the sacrifices. That's what *David* was foreseeing. A millennium before Christ.

And we should be clear on what it is that David is referring to when he says that God is not pleased by sacrifices. That is, is it just *sacrifices*? Calvin thinks not. And he is not suggesting only that we, today, can understand that the principle involved has broader application. No, he believes that David's "design," his *intention*, was to "teach us" something about "*all the legal rites*." Which stands to reason, I would think, in light of the circumstances that brought David to his knees before God in this penitential

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Previous article in this series: December 15, 2015, p. 132.

prayer. *Empty-handed* had to be... all inclusive! He came with *nothing*. David was pleading for the restoration of the joy of salvation (v. 12) on the basis of nothing other than God's *mercy*. Only this: "Have *mercy* upon me, O God." "*Cleanse* me from my sin." "*Wash* me, and I shall be whiter than snow." And, we must remember, no saint of old ever had thoughts like *that* without thinking of Genesis 3:15. The *Christ*. Deliverance from "blood-guiltiness" (v. 14) could be sought from no other source.

Hardly could David, therefore, have been foreseeing in Psalm 51 a Gospel age in which, on the one hand, lambs would no more be slain, but, on the other, the eating of pork would still be proscribed and circumcision prescribed. He was foreseeing the termination of "all the legal rites."

It is *that*, in particular, as it seems to me, that makes David's insights here so remarkable.

Again, however, we might be inclined to ask, Why so? Would we not simply *expect* that, at the appearing of the Antitype (Christ), all that is typical would be cheerfully abandoned? What, after all, *are* the types? "Rough outlines," Calvin calls them, "which are foreshadowing the living picture." "...elementary and sketchy outlines [of] what today has been expressed in living and graphically printed color." Who would ever, when beholding the brilliant hues of the living picture, want to, or feel obliged to, hold still onto the rough, sketchy outlines that were displayed in the ancient ceremonies?

Who, indeed. Maybe Peter? Maybe thousands of Christians in Jerusalem a quarter of a century after Pentecost? All we need do is look at the actual history of the transition from the old to the new dispensation, the Law to the Gospel, to see how far the prophet David was ahead of his time. It would be profitable, I think, to do that.

Already in this series of articles we have seen the difficulty Peter had in letting go of his scruples regarding clean and unclean meats. "Rise, Peter; kill, and eat." "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean." And then, twice *repeated*. So deep was the hold that the old Jewish regulations about ceremonial uncleanness had on the Jews! Even the *apostles* needed time to grapple with the truth that the ceremonial laws were intended to be in force only until the coming of the Christ to whom they pointed.

A thousand years before them, David saw it coming. And was glad.

As revolutionary as the revelation concerning the abolition of the food laws must have been to Peter, that was hardly the end of the matter. The apostle must have understood that the many regulations regarding cleanness and uncleanness in the old dispensation spoke to Israel not only of a *spiritual reality*, the separation from sin, the life of the antithesis, but also of a *national distinction*, a separation of the children of Abraham from all other peoples of the world, a distinction therefore between Jew and Gentile. If the distinction in meats were to fall away, would not the distinction between Jew and Gentile fall with it? Peter was not left to wonder long about the implications of his vision for *this* separation. For we read that "*while Peter doubted in himself* what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius...stood before the gate" (Acts 10:17).

What followed, as you know, was *preaching*. Preaching of *Christ crucified*. To a gathering of *Gentiles*. *Uncircumcised* Gentiles. In their *house*. And then: "*the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word*" (v. 44). In one fell swoop, as it were, God had Himself opened the door of His church to the Gentile world. Wholly apart from *Judaism*. From *circumcision*. And, with it, all the rites of the 'Law'. All the ancient ceremonies. All the "sketchy outlines" that prefigured the Gospel age.

"For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Psalm 51. And Psalm 40.

But it didn't all go down so easily. Peter was *challenged*. "Thou wentest in to men *uncircumcised*, and didst [even] *eat* with them" (11:3). To say nothing of *baptizing* them and thus receiving them, *as they were*, into the church! Peter, we read, "rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it" (v. 4), concluding with "what was *I*, that I could withstand *God*?" (v. 17). Truer words could hardly have been spoken. Seems that even they who were "of the circumcision" and were contending with Peter (v. 2) were satisfied. For, "when they heard these things, they held their peace" (v. 18). For the time being.



Who were “they that were of the circumcision”? Not, surely, *all* the Jewish believers, but, rather, those who, says Calvin, “were exceedingly devoted to the legal ceremonies.” And it’s that devotion that did not die easily. At least not in Jerusalem.

Paul and Barnabas were made aware of that sad fact on their return to Antioch, the ‘calling church,’ after their first missionary journey.

The entire congregation, it seems, came out to hear the report of their two missionaries (14:27). And what they heard was especially this, that God had “opened the door of *faith* to the *Gentiles*” (v. 27). Wind of that reached Jerusalem. And there was resistance. Again, not that the entire Jerusalem church was ‘zealous’ for the Law. But there was in it a Judaistic faction, along with probably a far larger number of people who were simply uncertain about the place of the Mosaic law in the church of Christ. It was the former, the Judaizers, who took it upon themselves to try to correct what they perceived to be a deficiency in the work of Antioch’s two missionaries. Certain of them, we read in 15:1, came down from Judea

to Antioch and began to “teach the brethren” that, contrary to what they were hearing from Paul and Barnabas, Gentiles must “be circumcised after the manner of Moses” in order to “be saved.”

Did these false teachers deny salvation by grace, through faith in Christ? Oh no. They were very likely emphatic about that. Just this—they didn’t want to add the word “alone.” Faith in Christ—yes. But it was faith plus... circumcision. Faith plus Judaistic legalism. They wanted still to be able to come to God with something in their hands. That was an error, writes Calvin, that “poured out darkness on the light of the gospel.” So serious was it, in fact, Calvin continues, that “it would have been all over with Christianity in a short time if Paul had yielded to such principles.” For: “if the salvation of men is bound to works, it will be founded on the grace of Christ no longer.”

How far David was ahead of his time!

A little bit more on this... next time.

... to be continued. 

WHEN THOU SITTEST IN THINE HOUSE

REV. ARIE DEN HARTOG

## Family Worship: Biblical Examples

**F**or my contribution to this rubric in the next few installments I intend to write a few articles on the important subject of family worship. By family worship is meant the regular worship of God in a covenant marriage with husband and wife, or in the covenant home with the family together, parents with their covenant children. Such worship is simple in form, including the obvious elements of reading a portion from the Bible, some discussion of what is read, singing, and prayer. It should also include some instruction in doctrine and application of the truth of the Word of God to the life of the family. Ideally, this worship should

include some spiritual conversation among the members of the covenant family. It is a good time for dealing with issues of daily living, including sin in the life of the family. Family worship is also greatly enhanced when it includes the regular singing together of the psalms and hymns (see Col. 3:16). Singing promotes the joy of the Lord in the home.

Above all these things, family worship is the worship of God. The greatest reason for family worship in our covenant homes is that in it we worship our God, the God of our salvation. In the way of worshiping God together we bring down upon our families, by the grace of God, the favor and blessing of God.

Anyone who has knowledge of the state of Christendom in our day will know that family worship is practiced in very few homes professing to be Christian. Regular,

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truly spiritual family worship is absolutely essential for a strong covenant home and for one that has the accompanying blessedness of closeness, joy, and unity among the members of the family. Do we not confess that the covenant of God is a personal, living friendship between the blessed covenant Triune God and His people? Then surely the spiritual reality of the covenant must thrive in the practice of family worship in the covenant home.

Family worship is the prime time for husband/father to exercise his spiritual headship of his marriage/family. Through family worship the husband/father establishes the authority of the Word of God in his home and applies this Word to the lives of himself, his wife, and his children. At the time of family worship father instructs his wife and children in real piety and godliness.

The covenant wife/mother is present in family worship as the one who is the keeper of the home and has devoted herself to the care and nurture of her husband and children. This will be heard and seen in the comments she makes, the motherly advice she gives, and in the humble and *loving* devotion she has as an example to her children. The godly wife/mother greatly improves herself for family worship by her own personal study of the Word of God and by her daily living of it.

All the covenant children should be present at family worship. This should be insisted on. Very young children, school age children, teenage children, and young adults, when God gives these, should be present. Few excuses should be allowed for absences. Young adults should not imagine that, because of their age, they can busy themselves with their own pursuits and entertainment instead of being part of family worship.

Family worship should be regular and consistent. The most convenient time will obviously vary depending on the age of the children. We must make room for it in the busyness of the daily routine of our lives. We will do so only when we give it the high priority it deserves, making the necessary personal sacrifices to maintain this practice. In most Reformed families, family worship usually takes place at meal times. Sadly, regular family meals together are becoming rare in many homes. In many homes everyone fends for himself at a time suited to himself. Sometimes maintaining family worship can only be accomplished by the whole family rising from bed early in the morning before all go their separate

ways. Sometimes the best time for family worship is in the evening before everyone retires. Whatever may be the best time, the necessary discipline of the home for its practice ought not to be considered unrealistic or overly demanding.

One of the psalms that gives a beautiful example of regular family worship in Israel is Psalm 55:17. "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice." Notice how this psalm speaks of regular times. Another psalm that seems to give a beautiful example of private family worship is Psalm 141:2: "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting of my hands as the evening sacrifice." Those who are familiar with the Psalter and who love its rendering of the psalms will remember with deep appreciation the words of Psalter #386, especially the first three stanzas:

O Lord, make haste to hear my cry,  
To Thee I call, on Thee rely;  
Incline to me a gracious ear,  
And when I call, in mercy hear.

When in the morning unto Thee  
I lift my voice and bring my plea,  
Then let my prayer as incense rise  
To God enthroned above the skies.

When unto Thee I look and pray  
With lifted hands at close of day,  
Then as the evening sacrifice  
Let my request accepted rise.

The inspired writer of Psalm 141 was obviously a godly man. And he was a man who had regular private devotions, every day, whether by himself or together with his covenant family. And from the record of Daniel's life in Babylon contained in the Scripture, we can conclude that Daniel had been raised in a covenant home where the firmly established practice of family devotions took place.

I conclude this article with several passages from Scripture that at least allude to the practice of family worship. It would be saying too much to insist that family worship is definitely referred to in these passages. But we have some significant and beautiful passages that support this blessed practice in our homes.

Early in the development of mankind there is reference to God's people coming together to call on the name of the Lord. In Genesis 4:26 we read after the mention of the birth of Seth: "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." As soon as there were more than two people on earth, God's people were drawn together to worship the Lord and call on His name.

We read in the book of Job what this great man of God did for the good and salvation of his children. He "sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually" (Job 1:5).

God said concerning Abraham His friend, that Abraham would surely become a great nation, and all the families of the earth would be blessed in him. For God said: "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him" (Gen. 18:18, 19). God's covenant purposes would be realized with Abraham and his seed in the way of father Abraham instructing his children.

In Genesis 35 we read that Jacob gathered his children with him at Bethel to make an altar to the Lord and appear before the Lord in worship.

In his lengthy discourse with Israel just before he died, Moses gave this urgent commandment to the children of Israel. "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou risest up" (Deut. 6:7). This passage speaks clearly about God's people talking with their covenant children when they were sitting in their houses in fellowship.

Joshua, in his farewell discourse to the elders of Israel before his death, made the famous covenantal vow, "But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord" (Josh. 23:15).


The Psalms in several places speak of the homes of God's people as the place where parents daily teach their children. Psalm 128 was probably written by the inspired psalmist shortly after the return from the Babylonian

captivity. At this time God's people were a small remnant surrounded by heathen nations. How urgent it was for them to be strong and to continue in the fear of the Lord! The picture that Psalm 128 gives of the home of the God-fearing is that of a man and his wife and their children sitting around the table. Clear from the psalm is not only that the family would eat their meals together, but also that they would be instructed by father, and in that way experience the blessing of God's covenant fellowship together.

In Zechariah's day, the Bible speaks of God blessing His people after the return from the captivity by pouring out on them the Spirit of grace and supplication. Then Zechariah prophesies that the land shall mourn *every family apart*. Imagine the day when covenant families gathered together to mourn the state of the church and to hope for her salvation.

We have such allusions to family gatherings and worship also in the New Testament. In connection with his instruction to God-fearing husbands to dwell with their wives, Peter makes specific reference to their praying together (see I Pet. 3:7). Family worship takes places already at the beginning of marriage when there is only husband and wife.

We also have the beautiful example of Cornelius, a proselyte, already before the gospel of the kingdom of Jesus Christ was brought to him. We read of Cornelius that he was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people and prayed always" (see Acts 10:2). After Peter brought the truth of the gospel to the house of Cornelius, he and his house believed and were baptized.

One more passage will suffice. In Colossians 3 the inspired apostle Paul gives extensive instruction to Christian husbands, wives, and their children. Immediately before this instruction, the apostle admonishes Christians: "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also you are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3:15, 16). In light of the fact that this whole passage speaks of marriage and the family, we may say that the admonition in verses 15 and 16 is given also specifically to the Christian family. 

## Chapter Five

### Premillennialism (8):

# Its Explanation of Revelation 20

## Introduction

The previous articles in this series on premillennialism presented part of premillennialism's explanation of the important teaching about the last things in Revelation 20.

According to premillennialism, the millennium will be a literal period of one thousand years of future earthly history. The purpose of the millennium will be God's establishment of the earthly nation of Israel as His glorious kingdom in this world. He will bless Israel with abounding material wealth, which will then spill over to all the nations. He will make Israel a world power, ruling over all the Gentile nations on earth during that time. The risen Jesus will be the King of this kingdom of God, exercising His power over all the world from the rebuilt, earthly city of Jerusalem.

Most of the human race will be converted to Christ during this millennium of earthly peace, prosperity, and power.

Controlling this premillennial explanation of the symbolic vision of Revelation 20 is premillennialism's avowed, determined, strictly literal interpretation of prophecy—not alone the New Testament prophecy of the book of Revelation, but also Old Testament prophecy.

This enslavement to literal interpretation of Old Testament prophecy commits premillennialism to a literal fulfillment during the millennium of Ezekiel 40-48. Therefore, the premillennialists, "moderate" as well as ex-

tremists, teach a resumption of bloody animal sacrifices in a rebuilt temple by a restored Levitical priesthood during the millennium.

This, the previous article has affirmed, exposes premillennialism as damnable, Judaistic heresy, the falling away from Christ and His finished work on the cross to the wickedness that Hebrews 10:29 describes as treading under foot the Son of God and counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing.

## Despising God's (Real) Temple

Although the preceding article concentrated on premillennialism's monstrously wicked, and well-nigh incredible, teaching of the resumption of bloody animal sacrifices during the millennium, equally reprehensible is premillennialism's teaching of a restored earthly temple as the locus of the public worship of God by both Jews and Gentiles. That earthly temple of the Old Testament was fulfilled in Jesus Christ according to Jesus Himself: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. ...He spake of the temple of his body" (John 2:19, 21).

By virtue of their union with Christ, as "lively stones," the New Testament believers are "built up [by God] a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 2:5). That is, by virtue of being united to Christ by faith, the New Testament church is the reality of the temple of the Old Testament.

The premillennial doctrine that some earthly building in the future will be a restored Old Testament temple is, as such, the denial of Jesus Christ and the reality of His saving work. Inasmuch as the church is the reality—the glorious, splendid, spiritual reality—of the temple,

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premillennialism's hope and prediction of a restored, grand, rebuilt Old Testament temple of Israel are, as is true of premillennialism in general, contempt for the church. And contempt for the church is at the same time contempt for the church's King, Head, and High Priest, Jesus the Christ ("Christ," meaning the church's anointed Prophet, Priest, and King).

This is gross sin, gross doctrinal sin.

It is also the height of folly. Face to face in the gospel with glorious, spiritual reality—the New Testament church—premillennialism opts for a return to types and shadows. It is with premillennialism as though a wife would turn from the solid, physical presence of her husband, just returned from long absence, perhaps in the military, ardently to embrace his shadow, or to concentrate lovingly on the pictures of himself he sent her during his absence. Premillennialism's turning from New Testament spiritual realities of the kingdom and salvation to the earthly types to which Judaism clings is the apostasy from the gospel of Jesus Christ condemned by the epistle of Hebrews.

The best witness that a Reformed believer can give to a premillennial acquaintance is: "Read the book of Hebrews!"

### Reducing Israel to a "Herd of Swine"

The other reason (in addition to a literal interpretation of Old Testament prophecy) why premillennialism envisions a "golden age" of material prosperity during the millennium is the powerful, beneficent reign of Jesus Christ, in His resurrection body, on earth, over all the world at that time. Although some contemporary, supposedly more "moderate," premillennialists downplay this aspect of premillennialism, this material prosperity will especially be the blessedness of the nation of Israel.

The older, original premillennial theologians were crass. During the millennium, Israel will enjoy material blessings; the church will enjoy spiritual blessings. C. I. Scofield expressed this difference between Israel and the church bluntly: "As distinctly as Israel stands connected with temporal and earthly things, so distinctly does the Church stand connected with spiritual and heavenly things."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. I. Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* (New York/Chicago: Fleming H. Revell, n.d.), 8.

A twentieth-century premillennial theologian, Alva J. McClain, describes the divine blessing of Israel during the millennium this way: "The chosen people [the earthly nation of Israel, made up of Jews—DJE] will enjoy once more their historic blessings of the 'goodness of the LORD' in 'wheat' and 'wine' and 'oil' and the 'young of the flock' (vv. 12-14 [of Jeremiah 31])."<sup>2</sup>

Although, with some embarrassment, they attempt to distance themselves from the older, premillennial orthodoxy that sharply distinguished Israel's material blessings from the church's spiritual blessings, also the reputedly "moderate," "progressive" premillennialists make the distinctive blessedness of Israel during the millennium material and earthly. In the volume that is intended to put premillennialism's best foot forward on behalf of ecumenical acceptance by, and oneness with, evangelical, covenant churches and theologians, Bruce A. Ware writes that "Israel is given territorial and political aspects of the new-covenant promise not applicable to the church."<sup>3</sup>

Controlled by the premillennial insistence on a literal interpretation of Old Testament prophecy, editor Darrell L. Bock writes, in the same volume: "Old Testament promises are ultimately fulfilled in the 'earthly' terms in which the promises were expressed in the Old Testament." These earthly terms will be "earthly rule and vindication" for the nation of Israel, and their abundant material riches.<sup>4</sup>

John Calvin's searing indictment, therefore, upon the "chiliasm," or millennialism, of his day falls also upon the premillennialists of our day, "moderate" as well as extremist: "[They] regard the Israelites as nothing but a herd of swine."<sup>5</sup> Calvin explained, continuing his devastating condemnation of millennialism's prediction of earthly peace, prosperity, and power for Israel:

Away with this insane and dangerous opinion—that the Lord promised the Jews, or that they sought for them-

<sup>2</sup> Alva J. McClain, *Greatness of the Kingdom* (Winona Lake, Indiana: BMH Books, 1959), 159.

<sup>3</sup> Bruce A. Ware, "The New Covenant and the People(s) of God," in *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, ed. Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 96, 97.

<sup>4</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *Dispensationalism*, 63.

<sup>5</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, tr. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), 2.10.1.

selves, nothing but a full belly, delights of the flesh, flourishing wealth, outward power, fruitfulness of offspring, and whatever the natural man prizes!<sup>6</sup>

Although the main source of the earthly prosperity of the entire world during the millennium will be the nation of Israel, contributing to the prosperity and peace will be the conversion and salvation of much of the world's population. Not only will all the Jews be converted to Christ, but also the majority of the Gentile nations will be saved. The salvation of most of mankind will naturally produce great improvements of health, peace, and prosperity.

### **Trouble Brewing in the Millennial Kingdom**

Nevertheless, despite the reign of the exalted Christ and His band of Jewish brothers and sisters for a thousand blessed, glorious, prosperous, earthly years, trouble is brewing for the millennial kingdom of God. The basically Israelite kingdom of God over all nations of the earth will, in the end, be broken up.

Thus continues the premillennial explanation of Revelation 20.

As soon as the thousand years of the millennial kingdom of Christ comes to an end, Satan will be loosed for a short while. Out of the nations of the world that have been subject to Christ and to Israel for so long, Satan will gather a huge host of people to wage war against Jesus Christ and the kingdom of Israel, with its headquarters in Jerusalem (Rev. 20:7-9).

In this aspect of its explanation of Revelation 20 also, premillennialism is exposed, not only as erroneous, but also as ridiculous. First, the question is, "Where does the

innumerable host of enemies of Christ come from?" According to premillennialism, during the millennium the vast majority of humans will be converted and saved. In addition, the exalted Jesus Christ has been ruling all the nations of the world for a thousand years. He has been ruling by His bodily presence and with the purpose of establishing His worldwide, Messianic kingdom. Evidently, He will prove to be a royal failure.

Second, the breakup of the Messianic kingdom at the end, ending as it does in internal warfare, involving hordes of people opposing King Jesus and His kingdom, negates the purpose of the millennial kingdom according to premillennialism's own thinking. Premillennialism regards the millennial kingdom as the main purpose of God with all of human history. By the schism in the kingdom and the revolution against the King and the kingdom on the part of entire nations and vast hordes of persons, God's great purpose with history is stymied. The Messianic kingdom comes to an ignominious end: division and war.

For all its boasting that it optimistically ascribes victory to the kingdom of God in history, in contrast to the alleged pessimism of amillennialism, the fact is that premillennialism's explanation

of Revelation 20 has the kingdom of God in the Messiah ending in inglorious failure.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Calvin, 2.10.23.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1965), 17, 18: "The covenant view...obviously does not have any [earthly victorious] goal within temporal history and is therefore pessimistic." Note well Ryrie's carefully chosen preposition, "within." Reformed, covenant theology proclaims the triumphant goal of God for Christ and His spiritual kingdom as, and at, the end of temporal history. The "goal" is not "within" history, but the end of history. Therefore, amillennialism is, not "optimistic"

In this respect also, premillennialism is like postmillennialism.<sup>8</sup> Although both millennial theories castigate amillennialism as pessimism, because amillennialism rejects an earthly triumph of the kingdom of Christ in history, and although both pride themselves on their “optimism” regarding the earthly fortunes of the kingdom of God in history, both must acknowledge that their earthly kingdom is broken up toward the end of history. “When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth...to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea” (Rev. 20:7, 8). The optimism of millennialism, both pre and post, is hollow.

In the end, Satan conquers. He will go down, but he will go down rejoicing that he foiled the great purpose of God with history: a triumphant, unified, peaceful, earthly empire of the Messiah.

What is ridiculous about the premillennial interpretation of Revelation 20, in the third place, is that this millennial theory has the army of Satan daring to make war, and capable of waging war, on the risen, exalted, omnipotent, glorious Jesus, and to do so with mere physical weapons. Against Jesus on His throne in Jerusalem, the earthly army of the devil advances, with jet planes, tanks, mortars, and machine guns.

The idea is absurd, indeed worse than absurd. It is idiocy. Even Satan knows better than to attempt an as-

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about history, but hopeful with regard to history, including the rise and rampaging of Antichrist toward the close of history. The Reformed believer fastens his hope on the *end* of history—history’s *telos*, or goal: the second coming of Christ, with its defeat of the church’s and Christ’s great adversary; the resurrection of the saints into eternal life; the final judgment; and the new world.

<sup>8</sup> An exception is the postmillennialist, Martin G. Selbrede. In response to my criticism of postmillennialism’s admission that the millennial kingdom of Jesus will be broken up in history, Selbrede took issue with “postmillennialism as traditionally formulated” and proposed that the postmillennial kingdom will suffer no division or attack from within as Revelation 20:7-9 teaches. Selbrede brings consistency into the postmillennial scheme of the end as the earthly triumph of the millennial kingdom. But his effort is dashed on the rock of Revelation 20:7-9: at the very close of history, the hordes of Satan—multitudes of humans, including entire nations—rise up in opposition to the kingdom of Jesus Christ. See Martin G. Selbrede, “Reconstructing Postmillennialism,” *Journal of Christian Reconstruction: Symposium on Eschatology* 15 (Winter, 1988): 203, 204.

sault on the exalted Jesus Christ with physical weaponry. With regard to the humans under Satan’s command, no mere mortal, or army of mortals, would dare to attack, or think of attacking, with rifles or with an arsenal of atomic bombs, the glorious King Jesus in His awesome bodily presence.

To finish the premillennial explanation of Revelation 20, at the last moment God intervenes, to rescue His Jewish kingdom, devouring with fire from heaven the host attacking King Jesus (Rev. 20:9).

Having succeeded in breaking up the millennial kingdom and thus defeating God’s purpose with history, Satan is then consigned to hell forever (Rev. 20:10).

History and the present form of creation end (Rev. 20:11b).

Jesus conducts the final judgment, which, according to premillennialism, is only for the ungodly (Rev. 20:11-15). “For the saved...there can be no such judgment, because their judgment with reference to sin took place at Calvary.”<sup>9</sup>

And eternity begins, an eternity in which the nation of Israel and the church retain their separate identities. For the older dispensationalists, the separation would be local, the Jews living on the earth, and the church inhabiting heaven. Even though the modern “moderates” are mildly critical of this radical separation between the two peoples of God and Christ, they too maintain the difference between the two, saved peoples in the world to come. Israel is always Israel, as the kingdom always distinct from, and never one with, the church, the body and bride of Christ.

This premillennial explanation of the crucial eschatological passage of Scripture, Revelation 20, is false on the very face of it.

As the past few articles have already begun to show.

And as will be shown further in the next article in this series on the millennium.

... to be continued. 

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<sup>9</sup> McClain, *Greatness of the Kingdom*, 509.

## The Elder's Ordination (5)

# Laying on of Hands: The Practice in Protestantism

Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

I Timothy 4:14

In our last article we explained four elements that must be found in the ceremony in which elders are ordained (installed): appropriate stipulations, interrogations, admonitions, and prayers. The fourth article of the PRC Church Order prescribes that, particularly when a new minister is ordained, these four elements be included in the ordination ceremony. We have already shown that the same applies to the installation of elders.

In passing, we also noted that Acts 13:3 mentions fasting in connection with the ordination of Paul and Barnabas to be missionaries, and Acts 14:23 mentions fasting in connection with the ordination of elders in the various churches that Paul and Barnabas established on their first missionary journey. About fasting, our Church Order is silent. This silence is *meaningful*. It means that Reformed churches as a whole do not bind themselves to observe a fast; if we did, the Church Order would explicitly prescribe it. Yet this silence is not to be considered prohibition. Especially in light of Scripture's indication that the early church did fast on such occasions, this silence means that individual Reformed congregations are free to observe a period of fasting in connection with ordination of elders.

Article 4 of the Church Order specifically mentions the "imposition of hands" as being a necessary element in the ordination of a new minister. Scripture mentions the

laying on of hands in connection with the ordination of deacons (Acts 6:6), the sending forth Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:3), and the ordination of Timothy as pastor (I Tim. 4:14, II Tim. 1:6). In the two New Testament passages that speak of the ordination of elders (Acts 14:23, Tit. 1:5), no mention is made of the laying on of hands.<sup>1</sup>

But if the practice is mentioned with regard to ordaining deacons and ministers, would it not follow that it is permissible in ordaining elders?

Why do we not lay hands on new elders at their ordination? Would it not be good to return to this practice?

In our next article, we will examine reasons why we could return to this practice. But first, in this article, I will demonstrate that this idea is not novel. Confessional statements of Protestant (that is, non-Catholic or Eastern Orthodox) denominations from the 1500s on have permitted or even required it.

## Confessions of Broader Protestantism

The "Sandomierz Consensus" (1570) is not a confession, strictly speaking, but a joint statement of Polish Lutherans, Bohemians, and Zwinglian Reformed regarding doctrines and practices with which they were in agreement. Speaking in section 18 of "Ministers of God's Church," but making clear that "ministers" includes any who hold legitimate church office, the "Consensus" stipulates that qualified people should be chosen, in accordance with God's Word in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

<sup>1</sup> We noted in our first article in this series that the Greek word translated "ordained" in Acts 14:23 refers to a stretching forth of hands. But this word seems to suggest a stretching forth of hands to choose, not to ordain—in other words, to the practice of voting by hand in choosing officebearers, rather than laying on of hands to ordain officebearers.

Rev. Kuiper is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Edgerton, Minnesota.

Previous article in this series: December 15, 2015, p. 137.



Then it says: “Such, after being duly chosen, are ordained or consecrated by the elders of the Christian congregation with public prayers and the laying on of hands.”<sup>2</sup>

New England congregationalists (Puritans) considered each church to be independent. While various independent churches cooperated with other churches who shared their faith, they did not federate into a denomination. These congregationalists were satisfied with the doctrines of the Westminster Standards, but adopted the “Cambridge Platform” (1648) as a statement of the principles of their form of church government. After treating the office and duties of the pastor in chapter six, and of the ruling elders and deacons in chapter seven, this document treats the manner of their election in chapter eight. This chapter states that “hands are not suddenly to be laid upon any” (reflecting I Tim. 5:22).<sup>3</sup> Chapter nine, entitled “Of Ordination and Imposition of Hands,” specifies that the *current elders* of a church are to lay hands on those being ordained. If the church is newly established or has no elders for another reason, elders of other churches may do so, or non-elder representatives of the congregation whom the congregation has selected for this purpose.

The Puritans of Old England revised the Westminster Confession of Faith in the “Savoy Declaration” (1658). Article 11 of its appendix treats “Of the Institution of Churches, and the Order Appointed in Them by Jesus Christ.” There the Puritans expressed their conviction that the

way appointed by Christ for the calling of any person, fitted and gifted by the Holy Ghost, unto the office of pastor, teacher, or elder in a church, is, that he be chosen thereunto by the common suffrage of the church itself, and solemnly set apart by fasting and prayer, with imposition of hands of the eldership of that church, if there be any before constituted therein; and of a deacon, that he be chosen by the like suffrage, and set apart by prayer, and the like imposition of hands.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> “Sandomierz Consensus” (1570), translated by Agata Omelanczuk Gazal, *Reformed Confessions of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries in English Translation*, ed. James T. Dennison, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books), 227.

<sup>3</sup> “The Cambridge Platform” (1648), *Reformed Confessions*, vol. 4, 391.

<sup>4</sup> “The Savoy Declaration” (1658), *Reformed Confessions*, vol. 4, 491.

The next article then states that the essence of the call of pastors, elders, and deacons “consists in the election of the church, together with his acceptation of it, and separation by fasting and prayer. And those who are so chosen, though not set apart by imposition of hands, are rightly constituted ministers of Jesus Christ....” It would appear that the Puritans wanted to preserve the tradition of laying on of hands, but understood that it was not essential to holding office. Without saying so in as many words, they must have understood what we do—that the imposition of hands is a sign of something else, of a reality that is no less true when the sign is not administered.

Similarly, the “London Baptist Confession” (1677) is a revision of the Westminster Confession to suit the English Baptists. Its wording of the matter is almost identical to the quote from the “Savoy Declaration,” though it omits the second statement about the essence of the call.<sup>5</sup>

### Confessions Within Reformed Protestantism

But what of more narrowly *Reformed* church confessions and polities? Have any of them suggested the benefits of the practice of laying on of hands?

We will consider the Scottish Presbyterians to be part of the category of “more narrowly Reformed.” Referring to all church offices, section 3.12 of their “Second Book of Discipline” (1578) says: “The ceremonies of ordination are fasting and earnest prayer, along with the imposition of hands by the eldership.”<sup>6</sup>

Let us not overlook the “Second Helvetic Confession” (1566), penned by Heinrich Bullinger, and officially adopted by the Reformed Churches in Switzerland, Hungary, and Eastern Europe. One statement in chapter 18, “Of the Ministers of the Church, Their Institution and Offices,” is noteworthy: “And those which are chosen, let them be ordained of the elders with public prayer and laying on of hands.”<sup>7</sup> Of course, if the “ministers” of which this chapter speaks are pastors only, this quote is not relevant for our purposes. But prior to the sentence

<sup>5</sup> “The London Baptist Confession” (1677), *Reformed Confessions*, vol. 4, 563.

<sup>6</sup> “The Second Book of Discipline” (1578), *Paradigms in Polity: Classic Readings in Reformed and Presbyterian Church Government*, ed. David W. Hall and Joseph W. Hall (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1994), 237.

<sup>7</sup> “The Second Helvetic Confession” (1566), *Reformed Confessions*, vol. 2, 853-854.

just quoted, the article has mentioned elders as being “ministers” (that is, *servants*), saying that elders “are the ancient, and as it were the senators and fathers of the church, governing it with wholesome counsel.”<sup>8</sup>

Finally, the “Articles of Wesel” (1568) set forth an early church polity for the Dutch Reformed Churches. Speaking in chapter 4, section 7 of the installation of elders, the document says: “Then finally [after these solemn promises have been made], they will be admitted to the exercise of their offices after solemn prayers have been offered (in this case also we leave the laying on of hands optional).”<sup>9</sup>

### Our Own Reformed Standards

Clearly, the PRC’s officially adopted standards say nothing about the practice of laying hands on the elders-elect at the time of their installation. Specifically, this

<sup>8</sup> *Reformed Confessions*, vol. 2, 852.

<sup>9</sup> “The Articles of Wesel,” *Translation of Ecclesiastical Manual including the decisions of the Netherlands Synods and other significant matters relating to the government of the churches* (P. Biesterveld and Dr. H. H. Kuyper), by Richard R. DeRidder (Grand Rapids: Calvin Theological Seminary, 1982), 31.

is true of the Belgic Confession, the Church Order of Dordt, and the “Form of Ordination of Elders and Deacons.”

I repeat here what I said in connection with the matter of fasting: the silence of our creeds is meaningful, but not prohibitive. If our Reformed fathers considered the practice of laying on of hands to be fundamentally wrong, or to be absolutely necessary, they would have said so. Rather than being prohibitive, this silence means that our Reformed fathers considered this practice to be unnecessary.

And we would agree: it is not *necessary*. Not absolutely fundamental.

But why have Reformed churches historically not followed the practice? The reason is that they judged it would not *edify*.

Why did they judge, early in the history of Reformed churches, that it would not edify *then*?

Does their reason remain true today? Would laying on of hands at the ordination—now, the first appointment to office—of elders and deacons be unedifying still *today*?

To this we will return. 

## NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

## MR. PERRY VAN EGDOM

### Minister News

Rev. Rodney Kleyn, pastor in Covenant of Grace PRC, Spokane, WA, had the opportunity recently to visit his brother, Rev. Daniel Kleyn, missionary in the Philippines. Other family members made the trip there at the same time—a nice meeting for them. Rev. R. Kleyn preached one service in the PRC of Bulacan as well as in Maranatha PRC while he was in the metro Manila area.

*Mr. Van Egdom is a member of the Protestant Reformed Church of Doon, Iowa.*

On December 13, Rev. James Laning, pastor in the Hull, IA PRC was led to decline the call to be the second missionary in the Philippines. While we are eager for another missionary, we are glad that God has re-affirmed to Rev. Laning the call from his present charge in Hull.

### Denominational Activities

Prof. R. Dykstra and Prof. R. Cammenga were sent by the PRC Contact Committee to the Philippines in order to meet with the three churches that have federated

as the Protestant Reformed Churches in the Philippines (PRCP). This visit was intended to equip the Contact Committee with the ability to give advice to Synod 2016 in response to the request of this denomination to become sister churches with the PRCA. The two men preached in all the federated churches and in Provident Christian Church of Marikina. They also attended and spoke at the 7M meeting while they were there. They left the States on December 10 and returned on December 21.

## Congregational Activities

At the busy Christmas time of year the Ladies' Bible Study of Byron Center, MI PRC wanted to make a special effort to worship Christ, our Lord, the newborn King! They invited all ladies of the congregation to join them Wednesday, December 16, at 9:30 for coffee, followed by the singing of Christmas carols at 10, and then small-group discussion on "Mary of Nazareth." Part of the discussion focused on these points: God had a perfect plan for Mary as He does for each of His children. And how can our lives fulfill the eternal purpose for which God created us? There were study sheets in the fellowship room for those who decided to join the activity.

First PRC of Grand Rapids, MI held a request program on December 6. Various children and adults participated in this musical program of praise to God. An offering was received for the 2016 Young Peoples' Convention, with a light lunch served before the program.

The congregation of First PRC of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada invited the congregation of Immanuel PRC of Lacombe, Alberta to an evening of celebration and thanksgiving to God on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the First Edmonton PR church on December 3, 2015. Speaking were Rev. T. Miersma (Immanuel PRC), Rev. M. DeVries (former pastor), and Rev. J. Marcus (First's pastor). Refreshments were served afterwards. We give thanks with the saints in Edmonton for God's faithfulness to them as a

manifestation of the body of Christ all these years!

## School Activities

The combined junior high bands and choirs of Northwest Iowa PRC and Hull PRCS held their annual program Monday, December 7, at the Hull PRC. Both Thanksgiving and Christmas songs filled the air with fitting praises of thanksgiving for the birth of Emmanuel. Refreshments and a time of fellowship followed the program of praise.

The Covenant Christian High School Christmas concert was held December 20 at the Jenison Center for the Arts. The program included a special band number along with a combined band and choir rendering of the "Hallelujah Chorus." Singing and playing the songs of Christmas are always a special treat—a treat for the listeners as well!

## Young People's "Communist Run"

It was noted in the December 1, 2015 issue that great fun was had at the Doon, IA YPS event called the "Communist Run." The mention of that activity stimulated conjectures galore, even assertions that the *SB* editors printed a "typo," as some believed the term "Community Run" was intended. So now we elaborate.

Northwest Iowa groups do participate in what they call "Communist Runs." Where did this name originate, you ask? Quite possibly from the Russian history of the capitalists and the communists, which included an underground railroad of sorts for capitalist targets. The capitalists traveled from place to

place while the communist government tried to track them down between the safe houses that hid them from the government. "Communist Run" has been accepted as a fitting name for a hyped-game of cops and robbers. In the game the young people are usually the capitalists, the adults the communists trying to catch them physically. Members of the congregation offer their homes as safe houses for the activity. Only the capitalists or "runners" know which houses are safe houses; various groups visit the safe houses in differing order. The goal for the young people is to visit all the safe houses without getting caught. The goal for the communists or "chasers" is to catch the runners as often as possible. This happens in the dark, mostly on foot, with flashlights and camouflage clothing, on a nice fall night. An end time is set for all to meet for food, fellowship, and stories of the night. Small Midwest towns like Doon (about 10 blocks by 6 blocks in size) make excellent playgrounds for this experience. Many say the challenge is addicting.

## Sister-Church News

Start making plans to visit beautiful Castlewellan Castle in Northern Ireland next July 16-23, as the British Reformed Conference titled "Behold I Come Quickly: The Reformed Biblical Truth of the End" will be held there then.

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." Ecclesiastes 3:1. ☞

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Wedding Anniversary

■ On January 25, 2015, our parents, grandparents, and great grandparents,

#### **HERMAN and LOUISE OPHOFF,**

will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary. To God be the glory for giving them the grace to instruct and guide us in His precious truths.

We pray that the Lord will continue to show His covenant faithfulness through them, bless them in their marriage, and care for them as they draw near to the end of their earthly pilgrimage. Psalm 105:8: "He hath remembered his covenant forever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations."

✧ Steve and Karen Ophoff  
Steven Charles

✧ Bruce and Rosanne Van Solkema  
Tedd and Abby Van Solkema  
Stella Rose  
Andrew  
Nathan and Nancy Rau  
Noah

✧ John and Patricia Ophoff  
Robert and Jessica Westhuis  
Levi  
Monica, Natalie, Lexi, Nicholas, Joshua

Grand Rapids, Michigan

### Teacher Needed

■ Faith Christian School of Randolph, WI, is in need of a full-time elementary or junior high teacher for the 2016-2017 school year. Interested parties should contact Ed Hoksbergen (edhoks@gmail.com or 608-712-7514) or Mike Vander Veen (michael.vanderveen@yahoo.com or 920-296-4406)

### Classis West

■ Classis West will meet in regular session on Wednesday, March 2, 2016, at the Protestant Reformed Church in Crete, IL. Material to be included in the agenda must be in my hands no later than Monday, February 1, 2016. Delegates who will need housing or transportation may contact Mr. Ed Stouwie, 219-513-9218.

Rev. Douglas Kuiper,  
Stated Clerk

### Seminary

■ All students enrolled in the Protestant Reformed Seminary who will be in need of financial assistance for the coming school year are asked to contact the Student Aid Committee secretary, Mr. Bill VanOverloop (phone: 616 795-8606). This contact should be made before the next scheduled meeting, March 8, 2016, D.V.

Student Aid Committee  
Bill VanOverloop, Secretary

### Lecture

#### Topic

***The Necessity of Membership  
in a True Church of Jesus Christ***

#### Speaker

Prof. David Engelsma

#### Date/Time

Friday April 22, 2016 at 7:30 P.M.

#### Place

First Jenison CRC  
8360 Cottonwood Dr.  
Jenison MI

#### Sponsor

Reformed Witness Committee of Hope PRC

Will be lived-streamed on SermonAudio