

# THE STANDARD

*Bearer*

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

VOLUME XXVII

May 1, 1951 — Grand Rapids, Michigan

NUMBER 15

## MEDITATION

### I Love The Lord!

"I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice  
and my supplication."

Psalm 116:1.

No, we do not know who wrote this psalm, but it matters not. If it mattered, the Lord would have told us. Therefore I will not guess who the author may be. We have the psalm.

I love the Lord! That is the theme of the whole psalm. He will give us the reason for his love; he will tell us what he is going to do with that love, so that he ends in heaven itself where he will dwell in the courts of the Lord forevermore, but you are right when you write above the whole psalm: I love the Lord!

What mighty concept: I love the Lord!

Yes, the world also speaks of love.

Very learned men, especially in the field of psychology, tell us that love is the deepest urge in man, moving him irresistibly on. They say that behind all effort of men of all the ages you will find the love of man for his mate, his friend, his flesh and bone, his fatherland, humanity. And I can well believe it. Read the literature of all the ages, and you will come face to face at every page with the love of man.

But their love is not our love. Our love is the love of God! Therein lies all the difference in the world!

The love of God is pure and sweet; it is holy and just; it is wise and strong; faithful it is and true unto all eternity.

The love of God is God Himself. God is His virtues. And so we sing: Unending is the love of God from age to age the same!

The love of the world, however, is ugly. It is so utterly ugly that God hates it, and the angels of God hide their pure faces from it.

The love of man ought to be the reflection of the love of God. But it is not. God is not in all their love.

And so we find a lot of filth in the world, masquerading under the sweet name of love. All human emotion should be nothing but the fruit of God's emotion, reflecting the life of God. Everything apart from God is contraband. And you need no magnifying glasses to see the corruption which corrupts the love of the world.

How different is this psalmist: I love the Lord! That makes all the difference in the world. If you have the love of God in your heart you will find the sanctifying power of that love in all your other relationships. It will never stand in the way of the other avenues of love we spoke of above. Nay, but that love of God will hallow them.

I love the Lord!

It is the song of heaven unto all eternity.



I love the Lord!

Ah me, what shall I say of this holiest and most beautiful of all emotions?

It certainly means that all your heart is set on the Lord, that you esteem Him as the Summum Bonum, the Highest Good. If the love of God dwells in your heart, if that heart is a sanctuary of the Lord, then you seek Him with that heart, and you will find in Him all your delight. Apart from Him you long and thirst and nought can satisfy. You look then about you and say: all the streams are dry here below.

Conversely, you hate all that He hates, for He is your life. His enemies are your enemies, and you hate His enemies with a perfect hatred. And that is the reason why you hate your own life in the world, for that life is sinful. Even with the best of intentions, you live a sinful life. You begin in the morning with the best of intentions: I am going to walk in harmony with my God and His law. But when evening is there, you look upon the completed day, and you weep. Then

you say with Paul: I do not know this day's work! That is not the way I began this day. That is not the completed day as I saw it this morning in my plans. I saw before me a day that would be spent in His communion, to His praises and showing the fruits of His indwelling Spirit and Truth. - But this awful life which I led is terrible: I hate it! O wretched man that I am! For I do love the Lord! And it is for His sake that you end your day on the minor note of melancholy: Godly sorrow that worketh repentance.

Yes, I love the Lord!

And so I also love what He loves. His friends are my friends, and His interests are mine. I am wrapped up in what God loves. He has a cause in the midst of the world. Well, it is mine. He has a people, a city, a Word, a day, a battle, a victory. I love them all, and I am immersed in all manner of endeavors that pertain to them.

And He has a son: it is Jesus Christ the Lord.

Well, I love Him, for He is the very Face of the God whom I love. I cling to that Son, for He is the most wonderful revelation of the God whom I love. I know, I know, that God reveals Himself in all the works of His hands, and I know also that wherever the Lord showed Himself there was a song of adoration because of His wondrous works. But this Son is the crown of all the works of Jehovah, and all the other works of God point to this Son of His right hand.

That Son of God reveals to me the love of God such as no tree or flower ever did. He shows me the very Heart of His heart. From afar I have heard people argue about the comprehensibility of God and Divine revelation. There are some who say that there are depths of God which we will never see. Maybe so. But I am persuaded that the child of God has seen His inmost Heart when Jesus cried out on the cruel cross of Calvary. And the Holy Apostle Paul set us to measuring the "breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." Yes, that text would be in Ephesians, the profound epistle. It fits there.

If you would hear the heartbeat of the love of God, I would suggest you stand at the foot of the cross of that Son, and you will hear it, and its rythm is unspeakably sweet. There is a melody which is called the Son of God: His song in the night!

In the world they save the most beautiful melodies on long-playing records: they are stored away for other generations to feast on. Well, God has stored away the Song in the awful night, and you shall hear of that song of the love of God unto all eternity. Heaven is severely theological. It shall be filled with the rendering of all God's wonderful works.

Do you know the name of God's conveyance which He uses to bring you His love? Paul tells you: it is

the Holy Ghost. And now note: when that Holy Ghost was poured out in the church on Pentecost, they did nothing but speak of the wonderful works of God. And the climax of all those works is God's crucifixion of that wonderful Son of God.

For you and for me!

I love the Lord!



I love the Lord!

But why? Listen to the unknown psalmist who sings his songs of love in heaven at this moment of writing; he will tell you. I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications.

The psalmist had called upon the name of the Lord: he had prayed to God.

There is another one of these mighty concepts: a man that will direct his voice to heaven and to heaven's God. What a mighty concept! It is one of the mightiest miracles that can happen to man. It beggars description. Imagine: a man calls upon the name of the Lord!

You say: what is so mighty about that?

And my answer is: it is easier for a great and high mountain to lift itself and to wing its way to the depths of the ocean, than that a man will ever think of calling upon the name of the Lord. And that is no hyperbole. That is the truth. Man is dead. Man is an enemy of God: he hates God with every breath he takes. He hates Him to his dying day. With his last breath he breathes defiance to God.

When natural man tastes anything that smacks of God and the things of God, he becomes thoroughly nauseated. When He hears the voice of God calling him, he will turn around and he will fling into the teeth of God: Depart from me: I have no pleasure in Thy ways.

But this poor man cried, and God answered him.

I love the Lord, says the unknown singer, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications.

Yes, the miracle of grace happened to this poor man. God had visited him in his inward parts. God had visited him in the very depths of his heart. And there in those depths, the Lord had taken away his stony heart-core, and substituted a heart of flesh. He did so by His almighty grace and Holy Spirit. And that operation is tantamount to saying that God made that heart His dwellingplace.

And since that time the Lord placed him in the way of His covenant, with its attending preaching and teaching and constant testimony of His glorious and precious Word.

That Word made this poor man wise unto salvation.

And the wisdom of God which dwelled in him caused him to turn to God in all his distresses.

If you will take the time to read psalm 116 you will

note that this poor man was in great distress. It is also plain from the text which we quoted: and my supplications.

It is one thing to speak to God, to pray to him in your normal (!) communion with God. It is another thing when that speaking becomes crying, and when your cry becomes supplication. Supplication and prayer are the same thing, except that the former is prayer intensified. When your prayer becomes supplication you are in dire straits.

Then he prayed to God, and his prayer became supplication.

And God heard.

Hence, his love to God.

I love the Lord!

For He has heard my voice!

And my supplications!



Oh yes, I love the Lord!

For in my terrible straits I called upon Him!

And He heard me!

You ask: what was the trouble of this poor and needy man?

He will tell you. The answer you may find in the whole psalm, although there is an indication in the text itself. You do not use the intensive mood of prayer for just any need. The need must be very urgent before you supplicate.

And I would ask you: what is the greatest need a man has? What misery in this vale of tears brings you its bitterest pangs?

You are so right: it is sin and its attending feeling of guilt.

I've often said: if you want to know what hell is like, you must ask the child of the living God. He will tell you what it is like to have God angry with you. The feeling of guilt is the experience of what God thinks of me. His displeasure of my ways He tells me in my heart. And the experience is very bitter.

Go to verse 3 and you will find its expression in words that you can understand: the sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me!

Go to verse 4: O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul!

And to verse 8: For Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, my feet from falling!

It tells the whole story: This man was visited by the omniscient God, and this God had told him first what an abominable sinner he was. And the Lord had taught him what was the usual, the common, the

natural, the just recompense for sin, and the reward for guilt.

Do you know what it is?

It is hell!

And hell is an angry God staring at you.

God makes hell the awful place it is. In His love there is life, but in His wrath there is hell-fire.

Ask God's child: he will tell you. For he knows by experience.

But God also gave this poor and needy man the wisdom to plead upon the sure ground of His everlasting mercy: God taught him to pray and to pour out his supplications before the throne of that mercy.

And so God heard his voice and his supplication.

And hearing He forgave.

And forgiving, He justified this man. And justifying him, He gave him long life, and life eternal.

And he began to sing: I love the Lord, because He heard my voice and my supplication.

Oh yes, he loved the Lord!



I love the Lord!

How severely personal!

Yes, your father and your mother may be dear children of God. It does not help you really, personally. Our fathers always said about this: grace is no heritage from father to son.

Yes, you may have been baptized, and foolish people may have given you an idea that there was something in the mere fact that you were baptized. Esau was circumcised: whenever he thinks of it right now, his cries are doubled, and his sorrows increase.

Yes, you may have heard the voice of the Lord from your very infancy, and your pastors may have been of the excellent and of the good. But it helps you not one wit: you, you, you must speak to God, you must pray to Him, and you must pour out your supplications.

And you will when visited by the Dayspring from on high.

There is a song: Since Jesus came into my heart! That is eternally correct: Jesus does visit the hearts of certain men, women and children.

Some, but not all.

And if He does, that man, woman or child will know it. Oh, but they will know it. Then He tells them what He thinks of them as they are by nature. He gives them eyes of the heart to see the blackness and the damnable worthiness of their sin and guilt.

Then they cry to God.

And then He hears, and they love Him for aye!

G. Vos.

## *The Standard Bearer*

Semi-Monthly, except Monthly in July and August

Published By

The Reformed Free Publishing Association

Box 124, Sta. C., Grand Rapids, Mich.

EDITOR: — Rev. H. Hoeksema.

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

Communications relative to subscription should be addressed to Mr. J. BOUWMAN, 1350 Giddings S.E., Grand Rapids 7, Mich. Announcements and Obituaries must be mailed to the above address and will be published at a fee of \$1.00 for each notice.

**Renewals:**—Unless a definite request for discontinuance is received, it is assumed that the subscriber wishes his subscription to continue without the formality of a renewal order.

Price: \$3.00 per year

Entered as Second Class Mail at Grand Rapids, Michigan.

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## EDITORIALS

### The Rev. Daane on "Common Grace"

In *The Reformed Journal*, Vol. I, No. 2, I found a very interesting article by the Rev. James Daane, in which he reflects on the problem of so-called "common grace".

Interesting this article is, first of all, because it is rather refreshing to find a Christian Reformed minister that has the courage and intelligence to broach the problem of common grace once again. The Synod of 1924, after having established the well-known Three Points, admonished the leaders of the Christian Reformed Churches as follows:

"In connection with the overtures that urge that synod express itself about the doctrine of common grace as such, or that the synod appoint a committee to study this case in general, synod decides as follows:

"a. Not to make a declaration now concerning the standpoint of the church in re the doctrine of general or common grace in all its parts. Such a declaration would presuppose that this doctrine had already been penetrated and developed in all its details, something which surely is not in the least the case. The necessary preparatory study is as yet entirely lacking. The result is that in the Reformed churches there is as yet no 'communis opinio' in this case.

"b. Nor to appoint a committee which will study the case of common grace, in order in that way to reach the formulation of a dogma concerning this doctrine, which presently can be included in the confession:

(1) because dogmas are not made, but are born out of the conflict of opinions, and therefore it is desirable, that the establishment of a dogma be preceded by a long discussion. The participation in such a discussion must be as general as possible, and must not be limited to a single group of churches;

"(2) because a truth must first live clearly in the consciousness of a church in general or of a definite group of churches in particular before the church can receive such a truth in her confessions. It cannot be said, that this necessary condition is already present, or will be present in the course of two or four years.

"c. But to urge the leaders of our people, ministers as well as professors, that they make further study of the doctrine of common grace; that they painstakingly think into the problems which are thereby presented in sermons, lectures and writings. It is very desirable, that not a single individual or a small number take this task upon themselves, but that many take part in it. Grounds:

"(1) This will be conducive in the most natural way unto a fruitful discussion about the doctrine of common grace, and such a discussion is the indispensable requisite for the development of this truth;

"(2) it will serve to call the attention of our people more directly to this doctrine, clarify its understanding of it and cause it to feel the significance of it, so that it becomes conscious in increasing measure of this part of the contents of its faith;

"(3) it will after a course of some years undoubtedly lead to a 'communis opinio' in regard to this truth, and also cause the condition of our church to become ripe for a communal confession concerning common grace." (Acts of Synod, 1924, pp. 149, 150; translation is mine.)

It is now more than 25 years after the synod so admonished and urged the leaders of the Christian Reformed Church. What have they done to develop the doctrine of common grace? Absolutely nothing. Berkhof defended the Three Points in a brochure, and also defended the old theory of common grace in his *Reformed Dogmatics*. H. J. Kuiper delivered a few sermons on "The Good that Sinners Do." Volbeda and Bouma went about soon after the Synod of 1924 to lecture in defense of the Three Points. But nothing further was done. In the meantime, our elaborate criticism of Dr. Kuyper's *De Gemeene Gratie*, as well as the positive development of our conception concerning this problem still stands as we developed it in "Van Zonde en Genade". As far as I know, no one has ever touched it. Why this lack of interest and ambition? Were the Three Points after all only used as a stick to strike the Rev. H. Danhof and myself, and later also the Rev. G. M. Ophoff, and to drive them out of the communion of the Chr. Ref. Churches? Or were, perhaps, the Three Points after all expressive of the main tenets of the theory of common grace, so that there is no room for further development whatever?

Dr. Daane finds this situation very regrettable. Writes he in the article referred to above: "The Protestant Reformed Church has continued to register arguments against it and to refine their objections to it. Interest in the subject has revived and produced considerable discussion in the Netherlands. This revival of interest, however, has been less stimulated by our 1924 problem and solution, than by reaction to the exposition given common grace by Abraham Kuyper. Discussion has taken place between the Netherlands and America but the point of contact has been rather with the Protestant Reformed Church than with our own. Although a fine little book entitled *Common Grace* has come out of Westminster Seminary from the pen of Dr. Van Til, within our own denomination little has been done to advance this doctrine. This is remarkable in view of our initial interest in common

grace and the crucial part we have played in the history of this doctrine.

"This neglect is regrettable. So far as my knowledge goes, we were the first Church to make a separate, specific pronouncement on this doctrine. If this be true, our responsibility to further define the meaning of common grace is a heavy one. In any event, our responsibility is tremendous because of the important part we have played in this doctrine. The years following 1924 were 'natural years' for its theological advance. The men who played a prominent part in the 1924 controversy were ripened and equipped by the experience of the controversy to further pursue the task.

"Our failure to go forward on the momentum of our initial interest is doubly regrettable because the doctrine is not one that can be simply affirmed or denied without serious consequences. . . ."

Interesting the article is too, because the Rev. Daane reveals the willingness to recognize, study, and criticize our position and writings, and to enter into a discussion with us on the question of common grace. He even writes: "If they as well as we would apply our respective positions to the broad scope of history, and to the problem of history itself, I consider it a possibility that we might both find ourselves drawing closer together." This willingness to recognize us and to discuss the problem with us is something quite new in the Christian Reformed Church. I cannot but admire the Rev. Daane for this position. On my part, although I have rather settled convictions on the question of common grace, I am very willing to take cognizance of all the Rev. Daane may produce, and to enter into a brotherly discussion with him. He does not have to be afraid that I will resent thorough criticism, provided he comes with arguments from Scripture and the Confessions.

In this connection, however, I want to make the remark that it would be very conducive to a better relationship, if the Rev. Daane would have the courage openly to disown responsibility for the black page the Christian Reformed Church wrote into its history in 1924. The Rev. Daane writes:

"A little over twenty-five years ago, the Protestant Reformed denomination came into existence. She separated from the Christian Reformed Church over the doctrine of common grace. In the Three Points, drawn up and adopted by our Church in 1924, we stated our belief in the existence of common grace. A group of our people under the leadership of Rev. Herman Hoeksema, denied that there is any such thing, and went on their own denominational way."

The above is not quite correct. We did not separate from the Chr. Ref. Churches in 1924. And we did not go on our own denominational way. But we were cast out, cruelly cast out, although we made every



reasonable and possible attempt to remain in the Chr. Ref. Church. And if the Rev. Daane wants to know, as possibly he does know, what I mean when I refer to the black page the Chr. Ref. Church wrote in its history in 19924, he but has to read my "A History of the Protestant Reformed Churches." Twice we have appealed in the course of our history to the Synod of the Chr. Ref. Church to confess their sin of casting us out. But they never heeded it.

Finally, I also find interesting what the Rev. Daane writes about our "Declaration of Principles". Writes he:

"In a very sharp form, the consequences of denying common grace can be seen in the controversy going on in the Protestant Reformed Church. This controversy arose out of the problem of organizing Canadian immigrants of the Schilder group into Protestant Reformed Churches. Faced with the question of accepting members entertaining the Schilder view of the covenant, Protestant Reformed missionaries requested a statement of denominational policy. The result was the formulation of a *Declaration* at their last Synod. The *Declaration* defines the Protestant Reformed view of the Covenant, in contrast to Schilder's view—and ours. It is the denial of common grace as applied to the Covenant. For the year now running, it has been placed before their churches for consideration. At their Synod this summer, it is to be adopted (or rejected) as the official Protestant Reformed doctrine of the Covenant.

"According to Hoeksema and the *Declaration*, the denial of common grace means that there are no 'conditions' in the Covenant. God never meets man on a conditional basis—not even in that process in which the individual's salvation is actualized. God never speaks or works on the principle: if you, man, do this, then I, God will do this. Hoeksema believes that if their churches subscribe to the position that God operates with conditions, and takes them seriously, their churches have lost their reason for separate existence. Rejection of the *Declaration* would be an announcement that it is time to return to the Christian Reformed fold.

"A number of Protestant Reformed ministers are not in favor of the *Declaration*. Some object for formal reasons. Others openly contend for conditions within the Covenant. They maintain that such a view of the Covenant does not do violence to Protestant Reformed theology. In this, I believe, these protesting Protestant Reformed ministers are plainly wrong, and Hoeksema, on his basis, is entirely correct.

"What these Protestant Reformed ministers fail to see is that the basic issue in their present controversy is not common grace—although it is indeed involved, as Hoeksema sees clearly. The basic difference between themselves and Hoeksema is not common grace

or conditions, but a prior position that lies behind both common grace and conditions. It is possible that these protesting ministers do not themselves recognize the nature of this prior position. Until they do, they will never understand that Hoeksema is correct in his contention that, for the Protestant Reformed, conditions are excluded from the Covenant. When they do understand this prior position, they will also understand why common grace and conditions are both taboo in Protestant Reformed theology. And then they will face two alternatives. They will either have to reject conditions within the Covenant, or insist upon their retention, and become Christian Reformed."

I find it very interesting indeed to meet with an unbiased, outside opinion concerning our Declaration of Principles. Unbiased, that is, in distinction from the Liberated, who also have written their opinion concerning our Declaration.

\* \* \* \*

### A FEW SUGGESTIONS

I want to make a few suggestions for a principal and fruitful discussion of the theory of common grace.

In the first place, I want to suggest that we base our discussion upon Scripture and the Confessions alone. The Rev. Daane suggests that back of my denial of common grace lies the conception of what he calls a "timeless logic". Writes he:

"Behind Hoeksema's denial of both common grace and conditions within the Covenant, is the fact that he has taken his theological stance in eternity, and consequently understands God's dealings with men in terms of a *timeless* logic. But a *timeless* logic is not adapted to deal with or produce an understanding of God's dealings with men in time. A definition of God's dealings with men in terms of a timeless logic, means precisely that temporal sequence and historical conditions have no relevance for that definition. The temporal 'before' and 'after', and the changing factors and conditions in this 'moving situation', have no real meaning. They indicate nothing as to the manner in which God deals with men. . . .

"The most characteristic feature of Hoeksema's theology is not his denial of common grace; it is rather this prior position to which he is committed and which makes necessary his denial of common grace. This has not been understood by many who contend against him in favor of common grace. Standing on Hoeksema's initial position and operating with his timeless logic, the proponent of common grace has lost the argument, before it begins. It is a mistake to argue about common grace and conditions, when the real issue is something else. I submit that the most telling criticism that can be made of Hoeksema's theology is

its inability to allow genuine validity to the historical process."

Now, in the first place, I suggest that the very term *timeless logic* is a contradiction in terms. There is no such thing as timeless logic. Logic and time are inseparably related and connected. What the Rev. Daane means is undoubtedly that I take my standpoint in the eternal counsel of God. But although there is truth in this assertion, yet if it be conceived as a preconceived notion, apart from the Word of God and the Reformed Confessions, it is not correct. Throughout all my writings on the subject I have based my denial of common grace upon Scripture and the Reformed Confessions. I deny, too, the last sentence in the above paragraph in the article of the Rev. Daane, namely "that the most telling criticism that can be made of Hoeksema's theology is its inability to allow genuine validity to the historical process." About this I will have more to say presently. Suffice it to remark now that it is exactly over against Dr. Kuyper's conception of the history of this present time as an interlude, motivated by common grace, that we have opposed our own evaluation of history in the light of Scripture. But let it be established between us that for a fruitful discussion about the matter of common grace we both take our stand on the Word of God and the Reformed Confessions.

Secondly, I submit that for a fruitful discussion of the problem, we must clearly distinguish between the Kuyperian and the Arminian conception of common grace. The Synod of 1924 simply confused the two. In their attempt to base their common grace theory, especially as it is adopted in the First Point, on the Reformed Confessions they unwittingly, perhaps, slid into the Arminian theory of general grace. This was but natural. The fathers of Dordrecht did not deal with the common grace theory *a la* Kuyper, but simply confronted the question whether the grace of God unto salvation is general or particular. And therefore the Synod could not possibly find a basis in that Confession for the Kuyperian theory of common grace. And when they nevertheless attempted to condemn the Revs. Hoeksema and Danhof for their stand on the denial of common grace, and tried to find a basis for their condemnation in the Reformed Confessions, they necessarily confused the Arminian and the Kuyperian conceptions of common grace. This confusion is very evident from the First Point adopted by the Synod of Kalamazoo, 1924:

"Relative to the first point, which concerns the favorable attitude of God towards humanity in general and not only towards the elect, Synod declares it to be established according to Scripture and the Confession that, apart from the saving grace of God shown only to those that are elect unto eternal life, there is also a certain favor or grace of God which He shows to His

creatures in general. This is evident from the Scriptural passages quoted and from the Canons of Dordrecht, II, 5, and III, IV, 8 and 9, which deal with the general offer of the gospel, while it also appears from the citations made from Reformed writers of the most flourishing period of Reformed theology that our Reformed writers from the past favored this view."

Now, it is very evident that in this First Point the Synod of 1924 adopted both the Kuyperian and the Arminian conceptions of common grace. The Synod became confused when they attempted to support their view by the confession of the Reformed churches, and thus lapsed into the Arminian presentation of common grace. That this is true is evident, first of all, from the declaration itself. For when it declares that "apart from the saving grace of God shown only to those that are elect unto eternal life, there is also a certain favor or grace of God which He shows to His creatures in general," is purposes to express the Kuyperian view that God is gracious to all men in common, elect and reprobate, godly and ungodly, when He bestows on them the things of this present life, such as rain and sunshine, life and health, wealth and possessions, gifts and talents. All the good things of this present time are, according to this view, a manifestation of God's gracious attitude to all men. But the declaration of the First Point lapses into the Arminian conception that the saving grace of God is intended for all men individually, when it speaks of "the general offer of the gospel" as a manifestation of the grace of God to all hearers without distinction. For it is evident that the preaching of the gospel does not deal with common grace in the Kuyperian sense of the word, but with saving grace only. Besides, this confusion is also evident from the references to the Canons of Dordrecht. Also these certainly do not refer whatever to the Kuyperian theory of common grace, but only to the grace of God unto salvation. Hence, the First Point of 1924 teaches that in the preaching of the gospel God is graciously inclined and bestows grace upon all the hearers, or, more briefly, the preaching of the gospel is grace to all.

Now it seems to me it is hardly worthwhile to discuss the Arminian theory of common grace, although I admit that it is connected with the Kuyperian conception. That the preaching of the gospel is certainly no grace to all that hear the gospel has been too plainly condemned by the fathers of Dordrecht. The truth of particular grace contains the following elements. First, from all eternity God sovereignly loved and chose a people in Christ, ordaining them unto eternal glory through the deep way of sin and grace, and that too, in distinction from others who are not ordained unto salvation. Secondly, Christ suffered and died and rose from the dead, and was glorified at the right hand of God only in behalf of the elect, given Him by the

Father, and meriting and obtaining for them, and for them only, all the blessings of salvation. Thirdly, by the Spirit of grace the elect, and they only, are regenerated, called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ efficaciously and irresistibly. Upon them, and upon them alone, He bestowed the saving grace whereby they believe in Christ as He is proclaimed unto them in the gospel, whereby they are justified and sanctified and glorified. Fourthly, by the same efficacious grace they are preserved unto salvation, and they can never fall away from grace, but will surely persevere even unto the end, when God will glorify them and make them heirs of all things with Jesus Christ their Lord.

This is the Reformed line of thinking in regard to the grace of salvation. That this is true is evident from Canons I, A, 6; II, A, 8; III, IV, A, 10; V, A, 8. Hence, the preaching of the gospel is neither in God's intention, nor in actual fact, grace to all the hearers, but only to the elect, for whom Christ died and rose again, and whom God through that preaching effectually calls unto eternal life and glory.

It seems to me that on this point there is hardly any room for discussion among Reformed people and Reformed theologians.

But it will be fruitful if we discuss the Kuyperian conception of common grace, especially in view of the fact that the Rev. Daane speaks of a proper evaluation of history. For this is indeed implied in the Kuyperian theory of common grace. Mark you, Kuyper makes a distinction between "common" and "special" grace. The latter only is of saving power and efficacy, and is particular, that is, for the elect only. Its fruit is eternal life and glory in Christ. The former is not saving, but pertains only to the present life and history of man in the world, and is universal, or common to all men. To denote the distinction Kuyper preferred to employ the word "gratie" to indicate common grace, while he used the term "genade" to denote special or particular grace. And Kuyper sought to show that there still is a positively good world life and development of the human race in connection with all created things. And by the theory of common grace he offered an explanation of the positively good in the world in connection with the fact of the fall and the curse of God in the world, and the total depravity of the natural man. He maintains that if common grace had not intervened and begun to operate immediately after the fall, the end of all things would have been reached in paradise with man's eating of the forbidden fruit. The whole world would have relapsed into a chaotic state. Adam would have died the complete and eternal death. And there would have been no history, no development of the human race in the world. As a result, there would have been no room for the establishment and development of God's covenant grace in Christ, the elect would not have been born, Christ

would not have come, and the works of God would have been completely spoiled and destroyed by the wiles of Satan. However, by His common grace God intervened, the universe did not suffer destruction, man did not immediately die, and the original divine idea and ordinance of creation can be and is realized in the history of this world. At the same time, a sphere is created for the realization and development of special grace in Christ Jesus. He therefore conceives of the work of God in a dualistic way. God has an original purpose with creation, the normal development of all things under man as their king. This purpose is apparently frustrated by the temptation of the devil and sin. But through the operation of common grace God carries out the original idea, and brings about a positively good development of the human race in connection with the earthly creation. But on the other hand, God also carries out His purpose of predestination in the redemption of the elect and the damnation of the reprobate. The present history of the world, therefore, according to Kuyper, is really an interlude.

Over against this we have always placed a different conception and evaluation of the present history of the world. What is really the problem of so-called common grace? It concerns the question of God's attitude over against, and of His operation upon the whole of the kosmos, the created things and their mutual relation and their development in time, in connection with and in agreement with the counsel of God in general, predestination in particular, with election and reprobation, the realization of God's eternal covenant, grace and sin, favor and wrath, nature and grace, creation and recreation, Adam and Christ; and, moreover, concerns the question of the place and calling of the people of God in and over against the present world.

This, in our opinion, is the problem of common grace. And, as the Rev. Daane will undoubtedly notice, certainly implies an evaluation of history.

About this, and also about some other matters, especially about the mistaken idea of the Rev. Daane that we should teach a certain individualism, we will write more, the Lord willing, next time.

H. H.

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In other men we faults can spy,  
And blame the mote that dims their eye,  
Each little speck and blemish find,  
To our own errors blind.



## Of Books

*Expository Thoughts on the Gospels*, by bishop J. C. Ryle. Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Published as a reprint by the Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Price per Volume \$4.95.

The Zondervan Publishing House certainly did all students of the Bible, whether ministers or laymen, a service by offering a reprint of the above mentioned work. It is more than a commentary. (The work is deeply spiritual and devotional. It is written in a very lucid style, so that everybody can easily read it. While the work is based on the exposition of the text, it offers, at the same time, many practical suggestions. Bishop Ryle, a divine of the last century, was a lover of Holy Writ and a warm hearted Bible student. His "Expository Thoughts on the Gospels" makes very pleasant and easy reading.

To give our readers a taste of the contents of these "Thoughts on the Gospels" I cannot refrain from quoting one or two passages from it. The first is on "the children sitting in the marketplace" from Matthew 11:16 ff.:

"It is a mournful fact, that there are thousands of professing Christians just as unreasonable as these Jews. They are equally perverse and equally hard to please. Whatever we teach and preach, they find fault. Whatever our manner of life, they are dissatisfied. Do we tell them of salvation by grace, and justification by faith? At once they cry out against our doctrine as licentious and antinomian;—Do we tell them of the holiness which the gospel requires? At once they exclaim that we are too strict, and precise, and righteous overmuch.—Are we cheerful? They accuse us of levity.—Are we grave? They call us gloomy and sour.—Do we keep aloof from balls and plays, and races? They denounce us puritanical, exclusive, and narrowminded.—Do we eat, and drink, and dress like other people, and attend to our worldly callings, and go into society? They sneeringly insinuate that they see no difference between us and those who make no religious profession at all, and that we are not better than other men.—What is all this but the conduct of the Jews over again? "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced: we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented." He who spake these words knew the hearts of men." p. 113.

The second passage is on Mark 13:20:

"It is plain from this, and other passages in the Bible, that God has an elect people in the world. They are those, according to the seventeenth Article of our Church, whom 'He has constantly decreed by His counsel. Secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation; those whom He hath chosen in Christ out of

mankind, and decreed to bring by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honor.' To them, and them only, belong the great privileges of justification, sanctification, and final glory." etc.

We cannot agree with Ryle's contention that there will be a second siege of Jerusalem in the end of time.

H. H.



## Rev. Petter's Reply

In the *Concordia* issue of March 15, 1951, the undersigned addressed the following question to the Rev. Petter, and I quote: "Is Baptism the sign and seal of a conditional promise, of a promise which will presently be held before them with its accompanying command and threat? or, is Baptism the sign and seal of the promise which is theirs because of Divine election, particular atonement, and the Spirit of regeneration? I can restate my questions as follows: Do we baptize our children because the promise will be presented conditionally to them, so that the sacrament of baptism merely looks forward to the time that the child grows to self-consciousness and faith? or, Do we baptize our children because the Father has adopted them eternally as His heirs, because Christ washed their sins and presented them righteous before God, and because God has promised that they, also as children, shall receive the promised Spirit of regeneration, the Author of faith?"

Rev. Petter answered my questions in the *Concordia* issues of March 15 and 29. I wish to thank the brother for his time and effort which he spent in answering my letter.

I do not feel, however, that he has answered my questions clearly and concisely. This may also be due to the letter which I wrote him and the questions which I submitted. I will grant that my letter may have been somewhat vague. It is also for this reason that I wish to answer brother Petter's reply and attempt to state the issue clearly and concisely.

I trust that our readers will bear with me. We should bear in mind that the issue is fundamental and tremendously important. It is simply a fact that the reformed position is most clearly expressed in connection with the baptism of our children. Here we deal, to be sure, with the truth as it constitutes the very heart and core of our Protestant Reformed Churches. That truth we are called to proclaim in all its blessed fullness and distinctiveness. And it is exactly on this point that the theology of the Liberated and that of our churches stand sharply over against each other. Let us therefore be clear and concise. This prompts me in the writing of this article.

*Two Widely Divergent Views.*

According to the one conception the baptism of our children is based upon the *fact* of salvation, proceeds from the truth that our children *are* partakers of the salvation and the promise of God (as realized for them and in them). This conception is rooted in God's sovereign election, in Christ's particular atonement, in the promise as God's infallible and unconditional oath of salvation. According to the other view we baptize our children on the basis of a conditional promise, a promise which is given equally to all the children, and which will be realized in them if they believe and therefore upon the condition of faith. This conception does not proceed from the truth that the children are partakers of the salvation of God but that they may become such in the future.

Let us first attend to the first of these two conceptions. In this connection I would urge all our readers to read carefully and thoughtfully the articles of the Rev. Hoeksema in the *Standard Bearer*, beginning with the *Standard Bearer* of Feb. 15, 1951. We, then, baptize our children, as the Baptism Form states it so beautifully, because they are included in the covenant of grace (not merely the regulation of friendship but God's eternal friendship) which God has established with them eternally; because God has adopted them to be His children and heirs; and because God, the Son, has washed them in His blood and has presented them righteous before God. Mind you, this must not be understood merely as an objective bequest or bestowal, as merely constituting the content of the promise which is equally bestowed upon and extended to all, but as a statement of the fact of salvation. We baptize our children because God loves them eternally and Christ has suffered and died for them. But this is not all. We also baptize them because God promises them (and also of this promise baptism is a Divine seal) that His Spirit will dwell in them and sanctify them until one day they shall be presented before Him as an assembly of the elect in life eternal. In this sense it is certainly true that the sacrament of baptism also looks to the future, assures the child of what God will grant him all the days of his life. But we must notice that this work of the Spirit in our hearts and lives all the days of our life must not be divorced from that of the Father and the Son but as based upon it. The Holy Spirit will work and dwell in us *because* God has loved us and adopted us as His children and heirs eternally and the Son has washed us and presented us righteous before God. This means that the promise of the Spirit is not for all, is not conditional and given to all, but only for those whom the Father has loved eternally and the Son has redeemed by His blood. And this also implies that the paragraph in our Baptism Form which preceded that which specifically refers to

the infants and which speaks of the two parts in the covenant of God must not be viewed as a condition with which we must comply before the Spirit will work and dwell in us, but as the fruit of the work of God which is presented in the preceding paragraph. This lies in the very nature of the case. How can this "second part" of the covenant of God with us be a condition for the "first part" when that first part includes everything? Does not this first part bring us into everlasting glory, concluding with the words that we shall be presented as an assembly of the elect in life eternal? Hence, we are admonished unto a new and godly walk, to put off the old man and to put on the new man, because that is the fruit of the grace of God and therefore our calling as saved moral-rational beings. To this must be added that the work of regeneration generally occurs in the lives of the children of God during their infancy, be it before or during or immediately after the administration of the sacrament of baptism. This conception of infant baptism is the reformed position (see also on this point the articles of Rev. Hoeksema). And this has surely been our position as Protestant Reformed Churches. Hence, even as an American soldier must wear the American uniform because he *is* an American soldier, so also our children must receive the sacrament of baptism as their ensign and banner (according to our reformed confessions) because they are children of the living God, eternally, through the redeeming blood of the cross, and spiritually through the regenerating Spirit of Christ.

Over against this conception of infant baptism stands the Heynsian conception of the sacrament with which also the Liberated conception of the sacrament fundamentally agrees. It does *not* proceed from the truth of immediate regeneration and that the children are sanctified in Christ in the spiritual sense of the word. It does *not* proceed from what the children are but from what they may become. It places the significance of the sacrament in the future. We need not enter into a detailed discussion at this time of this Heynsian conception of the sacrament against which our people must ever remain on the alert. Heynsianism identifies the covenant with the promise and conceives of the promise as an offer of salvation. It declares that the sacrament seals and confirms this promise of God to every child that is baptized. It informs us that the Spirit will dwell and work in the children if they believe and accept the offered salvation. It maintains, of course, that regeneration is mediate. This, we understand, involves them in a difficulty as far as the children are concerned who die in their infancy. They cannot accept the gospel and cannot consciously exercise the activity of faith. They, therefore, attempt to extricate themselves out of the difficulty by asserting that these children who die in

their infancy constitute an exception in the Divine arrangement and dispensation of salvation. They are saved in a different way than that which normally occurs. The normal way is that the promise is equally bestowed upon all, that baptism seals this general promise, and that they will obtain the promise of the Lord if they believe.

Now we should bear these two widely divergent views of the baptism of our children in mind. Fundamentally, they are the only two possible interpretations of the sacrament. The one proceeds from the truth that baptism rests upon the promise of the Lord as an unconditional and infallible oath of salvation only to the elect. The other assumes that the promise is general and conditional. The latter is Heynsianism and the former is Reformed and has always been Protestant Reformed. Incidentally, we are not discussing, in this correspondence with Rev. Petter, the question relative the baptism of the reprobate children. Never is the sacrament of baptism grace for them, either from the viewpoint of the child or from the viewpoint of the purpose and intention of the Lord. We are now discussing the positive significance of the sacrament. This must be preached. To be sure, the reprobate children will reveal the wickedness of their heart. And this hardening is surely the Divine purpose of the administration of the sacrament upon him.

*Rev. Petter's Article in Concordia of Feb. 1.*

I ask our readers to look up the Concordia's of Feb. 1, March 15 and 29, and follow these articles with me as I call attention to them.

Particularly three elements in Rev. Petter's article of Feb. 1 struck my attention. The reader will notice that the brother is referring to that which the Declaration asserts with respect to the last question and answer of Lord's Day 27 of our Heidelberg Catechism. The Declaration asserts that the Catechism here emphasizes the truth that the promise is unconditional and only for the elect. This brings me to the first element of the brother's article to which I would call attention. Notice please what Rev. Petter writes here and I quote: "The defect in this argument is that it does not distinguish between infants that die in infancy and infants that grow up. Yet this distinction must be carefully observed. . . . And so it is also with the question of little children and conditions. The Liberated freely admit that dying infants are saved without meeting conditions. For the Liberated acknowledge that little children do not fall under the general rules. They are not confronted with the command and threat of the Gospel. We do not know what exists or takes place in infants, spiritually. It is sometimes suggested that little children are baptized on the supposition that they have a "potential faith" or "inclination to faith". (as according to Ursinus—H.V.). We

cannot say with any certainty that they have such faith. It is possible that the consciousness of salvation and of life is first given to dying infants when, redeemed by the Cross, they enter into the broad daylight of the heavenly world of fellowship with God. But for the adult the consciousness and enjoyment comes in *this* world, in this *altogether* different way. It comes gradually or by steps. It comes by the pedagogy of sanctification, and that in the confrontations of tensions and discipline that also involve the stimulations and provocations of conditionality. The very fact that infant and adult experience the entrance into salvation in two different ways, shows that God has two wholly different purposes with these differing ways and processes. The one awakes in glory. The other goes through a trying, training, ethical crisis of command, with promise and threat."—end of quote. Rev. Petter states here that we must distinguish between infants that die in their infancy and infants that grow up, that this distinction must be carefully observed, that the Lord has two *wholly* different purposes with these differing ways and processes. In this connection I would certainly like to ask the following questions. Does it necessarily follow from the fact that infants do not exercise conscious faith as do adults, that the Lord therefore saves them in two *wholly* different ways? Are not both saved through regeneration and faith in Christ? Does Rev. Petter have any right, in Lord's Day 27, to distinguish as he does between children that die in their infancy and those that grow up? Of course, we understand that if the promise of God is already realized in His people during their infancy then it must necessarily be unconditional. Now it may be possible that I misunderstand the brother, although I think it would be more correct to say that I do not understand him. But it seems to me that Rev. Petter makes distinction here between infants that die in their infancy and those that grow up, and that God pursues two wholly different ways of salvation with respect to them. This receives added significance when, in his article in Concordia of March 29, the brother expresses doubt as to the working of regeneration in the life of an infant. Is he here advocating the Heynsian conception as outlined above relative the distinction between infants that die in their infancy and those that grow up?

The second element in Rev. Petter's article to which I would call attention is contained in the same passage which I quoted in the preceding paragraph. Notice once more the paragraph which begins with the words: "And so it is also with the question of little children and conditions," and the following paragraph, ending with the words: "provocations of conditionality." Is the brother advocating here that little children do not have potential faith or the inclination to faith? I will have more to say about this in connection with the

brother's article in *Concordia* of March 29. But, if this is the meaning of the brother, is he then not deviating from our Protestant Reformed position (which is also the Reformed position) that regeneration generally occurs in the people of God during their infancy? He writes that it is difficult for him to conceive of this. If this be true, then it follows, does it not, that he does not teach or preach it.

The third element in Rev. Petter's article is expressed in the following, and once more I quote: "And it is exactly to this conscious faith-process that also infant baptism looks. It does not seal a righteousness that the infant *has*. Baptism cannot be separated from *faith*. It looks forward to the time that the child grows to self-consciousness and faith and sees its own baptism as the seal of its own faith-righteousness. And in this conscious faith-justification, which baptism looks to and seals, the tensions of promise and threat and conditionality also enter in."—end of quote. Here we read that "it is exactly to this conscious faith-process that also infant baptism looks." And: "It does not seal a righteousness that the infant *has*." And again: "It looks forward to the time that the child grows to self-consciousness and faith and sees its own baptism as the seal of its own faith-righteousness." Here Rev. Petter, it seems to me, advocates the theory that infant baptism does not seal something which the child has but which it may receive. Had the brother written that infant baptism seals the righteousness which the child has, seals the fact that God loves it and that Christ dies for it, and that therefore, because of this seal of God, the Holy Spirit will dwell and work in it and lead it in the conscious way or process of sanctification, etc., I would not question him. But now we are told that infant baptism does not seal a righteousness which the infant *has* (the emphasis upon "has" is of the Rev. Petter), merely looks forward to the future and to this conscious faith-process. Is all this Protestant Reformed language?

#### *Hence My Questions.*

Our readers will now understand why I submitted to Rev. Petter my questions relative the significance of the baptism of our children. The issue is of the utmost significance to me. And it should be to all our readers.

Indeed, I realize that the sacrament of baptism also points to the future. This none among us has ever denied. And this may possibly have caused the vagueness of my questions in the Feb. 1 issue of *Concordia*. But it is surely strange language among us that the distinction between infants that die in their infancy and those that grow up must be carefully observed, that the Lord has two wholly different purposes with these children, that a child may not have potential faith, and that infant baptism does not seal a right-

eousness which the child possesses. It is for this reason that I asked the question whether we baptize our children upon the basis of a conditional promise to be fulfilled in the future on the condition of faith, or whether we baptize them upon the basis of an unconditional promise which has been fulfilled for them, eternally and upon the cross, which is fulfilled in them exactly as infants, and therefore will be realized in them even forever. It is either-or, one or the other. In the one we hear the language of our Protestant Reformed Churches; in the other we listen to the language of Heynsianism and Liberated theology.

#### *Rev. Petter's Answer.*

First, we can be brief as far as Rev. Petter's answer in *Concordia* of March 15 is concerned. My questions did not refer to the relation between the sacrament of baptism and the consciousness of the believing church. My questions concerned the baptism of *our children*. I have, of course, no objection whatever to the fact that the "awful language of baptism is that we only have salvation through the blood of Christ, and as surely as we embrace this blood of Christ by faith, so surely we are safe in Him."—see page 3 of March 15 *Concordia*. This we have never failed to preach. Neither do I object to what Rev. Petter calls the "faith-unto-righteousness linkage." Hence, we all subscribe to the texts which are quoted in the March 15 answer of Rev. Petter. Justification and faith are inseparably connected. The one without the other is impossible. I do not hesitate to say that God, AS GOD, cannot give us the one without the other. This is simply due to the relative significance of righteousness and faith. Our justification is wholly a work of God. This is taught throughout Scripture and particularly in the epistle to the Romans. Hence, God gives us the assurance of this righteousness only through faith because faith is the bond uniting us with Christ, and through faith all we do is receive. This receives also the emphasis in the passages which are quoted by the Rev. Petter. Throughout Scripture faith stands opposed to works, to that which is of man, and emphasizes the Divine aspect of salvation. And inasmuch as baptism speaks of our hopelessness of sin, and of the blood of Christ, it therefore emphasizes the truth that our cleansing from sin is possible only through the blood of Christ, and that therefore we can receive this only from Christ and by faith. But, I reiterate: there is certainly no problem here. I must know why we baptize our infants.

Secondly, I wish to direct our readers to various elements in Rev. Petter's reply in *Concordia* of March 29. On the one hand, we must bear in mind what the brother wrote in his Feb. 1 article which occasioned my questions. These matters, to which I have already called attention, certainly need elucidation. Secondly,

in his article of March 29 he speaks of the church and her elect children, that they have "these things" in Christ, but that they are applied progressively through the whole span of life until we are perfected in glory. We also read that God will give to them (the church with her elect children) progressively these very things, this conscious participation of all that baptism implies. Here the Rev. Petter emphasizes the doctrine of election, tells us that God will give all that baptism implies unto them. I completely fail to see how this can be harmonized with "conditional promise." This is Protestant Reformed language, and when the brother writes these things we immediately understand him and rejoice. And in the third complete paragraph of the middle column, page 4, mention is made of Question 74 of our Heidelberg Catechism, and I understand that this must also apply only to the elect children who are received unto grace in Christ and adopted as children and heirs of God. Hence, to them only is the promise made. This must certainly imply that the promise is particular and therefore wholly unconditional. And this, I would say, is the language of our Declaration of Principles. Thirdly, Rev. Petter certainly maintains in his article that the sacrament of baptism emphasizes, not what the infant possesses, but what it shall receive in the future. Question 74 of the Heidelberg Catechism is explained in such a way as to refer to the future of the child (column 1, page 4). Art. 34 of the Netherlands Confession is interpreted the same way. This also applies (see column 1 on page 4) to the so-called second part of the covenant according to our Baptism Form. And finally Rev. Petter declares that, although he would not deny the possibility of regeneration in the infant, it is hard for him to conceive what we are saying and meaning when we ascribe regeneration to an infant. And in the following paragraph we are told that we cannot say that the faith and hope and love of which the sacrament speaks is already exercised and experienced by them. And all this is set forth by Rev. Petter as referring to the pedagogic arrangement which the Lord has provided for His people, as therefore referring to the future life of the child after he has come to years of discretion. May I therefore not conclude that the brother wishes to maintain that, although the sacrament of baptism does not speak of that which the infant possesses legally, it does not speak of the promise as already realized in him? In this same connection I would like to ask brother Petter the question whether, when he writes that the infant possesses this legally, he would also add that the infant possesses it objectively in Christ. To possess life legally in Christ signifies that Christ has merited it for us; to possess that life objectively in Christ means that that life which He has merited for us now also exists in Christ; our life is now in Christ and not only merited for us. It is also this

latter thought which makes the presentation of a general promise absurd. Fourthly, (and I do not write this because I wish to find fault) why did not Rev. Petter assure our readers that the sacrament of baptism, also as far as his conception is concerned, speaks of the eternal covenant, love of God and of Christ's particular atonement? It is a fact, is it not, that I specified this very thing in the questions which I submitted to him. Of course, if the sacrament of baptism emphasizes Divine election, particular atonement, and the sure work of the Holy Spirit as based upon this eternal love of God and the particular atonement of Christ, then the entire Liberated conception of a general promise necessarily collapses. Mind you, I do not say that Rev. Petter questions these fundamental truths. But I completely fail to understand why they do not receive their proper emphasis when the sacrament of baptism is treated. And, in the fifth place, Rev. Petter, it seems to me, offers us a rather confusing conclusion in his last paragraph. There we read, e.g., of the same promises that are infallibly sure to all the heirs of the promise. These heirs of the promise are the elect, are they not? Hence, this is the language of the Declaration of Principles. But, in this same paragraph, we are also reminded of a Divine pedagogy which includes conditional relations and conditional promises. I do not believe that the Divine pedagogy includes conditional promises. I can conceive of conditional relations, although, as I have stated before, I heartily endorse the abandoning of the term "condition". Conditional relations, then, are relations which are necessarily and inseparably connected. Regeneration and conversion, for example, are thus related—our conversion depends upon regeneration. But I maintain that the term: conditional promises, is arminian. Conditional promises are promises which are dependent upon something for their fulfillment. If the term does not mean this then what does it mean? The promises of God are unconditional for the simple reason that they include everything. Faith is part of the promise. And it is absurd to say that a promise is conditioned by something within itself. Besides, if I recall correctly (and I stand to be corrected), it seems to be that the Rev. Petter himself declared during this controversy in Concordia that he believed the promise of God to be unconditional. Pedagogy signifies that God leads His people progressively on the way of salvation, instructing them concerning their salvation. This Divine instruction does not include conditional promises.

Therefore, Rev. Petter, my problem remains, my problem as occasioned by your articles. I am sure that it also remains in the minds of our people. I am concerned only about our Protestant Reformed distinctiveness. And therefore I repeat my question: Does the baptism of our children rest upon a conditional pro-



mise the fulfillment whereof lies wholly in the future life of the infant, or do we baptize them because the promise has been fulfilled for them (eternally and upon the cross), is fulfilled in them as infants, and therefore will be completed in them in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ? Do we baptize them upon the basis of future possession or upon the basis of what they now possess and therefore shall receive in its eternal fulfillment?

H. Veldman.



## Praying To The Father

Let us turn to the 6th chapter of Matthew's gospel, the 5th and the 6th verses and read here the word of God as follows: "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

Christ instructs His disciples to pray behind the closed door. This cannot mean that here he lays His people under a law requiring that always they refrain from praying in public. We know from the Scriptures that God wills also the public prayer. The duties that belong to the office of pastors and teachers include the task of blessing the flock of God in the name of Christ and of voicing its common needs before the Throne on the meetings for public worship. Isn't it true that public prayer is with God's believing people an institution for all their assemblies—namely, prayer, in which the one saint at the request of the several voices audibly before the face of God the felt needs, the sanctified thoughts and desires of the several; and thus a prayer in which the several join the one and in which all are joined together by a common faith in Christ. It is not true therefore that what Christ means to be telling us is that the only prayers to which the Father inclines his ear are such as His people offer Him in private. Besides, such prayers can be just as abominable as the prayers of the hypocrites of our Scripture passage, though they be made behind closed doors. It all depends on to whom they pray, to the Father or to an idol.

Yet, certainly, the believer has need also of praying behind the closed door. For as member of the redeemed family of God, the believer, like the hand, the foot, the eye, and the ear of the human body, is distinguishable by an individuality—individual gift and function—that is his own. And in this life, still lying as he does in the midst of death, the believer is dis-

tinguished, too, by individual sins, miseries, weaknesses, troubles, trials, and temptations. Each believer therefore has his own need of Christ's God and of His love and grace, which can just as well be made known to the Father behind the closed door. The believer also has need of being with his Heavenly Father alone. There are always things that he wants to tell the Father, that are meant only for the Father's ears.

There is, then, the public and the private prayer. And the Father inclines His ear unto both, to the latter as well as to the former. For He is Father to His people collectively but just as certain is He Father to each of His people individually. He dwells also with the lone broken of heart, the lone sheep, giving Himself to him wholly in Christ, instructing, reproofing, and comforting him by Christ's Spirit and word, as he has need.

Christ reveals that the hypocrites of His day were praying much in public. They were praying not as pastors, voicing on meetings for public worship the common needs of the flock of God. Nor were they praying as leaders of societies addressed to the task of searching the Scriptures and assembled in the synagogues for that purpose. But as lone petitioners they prayed. Standing solitary in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, they prayed, at least apparently so, judging from their posture. Their praying in these places was certainly vile. Christ, who knew men's hearts, reveals the reason.

They loved to pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets to be seen of men. That was their sin. Not, to be sure, that it is as such wrong to want men to see us worshipping God. It is our calling, isn't it, to let our light shine that men may see our good works. We must penetrate to the heart of the matter. These hypocrites wanted men to see them praying because they were glorying in themselves and not in God and because, accordingly, they wanted to be glorified of men. And so, to achieve their aim, they prayed in the corner of the streets meaning to produce the impression that they were men of surpassing piety with a monopoly on godliness. And some of them, or even perhaps several of their number, so Christ elsewhere reveals, had an additional motive. They lusted after the property of widows and orphans; and to throw these defenseless members of their commonwealth off guard, they cloaked themselves in the forms of religious worship; they made long prayers in the synagogues and in the corners of their streets, in order that, however full of dead men's bones they might be, they might nevertheless appear beautiful to men, particularly to the widows and orphans whose houses they were planning to plunder.

Need we wonder at the teaching of the Scriptures elsewhere that the prayers of the ungodly are an abomination in the sight of God? However, in pro-

nouncing with Christ sentence of condemnation on these hypocrites, it is well to consider that, wherein we judge them, we condemn ourselves. For apart from Christ's grace, we are no better. This is evident, isn't it? Take notice once more of the basic trouble with these people. They gloried in themselves and wanted to be glorified of men. It means that they were strutting the earth as prostrated in their hearts before the shrine of their own ego instead of paying homage to the Father. And their robbing the houses of the widows under the pretence of making long prayers—what does it indicate but that they had their affection set on the things on this earth, which they were determined to acquire by means fair or fowl. Such were the basic troubles with these men.

And are these not also the basic and native troubles with every one of us, namely, our carnal pride, our self-worship, our praying to gods that are no gods, our seeking the things on earth with all our heart and power, each of us for himself. The horrible hypocrisy of the hypocrites of Christ's day only reveals to what fearful lengths we sinful men are capable of going in our effort to acquire the things which in our depravity we lust. Of course, you will realize that I speak of ourselves as we are by nature apart from the redeeming grace of Christ.

To His disciples Christ says: "Be not as the hypocrites are; but thou, my people, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father, which is in secret; and thy Father, who seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

God's believing people have need of this admonition, certainly. For though raised by Christ's Spirit from their spiritual death, there is still so much of the hypocrite and idolater left in every one of them. It was as a Christian and as a spiritual Christian man that the apostle Paul complained: "For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do . . . O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." But as filled with the wisdom of which the fear of the Lord is the beginning, the true disciples discern the wisdom of Christ's admonition and by His grace do the thing that He requires of them.

Let us concentrate on this positive side of Christ's instruction. "And your Father who is in secret . . ." The Father dwells in secret. There is a secret abode of the Father—the triune Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, unto which no man can approach. It is the light, the total of His glories, where He dwells solitary. But there is also a secret place of the Father accessible to the believers through Christ's blood. It is the sanctuary above, the house of God over which Christ has been set a great high-priest. Here the believers, the contrite of heart, find the Father on the wings of prayer. To be truly praying is to be with

Christ and His Father in His sanctuary, pouring out our hearts to Him. If a man is only in the sanctuary where Christ is at the right hand of God all is well with that man, no matter where he may be praying, behind the closed door, or in the streets, or on the farm, or in the office or factory, or on the battle-field amid the din and roar of war with death stalking all about him,—if he is in the sanctuary, it is well with His soul. For the eye of God is on that man in love. Though he may be blown to bits, nothing can harm him really; for he dwells in the shadow of God's wings.

But in order to be with God through prayer in His sanctuary, in order to be drawn into His presence by His love and Spirit, it is not necessary that we pray in the corner of the streets. True, if we want to be seen of men, we must make an open show of our private prayers. For men see only what meets the outward, physical eye. Men cannot see in secret. Their eye does not penetrate the walls and doors of our closet. But it is different with the Father's eye. His eye is all-seeing. There is no place where His eye does not penetrate. It pierces, does the eye of the Father, even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the hearts of men. If so, why should the followers of Christ be praying in public, if there be no cause? Let them in this case by all means retreat to their closet and shutting the door, let them pray not to an idol but to their Father. And their Father which seeth in secret shall reward them openly.

For they pray to the Father. They seek after the Father, after their heavenly Father of the heavenly Christ. Hence, they seek not the things on earth, but the things above where Christ is at the right hand of God. And therefore the Father will surely reward them. For they pray to their Father; they seek their Father and their Father's glory, and their Father's heavenly things. Such petitions are always heard, rewarded, without exception. In the way of their prayers, the Father's very own work in them, such worshippers receive the things they seek—they receive the Reward—the reward of grace. And what a reward it is? It includes the Father Himself. He is the Reward of His people, exceeding great. And therefore the reward includes also grace and always more grace for the good fight of faith which Christ's disciples, His redeemed people, must fight and do fight, toward the victory that is theirs in Christ. It includes, does this reward, the new earth, where the tabernacle of God, of the Father, will be with men, the men of the Father's good pleasure, whom He will clothe at the appearing of Christ with the perfection and glory of the heavenly because in this present dispensation of the world they prayed to the Father. So will He re-

ward them openly before the eyes of angels, men, and devils, so that all will see that in this life they prayed to the Father. For they who honor the Father, the Father will honor.

And consider in comparison herewith the reward of the hypocrites. The reward that they have. It is the vain praises of men and the property of widows, and rightly called the curse reward of the wicked, the things on earth that they sought. For the Scriptures predict that the elements will melt, that all the works of men will burn, and that the hypocrites who persistently sought the things on earth and loved the world and its lusts and pride will be driven into everlasting darkness by the curse of the Father and of Christ. That, too, must be included in the reward of the hypocrites because they prayed to idols and not to the Father. It is this wages of sin, which is death.

What a reward!

G. M. Ophoff.



## Contribution

### THE NEED OF THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

Much has been written pro and con about the proposed Declaration of Principles. The more I read the more I am convinced that our Prot. Ref. Churches need this or a similar Declaration of Principles. And in the light of our present situation I am convinced that we should have had it when we were organized as Protestant Reformed Churches.

It is my conviction that the proposed Declaration of Principles declares only our distinctive Reformed view with respect to the preaching of the Gospel and the promise in the Covenant, and that there is no well-meant offer of salvation or a promise for all in the Covenant, but, on the contrary, we have always taught that both the contents of the preaching and the promise are particular and unconditional unto salvation and for the elect only, based on the Three Forms of Unity; and thus differing from all other churches also holding to the same Three Forms of Unity.

But never have we as churches officially adopted these truths; we held these truths only by common consent.

Since the above are facts why the strong opposition to their adoption now? Do we as churches still hold that this Prot. Ref. truth is God's truth? And that this is the reason, *and only this*, why we have our existence as Prot. Ref. Churches? Do we as churches still believe as we did in 1924 that God raised up the Revs. Hoeksema and Ophoff to be the leaders of our church denomination to show us the error of the doc-

trine contained in the Three Points of the Chr. Ref. Church of their Synod of 1924?

I hear many voices from far and near from those who strongly oppose and *protest* against adoption of the Declaration of Principles. Some of these voices speak thus: "Why, of course, we believe the Declaration of Principles! Who would think of denying them or any part of same?" And then they say furthermore "But we have ample material that declare our principles, written especially by Rev. Hoeksema!"

I quote from Second Prot. Ref. Church's overture as follows: "We have ample material in the form of brochures which set forth our views as based on the Three Forms of Unity. These teach what we preach and that preaching is *binding*."

"This does not mean that we may not and do not have a distinctive *interpretation* of these *Confessions*." (Rev. Hofman, Standard Bearer, March 1, p. 262).

This is also what Bellflower's minister and consistory must have had in mind when they protested the adoption of the Declaration of Principles; and also Classis West who made this protest their own. I quote from this protest as follows: "Point 1. If they (the Mission Committee—N.Y.) did come with such a request they should have been referred to the same basis that we have used previously and the basis which is still the basis for the unity of all our churches."

Again I quote from the same protest: "Part 2. "But (Synod—N.Y.) should have very clearly pointed the Committee to its task to proclaim *our truth* unequivocally."

Again I quote: "In order to keep *our positive teaching* before the mind of the hearers."

I ask: What do the brethren mean, including Bellflower's consistory and Classis West? What do they refer to when they use such terms as *distinctive interpretation* of our confessions, *the basis*, *our truth*, *positive teachings*?

Do they mean perhaps what the Consistory of the Second Church states? "We have ample material in the form of brochures which set forth our views as based on the Three Forms of Unity"? Then my question is, when and where have the doctrines and declarations in these brochures written principally by the Rev. Hoeksema ever been adopted by our churches as our own? I know of course that we have by common consent held that Rev. Hoeksema's positive teachings of the "promise" in the Covenant and the preaching of the Gospel have been generally accepted as our distinctive interpretation of the Confessions, but are they binding on anybody? Had the churches declared them to be such, there never could have or would have been the hubbub in our churches about conditions that exists today.

Furthermore, not everyone in our churches holds

these as being our distinctive interpretations of the Confessions. Even whole consistories do not hold these as such. I quote from Holland's Consistory's overture; under ground 1; why the Declaration of Principles should *not* be adopted. "Certain statements contained therein "the promise of the Gospel is not conditional" and "we repudiate that the Promise of the Covenant is conditional" contain matters which are still not settled issues in our circles and therefore should not be included in an official declaration at this time." So it is plain that Holland's minister and consistory are not sure what is our distinctive interpretation of our Confession, and what is more does not want any at this time.

Also Rev. Petter who has written much on conditions does not believe them to be our distinctive interpretation of the confessions, writing on the Declaration of Principles which declare nothing more than what we have held all these years as our distinctive interpretation of the Confessions. He writes: "Arbitrary and onesided private opinions of certain persons," and again: "these same brethren can just brush aside the clearcut definition of the promise in the Canons, *fabricate one of their own*, and that anyone in our church must submit to that arbitrary definition." (Concordia—Jan. 18).

These same brethren referred to in the above quotation can be none other than our leaders whom we confess that God has raised up to show us the errors of the Chr. Ref. Church, for it was these very leaders, the Revs. Hoeksema and Ophoff who were added to the committee of pre-advice at Synod to help compose the Declaration of Principles. So it should be plain that all the Revs. Hoeksema and Ophoff have written on our distinctive covenant view can be called just *arbitrary, onesided, private opinion, fabrications*, etc., without even running in danger of being in violation of what we have always believed to be *our* doctrines.

Furthermore, even our own Mission Board composed of five ministers and three elders, were not sure what was binding in our churches. It may be taken for granted that these five ministers and three elders are as well acquainted with *our truth, our basis, our distinctive interpretation* of the Confessions as the ministers and elders in Classis West. Yet they come to Synod with the request as to what is binding in our churches. I refer you to a very weak and evasive answer the committee gave to a Holland immigrant as to what was binding with respect to our *conception* of Covenant and Baptism.

The committee answered in part as follows: "We do not feel that it lies within our jurisdiction to give answer to this question." (p. 115, Acts Of Synod, 1950). In other words, the Committee was not nearly as sure as Bellflower's Consistory and Classis West is, as to what is binding in our churches, what *our basis is,*

*our truth, our positive teaching.* Could the Committee have sent this man a copy of "De Geloovigen en Hun Zaad" and told him: This is what we believe, and this is *our basis* for our Covenant view? Is that what Bellflower means that the Committee should use as a particular *Basis*? If that is not the correct interpretation of Bellflower's protest then they owe it to all the churches to tell us what it is. I hold with the Committee that they were correct in requesting Synod for having something definite and uniform to present to these groups. They felt they had none to offer as we as Churches never have declared officially what are our distinctive interpretations of our Confessions, in respect to Common Grace, the preaching of the Gospel, the promise of the Covenant, etc.

Therefore I conclude that Synod was correct in honoring the request of said committee and to formulate a declaration of principles as to what our distinctive truth is, what our basis is, what our interpretation of the Covenant is, and our Confessions are, and submit them to the church for their approbation and final adoption.

It should be plain to everyone that we need a declaration of principles, as I have shown, there is not complete agreement in our churches what those principles are. With the possible exception of a few modifications here or there the Declaration of Principles as submitted by Synod of 1950 should be adopted, for it declares no other truth than our leaders have ever declared and we with them. Furthermore, unless we adopt it we cannot even ask the well-known two questions, also proposed by Holland's Consistory, namely, 1. Do you further agree to be further instructed in the Prot. Ref. truth? 2. Do you promise not to agitate against it? For I repeat, unless we adopt it we have no *Prot. Ref. truth*.

In closing, I finish my article with the same two questions I asked at the beginning. 1. Do we still believe that the Prot. Ref. cause is God's cause? 2. Do we still believe as we did in 1924 that God raised up the Revs. Hoeksema and Ophoff to be the leaders of that cause? It should be well-known to us that the same leaders composed the Declaration of Principles at Synod, as they were added to the committee of pre-advice to draw up a form and have fought for its adoption ever since. Have we lost faith in these men? Have they changed as some say they have?

It is my conviction that the Declaration of Principles should not only be adopted with majority vote, or even a two third's majority vote, but unanimously and enthusiastically, and it should be binding on all, not just a few members that desire to join us. If that is done then again we can work together in harmony, in love for a cause that has been dear to our hearts as we have worked and loved for the past 25 years or more. If on the other hand the Declaration of Prin-

ciples should be rejected, then I agree with the Rev. Hoeksema in his closing editorial that he sees very little hope for the future of our churches. Only I go one step further and state right here and now: "We have come to the end of the road!" Why should we continue? We might much better confess: we were wrong in 1924, and disband, and each of us join a church to his liking, and as best suits him. Why should we ask our people to further sacrifice in maintaining several small insignificant congregations? There is no further incentive or object.

Wishing the Synod of 1951 the indispensable guidance of the Holy Ghost, I am your brother in Christ.

Nick Yonker  
36 Catherine Avenue  
Muskegon, Michigan.




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## FROM HOLY WRIT

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### Exposition of Romans 6:1-14

It is the intention of the writer of these lines to write a short series of expository articles on the passage written by Paul in Romans 6:1-14.

Since this passage is quite lengthy, and since we all have our Bibles near at hand, I shall not write it out in full. I shall merely write the beginning of it and also the concluding words of it. It here follows: "*What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died unto sin, how shall we any longer live therein? . . . Even so also reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof, neither present your members unto sin as instruments unto unrighteousness but present yourselves unto God as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace.*"

In this article we intend to make a beginning of our study of this passage from Holy Writ. Our purpose is not simply to give exegesis, detailed exegesis of each word, phrase and clause in this passage, but we would give an exposition of the passage as a whole; we would thus treat the main thrust of the Apostle's argument here. In this way we will probably see more of the wood and a little less of the individual trees. Wherever we deem it necessary we shall treat a passage a little more in detail.

Let us then proceed in our discussion of the Scripture passage in question.

It is, then, important to notice, that the Apostle is refuting a certain malicious, erroneous conclusion that someone might wish to draw from the great gospel-truth, namely, that "where sin abounded grace did much more abound, that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 5:20-21.

Paul, we should notice, is here refuting the erroneous and the malicious conclusion. In doing so, the truth stands, that God added the law given at Sinai to the Promise given to Abraham some four hundred and thirty years sooner, in order that the actual transgressions might abound. This fact concerning the intents and purposes of the law-giving in distinction from the giving of the Promise to Abraham is not merely taught here in this passage but it is the classic truth taught by the Apostle in connection with all that he says of our justification by faith alone. A hasty reading of such a passage as Romans 4:15, 7:81 Gal. 3:19 will certainly convince the reader that this statement of Paul concerning grace abounding more where sin was more abundant touches the very heart of the gospel. However, the evil conclusion that we should then *remain* in sin that grace may abound, does not follow.

So much is the contrary true, that the Apostle literally shouts: God forbid! It is utterly monstrous and horrible to place such a construction on the abundance of grace in relationship to the multiplicity of sin. No, that conclusion is as far from the truth as it is in Jesus, as the west is distant from the east. Paul's heart and mind and soul cast this inference from them in utter disapproval. Nothing could be farther from the truth than that conclusion. It is impossible that they who are ingrafted into Christ in a true faith should not bring forth fruits of thankfulness! Water always makes one wet, and fire always is hot and burns, a stone always falls by the force of gravity, and the believing and redeemed heart love righteousness and hate iniquity. A fish can only live in the water, and a bird only feels to home on the wing and nestled in the branches; thus also the man with living faith, who is not under law but under grace, can only feel to home in the keeping of the commandments, which has a great reward!

Paul does not first of all try to show the logical falacy of this reasoning, but pointing out that there are certain elements in the major and minor premises of this reasoning that do not then come to their own, and that, therefore, the conclusion is logically unwarranted. Ah no, this is the outcry of life! Just as the real mother comes to manifestation before Solomon when he commands the baby to be cut in half, and as



the real believer comes to manifestation when Jesus suggests to His disciples that they too leave Him with the multitude, so here the real deep impulse of the redeemed and believing heart reveals itself in this: God forbid! The inference stings the apostle to the quick! It is a heartthrob from a believing heart that pulsates with the life of Christ that we hear in this: God forbid!

Surely there must be more to this "God forbid!" than the mere subjective attitude of a man, be it that of a good man! It surely is not thus to be conceived of. This outcry is true in respect to the apostle, but that this does not yet imply that we here are confronted with the norm, the rule of all faith and conduct. Overagainst this we can place the testimony of the church of Christ throughout the ages as set down in Confessional statement. But what is more is, that the Apostle here shows that the very genius of the Word of the Cross demands this: God forbid!

It is not simply the subjective feeling of Paul; it is more than an attitude that we should "respect", but which need not necessarily be shared by all who believe with the heart unto righteousness and confess with their mouths unto salvation. Indeed it is far more. It is based upon and is the outgrowth of the power of the death and resurrection in our life. It is simply living obedience of faith in response to the Word of the Cross!

This "God forbid" is bedded in the Gibraltar Rock of the finished work of Christ Jesus in His vicarious death and in His triumphant resurrection out of the dead! Anyone believing in Christ shares in that work, and that work was a *dying unto sin* and a *living unto God*! Whoever wills not to see this simply kicks against the pricks of the reality of the Cross as this reality confronts him in the preaching of the Word of the Cross.

Well may we, therefore, write this "God forbid" on the doorposts of our house, keeping it ever before our eyes as a lamp unto our easily erring feet and as a beacon light upon our path as this shines more and more unto the perfect day! This "God forbid" is the truth and all the rest is the lie. It is the Gibraltar Rock; it is God's righteousness as the only and sure basis of all of our salvation.

This Paul shows in the verses 2-14 of this chapter.

The believer *has died* unto sin! That is the keynote in this masterful preaching of the Word of the Cross. That the believer has died unto sin is simply the truth of the Word of the Cross. The believer has died unto sin not merely in the subjective attitude, but he has died unto sin *legally*; *all righteousness has been fulfilled*! The handwriting that was against us has been nailed to the Cross. We have been redeemed. The ransom price has been paid. The prisoner can go

free from the awful prison of guilt and death. Legally we have died unto sin.

Legally you ask? Was the Cross a legal matter in the court of God's great majesty of justice and equity? Indeed it was. And by this payment of the ransom price by the fulfillment of all the just demands of the law we died unto sin! Legally we are no longer held under the law of sin and death. In God's court the penalty of death for sin, and of sin unto death has been taken away, it has been disannulled and made void by the death and resurrection of Jesus. That is what it means that we have legally died unto sin!

We who have thus *legally died* unto sin, shall we still live as those who are doomed to servitude? All the past connection with sin and guilt has been forever removed from us in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; shall we now do and act and conduct ourselves as though this relationship of being doomed to sin is still in effect? Heaven and earth *may* and shall pass away, but the sure foundation of the Church built on the Chief Corner-Stone stands. Christ has paid our debt by descending into the depths of hell; all the angels, who had stooped down to behold it, behold; the powers of darkness were here stripped of all their usurping power, the earth trembled, the veil in the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom. And Jehovah has redeemed us, His people, from all sin. He is our Goel, greater than a Boaz. Shall we then continue as those in the prisonhouse of death in this acceptable year of the Lord? To ask this question is to answer it: God forbid!

Legally we are incorporated by faith into Christ by the activity of the Holy Spirit signified and sealed in baptism. By faith in Christ we realize that the prison-gates have swung open wide to us. This is not a jail-break. It is to be led forth through the prison-gates in royal estate by Him who has taken captivity captive. This is the experience of faith. It is to share in the death of Christ as the payment for sin and in His resurrection as the glorious victory over death. Writes the apostle: "Or know ye not that so many of us as have been baptized into Christ Jesus, have been baptized into His death? Wherefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into His death, in order that even as Christ was raised out of the dead by the glory of the Father, thus also we should walk in the newness of life."

This our walking in newness of life is first of all a walking in the new legal relationship. It is a claiming in faith the perfect righteousness of God in Jesus. No one can walk in newness of life who is still *under law*! He who is under law is still under condemnation and death. He is still under the death-sentence. But he who walks in the "newness of life" walks in the new legal relationship to God of the forgiveness of sins and of the right to life everlasting. And this we do

by faith. Hence, by faith we are ingrafted into Christ's death and resurrection. Actually believing in Christ, which believing is worked in the hearts by the preaching of the Gospel through the Holy Spirit, and strengthened by the use of the Sacraments, we walk in newness of life. Believing unto the forgiveness of sins, repenting by faith unto this forgiveness is walking in newness of life.

Now, forsoothe, who can walk in the repentance unto the forgiveness of sins, really hate sin and abhor self for it and still continue to walk in these sins. Can evil fruit grow on a good tree; can good fruit grow on a bad tree? Can a fountain both bring forth from the same source sweet water and bitter? Thus also no one who has died unto sin in Christ by faith will want to walk in sin that grace may abound. On the contrary, while he tastes and receives of the grace abundant he hates sin. Rejoicing in the overflowing fountain of grace and forgiveness he cannot but flee from sin by faith.

Such is the true faith. It is a being buried with Christ in His death unto sin, and thus it is legally to live unto God. Shall we then remain in sin? God forbid!

Faith thus accounts itself legally dead unto sin, and legally alive unto God. And therefore faith is the only way in which we understand the true nature of the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting. He who truly confesses his sins knows what the injunction means: Go and sin no more!

Geo. G. Lubbers.

#### IN MEMORIAM

On April 7, 1951, it pleased our heavenly Father to take unto Himself, our dear daughter and sister,

**Jeanne**

aged 16 years and 6 months.

Although deeply wounded, we are comforted by the assurance that she went to Jesus her Savior, according to her own testimony and God's promises. She now rejoices in heavenly glory.

Rev. and Mrs. Leonard Vermeer  
Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Stursma  
Leonard Jr.  
Harold Jay  
Frances Faye.

\* \* \* \*

#### IN MEMORIAM

As Consistory of the Prot. Ref. Church of Redlands, Calif., we hereby wish to express our heartfelt sympathy with our pastor, Rev. L. Vermeer, Mrs. Vermeer and children, with the sudden death of their daughter

**Jeanne**

We pray that the Lord may comfort them in their affliction.  
M. Gaastra, Clerk.

#### IN MEMORIAM

The undersigned organizations of the First Prot. Ref. Church of Kalamazoo, Mich., hereby wish to express their deepest sympathy to Mrs. S. Dykstra and family and Mr. and Mrs. Albert Verstelle and family, in the loss of a husband, father, and grandfather,

**Mr. Samuel A. Dykstra—age 53**

whom the Lord called home on April 10, 1951. We pray that the bereaved may be comforted in the knowledge that their dear one lives, and come to the assurance that the Most High doeth all things well.

Men's Society  
Ladies' Aid  
Yokefellows  
Eunice Circle.

\* \* \*

#### IN MEMORIAM

The Priscilla Society extends sincere sympathy to their Bible teacher, Rev. H. De Wolf and to his family in the death of his father

**Mr. G. De Wolf**

May the God of all grace comfort them with His Word and Spirit.

Priscilla Society of the First Prot. Ref. Church  
Mrs. Richard Monsma, Sec'y.

\* \* \* \*

#### Wedding Anniversary

On May 7, 1951, our beloved parents

**Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Faber**

hope to commemorate their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary.

We, their children, are grateful to God for sparing them these many years for each other and for us. Our earnest prayer is that He will continue to bless them in the future as He has in the past.

Their grateful children:

Peter  
Margaret  
Wm. Frederick  
Jeanette  
Oscar Jr.  
Christine.

Open House from 7-10 P.M.  
929 Worden St., S. E.  
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

#### NOTICE!

Young Men desiring to prepare for the ministry of the Word in our Churches, and therefore seeking admittance into our Theological School are requested to appear at the next meeting of the Theological School Committee on the evening of May 18, 1951 at Hudsonville, Mich., at 8 o'clock. Applicants must present a certificate of membership and recommendation from their own consistory and a certificate of health from a reputed physician.

The Theological School Committee,  
Rev. G. Lubbers, Secretary,  
1304 Maude Ave., N. E.  
Grand Rapids 5, Michigan.

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## IN HIS FEAR

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### Church Membership In His Fear

11.

#### WHERE?

The question implied in our title, which we began to discuss in the last issue, namely, "To what church must I belong?" is an important one. It is important and pressing, as we noted last time, first of all, because of the vast multiplication of church denominations which has come into existence since the time of the Reformation especially. In the face of this situation the believer, who confesses one holy, catholic church, must make a decision and maintain a decision as to where he must have his church membership, where his "papers" should be.

Doctrinally, too, the question involved, namely, that of the true or the false church, and the distinguishing marks thereof, together with the implication of these truths, is important. The subject is often one that is misunderstood. On the one hand, it is misunderstood in such a way that we are accused of conceitedly relegating all those who do not belong to the Protestant Reformed denomination to everlasting destruction. This is done not only by some outside of our churches, who use this as a "talking point" against us,—meaning to emphasize how conceitedly narrow and sectarian we are,—but one occasionally comes across that same misunderstanding in our own circles,—and I speak now from personal experience. On the other hand, it is misunderstood in such a way that we Protestant Reformed, who by some are accused in the manner above; are by others accused of not ourselves understanding the Confessions on this point, so that we were told not too long ago: "I believe if there is one important question which you need to study, it is the question: 'What is the church? Where is the true church in America?' This question must become an urgent one among you." Implied in the above quotation is the charge, of course, that we don't know, and have not for the 26 years of our existence known, a proper conception of the church and of the true in distinction from the false church. Implied too is the charge that this question is not urgent among us. And by implication is included the charge that we did not know what we were doing ecclesiastically when we allowed ourselves to be cast out in 1924 and organized anew as the Protestant Reformed Churches.

That the question must *be* urgent among us there can be no doubt. That it *has* been urgent among us in the proper way is also my conviction; so urgent has it been in the proper sense that it was in obedience

to the requirements of our Netherland Confession that we came into existence as Protestant Reformed Churches. And also that this question must *remain* urgent among us in a healthy way cannot be challenged. The moment that we fail to judge ourselves as churches in the light of the distinguishing marks of the true church, at that moment we shall go astray as churches. And the moment that any member cannot and does not give account of his church membership in the light of those marks, at that moment he will certainly go astray.

How the above must be understood of us as Protestant Reformed Churches and as members of those churches *in distinction from all other churches* is another matter. But even now we may be warned against the tendency to blasely go down the list of denominations with the crass and blunt judgment: "This is false, and this is false, and this is false, period. But, this only is true." We may be warned, too, against naively assuming that we exclude anyone and everyone who leaves our churches from the kingdom of heaven. And we may remember from the outset that our calling is not to pass judgment on what someone else does, but that this question must be approached primarily from the viewpoint of the question: "Where must I, personally, individually, join myself and remain joined?"

That question we hope to consider here. The doctrinal and confessional question concerning the true church and its marks must necessarily be considered in this connection. But it is not *as such* the question in this rubric. As a matter of objective doctrine we can leave it to the writer of *Our Doctrine*. And in as far as at present it is the subject of a little controversy, we safely leave the matter to our editor, whom, we trust, will in due time finish what he promised to finish in the *Standard Bearer* of December 15, last.

And from the above point of view, the question often is brought before our attention in various concrete ways. There is always, of course, the probability that you will be forced to answer the question by those from the outside, who often stand amazed that a little group of people has the audacity and the stamina to exist separately as a church. The majority always belongs to the "big" church, and cannot understand the motive of one who doesn't belong to it. There are others, whom you may meet, who will sing the siren song of tolerance to you, and whom you must answer. More concretely still, there is the case of the Christian young man who falls in love with a young woman from another denomination, and who must face the question of church membership in that connection. May he go to her church? How must he answer the question? Should he insist simply that she comes to his church, regardless of anything else? May she accede to that request simply to "keep" her man? What must be the

standard according to which these questions must be answered by people of God? Or equally concretely, the question must be faced by those who wish to move elsewhere to earn their daily bread, or who are tempted by an opportunity to earn just a little more than daily bread. It is even possible to a certain extent—if we maintain that one has a duty not only toward himself as member of the church, but as well toward the congregation to which he belongs—that this question is connected with the matter of transfer from one congregation to another *within* a denomination. I could conceive of a situation in which it would be wrong to transfer to another congregation if it were not strictly *necessary*.

#### *The Tolerance of Undenominationalism.*

With regard to this question, there are many, first of all, who take the stand that the various churches should simply break down their confessional walls of separation, forget their differences, and unite on a very broad platform of a few general principles. There are two trends in this connection, probably to be denoted as the modernist and the fundamentalist trend. The one you see evidenced in the numerous movements toward union of existing denominations in our day. The modern tendency is for churches to unite without settling their differences, either confessional, church political, or historical. They find a basis which is broad and general; one or both groups have to give in a little; the truth must either be compromised, or room must be left for differences of opinion. And presto, two denominations become one giant, and they look around for another church to swallow. What has happened? Doctrinal standards have become no more than dead traditions, and they have no longer a place as the living confession of the truth. Their connection and foundation upon Scripture is no longer seen. And the confessions have long failed to be taken seriously either by the church or its members.

But such an event cannot take place without the consent, either silent or vocal, of the individual member. And what attitude must he take when that so-called tolerance is sweetly preached in our day? May he go along? May *he* go along who concretely faces the question of such a church merger? And may *he* go along with it in his heart and mind, who witnesses such events every day, and who hears and reads such teachings? For you understand that if we go along with such teachings in theory, the day is not far off when we will actually practice them also.

Principally no different, but with a little different approach, is the fundamentalist doctrine of tolerance. You are also acquainted with this movement. They likewise want no confessional barriers. Their slogan is "No creed but Christ" or "No creed but the Bible." They are willing, at the most, to accept as their creed

the non-controversial Apostolic Confession. They insist that the church cannot afford to spend its time on petty doctrinal differences, that the only thing that matters is the blood of Christ, and that all evangelicals should unite to do battle against modernism and work for a revival of the fundamentals of the Christian faith. They often have their origin in a group of malcontents in an existing church or in an independentist movement, which came into existence entirely apart from the instituted church.

Concerning both we may say, first of all, that they deny the very principle of the Reformation in which all protestant churches had their beginning, the right and the calling to *reform*. If the reformers of the sixteenth century had assumed the same attitude, we would all be in the Romish Church to this very day. Once in a while the truth of the above statement becomes concretely evident in those extreme statements of the modernist in which he pleads for cooperation between Catholic, Protestant, and Jew.

In the second place, however, we must remember that this song of tolerance is actually intolerance of the worst sort. It is intolerance of the truth. And the truth is after all the fundamental issue. We are not speaking now of the constitutional religious tolerance granted to us in this democratic country. Surely, in the framework of our constitution up to this day, everyone is free to worship as he sees fit. But the fact is that in these professedly tolerant movements in the church of today there is no tolerance for the clearly and sharply defined truth of Scripture. And the moment you begin to insist in modern circles upon the satisfaction of the blood of Christ, for example, or in fundamentalist circles upon the truth of sovereign, particular grace, you are an outcast. Because the truth is so fastidiously intolerant of any lie, the lie will not for a moment endure the pure truth of the Word of God. And what is true in regard to the two main principles mentioned above is equally true down into the last nook and cranny of the truth.

And by this let us be warned against a false tolerance, a tolerance of the lie.

H. C. Hoeksema.

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Thy protector is the Lord,  
Shade for thee He will afford;  
Neither sun nor moon shall smite,  
God shall guard by day and night.  
He will ever keep thy soul,  
What would harm He will control;  
In the home and by the way  
He will keep thee day by day.

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## PERISCOPE

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### *An Awakening?*

Such, we certainly hope, is the meaning of the recent appearance of two new periodicals in the American Church world. They are "The Reformed Journal" and "Torch and Trumpet".

Both of these are edited and controlled by Christian Reformed leaders and we imagine directed mainly toward the constituency of the Christian Reformed Church in America.

Although from a Protestant Reformed point of view it is already evident, in the few issues of both magazines we have read thus far, that they will stand on a Christian Reformed (that is a "common grace") basis, yet we welcome them if it means that there is going to be an earnest study of the Word of God and the application of that Word to all of life.

We cannot help wondering: Why at this time and why two of them?

Is it a sign of an awakening in the Christian Reformed Churches? We sincerely hope so.

### *Conservation for Pilgrims.*

Under this title there appears a worthwhile piece in the April number of the "Moody Monthly". We quote from it:

"Christians above all others should cultivate the art of profitable conversation. This is true for a number of reasons, but especially because of the worthwhile things of which they have to speak.

". . . Parents especially should develop the habit of turning family conversation toward spiritual matters from time to time as the occasion permits. By so doing they will be fulfilling the spirit of Deuteronomy 6:7: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

"Satan, of course, will endeavor to hinder such conversation with trivial and inconsequential matters. He will also do his best to make us hesitant to speak of spiritual things. The family which is living close to the Lord, however, will not find it too difficult to share precious things discovered in the Word, to discuss the problems of everyday in the light of God's commandments, and to form the habit of thinking together of heavenly matters.

"The rewards of cultivating habits of Christian conversation are great. More and more, the heart of each member of the family will be turned toward the things of God. The world and its allurements, on the other hand, will be thrust farther and farther into the background, while growth in knowledge and grace

will be increased. In this way the family will be strengthened and encouraged for a more fruitful walk as pilgrims and strangers in an ungodly world."

How well we also as Reformed children of God must confess our lack also in this respect. Sometimes it seems to me that the old saw "familiarity breeds contempt" is especially true in our day, especially when we compare the truth which we have received with our joy and gladness in its continual reception.

### *A Rather Striking Viewpoint.*

In an article entitled, "Thank God for Problems" Dr. L. N. Bell in the Southern Presbyterian Journal gives rather an unusual and striking viewpoint of difficulties. We quote from the article:

"One of the most soul-satisfying experiences of the Christian is to be faced with perplexities and uncertainties and to be able to ask God for guidance and help and then to see His work.

"We know of no experience more calculated to bring a spiritual blessing than to stand facing a stone wall, uncertain which way to turn, and then to pray to the One who has *promised* to give wisdom and then see a supernatural thing take place.

". . . This is not a matter of mysticism. It is a question of just plain practical Christianity. For God delights to try and test His own and then to bless them as they exercise their faith in Him.

"God's guidance comes in many ways; we mention a few: He sometimes leads by some passage in His Word; again the Holy Spirit speaks to us while we are on our knees, or while we are doing our routine work; it may be a word of a friend, or even of a stranger; it may be by the development of circumstances. The wonderful thing is that God will and does direct the ways of His children.

". . . 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths,' . . . He does not want His own to react to difficulties and problems as the dumb animals. The Christian's position is one of communion with and dependence on the infinite resources of the infinite and eternal God. The problems, the sorrows, the uncertainties, the needs, the dangers, the complexities of life, all are but invitations to turn aside and experience daily the wonders of God's supernatural power and wisdom. Without problems to face there would be the grave danger of forgetting Him.

"THANK GOD FOR PROBLEMS!"

### *What is Coming to the Synods?*

Under this title we hope once again to call your attention from time to time to the important matters that will come to the Synods of various churches in our land.



To the Christian Reformed Synod will come among other things the following:

1. Calvin College President. President Schultze has presented his resignation and this has been accepted by the Board of Trustees. Synod will have to choose a new president from a suggested nomination of: Dr. Goris, pastor of LaGrave Avenue Chr. Ref. Church; Dr. George Stob, Seminary Professor, and Dr. Henry Stob, Calvin College Professor.

2. Report on Worldly amusements: This will come in the form of a report of the committee appointed to "clarify the decisions of the Synod of 1928 without changing those decisions". We understand that there is both a Minority and Majority report on this matter.

3. The NAE question: The Christian Reformed Churches have been members of The National Association of Evangelicals for eight years and during that time there has been constant criticism, and objection and the membership has been continued on a year to year basis. Gradually it seems to us that the agitation against membership has increased. This matter will come up in connection with a report on the basic principles of Inter-church affiliation.

Interesting for us is the fact that this question of NAE affiliation is being criticized on the score of the fact that it was "a decision arrived at without adequate study or investigation; by reason of an action initiated by a ministerial association and carried on (the floor of Synod—J.H.) *without warrant by a Synodical Committee. . .*" (I underscore—J.H.)

4. Divorce: This matter also will be brought to the attention of Synod by a committee appointed to study the problem.

5. Catechetical Training: Once again we read of a study committee ready to report on this very important item in the life of the church.

6. The Mission Question: The matter of home and foreign mission always plays a big part in this Synod. Undoubtedly the differences sharply evidenced last year in a series of brochures will carry over into this year. We hope to continue to keep our readers informed concerning the agendas and activities of the various Synods as we receive information about them.

#### *Formosan Missions.*

Formosa is much in the news today. We take over the following from the Moody Monthly concerning the history of Mission Work on the Island:

"When the existing Protestant missionary work began in Formosa, in the nineteenth century, there was no trace of an earlier Christianity. Yet there had been Christians on the island some two hundred years before. During the period of Dutch rule, from 1627 to 1662, as many as twenty-nine ordained ministers went to serve in Formosa. Four of them failed to escape

from the island when Koxinga (a Chinese pirate who conquered the Island of Formosa and ruled over it from 1662-1683—J.H.) drove the Dutch out and were beheaded by the pirates.

"These men not only ministered to the Dutch traders but also carried on missionary work among the Formosans. The first of them, George Candidius, is reported to have learned the language and the religion of the natives, as did others who followed. Another, Robert Junius, is said to have baptized 5,900, not counting infants, and he trained fifty native teachers. There was even some Scripture translation, for the Gospel of Matthew was printed in Formosan. Yet in the two centuries which followed the expulsion of the Dutch, every trace of Christianity was blotted out.

"The history of the present missionary effort goes back some eighty-five or ninety years. Dr. George Mackay, the first missionary of the Canadian Presbyterian Mission, began his work in the northern end of the island. The English Presbyterians began and carried on their work in the southern end. . . . Presbyterians have conducted the entire missionary enterprise. . . . The only others that have labored on the island is a small group of 'holiness' churches, started through local Taiwanese (native Formosan—J.H.) leadership under the influence of a certain 'holiness' preacher in Japan.

"The Taiwanese church became a well-organized body with substantial church buildings and some excellent leadership. However, their influence could not penetrate into the mountain areas during the Japanese era. The Japanese strictly forbade any missionaries to go into the mountains, and also forbade the aboriginal tribespeople in the mountains to read the Bible or conduct any kind of Christian service.

"It is a remarkable episode of Christian history how the truth seeped through to the hearts of these primitive peoples and how, secretly at night those who knew the Way went to teach their fellow tribesmen the wonderful truths of the Bible. Once they had come to know the truth, they became so firm in their faith, and their love for Christ became so strong, that they refused to bow under the iron hand of the Japanese, who sought to keep them from worshipping God or reading the Bible. The Japanese took strict measures to stamp out the Christian religion, and some of these simple folk languished in prisons, while others had to flee for their lives, and still others suffered death for their faith."

Under the present régime of Chiang Kai-Shek absolute freedom is given the gospel and many missionaries are at present working there—both among the natives and the Chinese immigrants, as well as among the soldiers of the Nationalist army.

J. Howerzyl.

# Report of Classis East

IN SESSION, APRIL 4, 1951, AT HUDSONVILLE, MICH.

This meeting of Classis was held at Hudsonville. Rev. E. Knott calls the meeting to order. He reads a portion of Scripture and leads in prayer.

After the credentials are received and accepted, Rev. B. Kok is called upon to preside. The minutes of the January and February meetings are read and accepted.

Classis decides to take up the matter of the examination of Candidate H. H. Kuiper first. A letter from Classis is read, stating that Classis West has no Deputaten ad Examina.

Candidate Kuiper preaches a sermon on Romans 8:3, 4. Sermon critics: Rev. G. Vos and Rev. C. Hanko. He is further examined according to the following schedule:

- Dogmatics, Loci I and II—Rev. G. Lubbers.
- Dogmatics, Loci III and IV—Rev. M. Schipper.
- Dogmatics, Loci V and VI—Rev. G. Vanden Berg.
- Practica,—Rev. G. M. Ophoff.

After the examination Classis meets in closed session to hear the report of the sermon critics and to further discuss the examination with the result that Classis decided to advise Randolph to proceed to the ordination of Candidate H. H. Kuiper.

Rev. G. Vos, as the mouthpiece of Classis, announces to Candidate Kuiper the outcome of his examination, and further expresses the wish that God may bless him in his ministerial labors.

His credentials having been examined were declared in order. Classis also decided that he shall receive a Classical Diploma.

A letter from Hamilton is read, stating that they have separated themselves from our churches.

A committee was appointed to draw up an answer to this letter. They presented the following answer which was adopted by Classis:

Beloved Brethren in the Lord,

We, Classis East of the Prot. Ref. Churches, have received your communication under date Jan. 17, 1951. And we have taken the following decision:

"It is moved and supported that inasmuch as Hamilton's Consistory has not walked in the way of Reformed Church Polity in not appealing their case to the next Synod, but contrary to all Reformed Church Polity have separated themselves from our federation of churches, and inasmuch as they who call themselves the Consistory of the Hamilton Prot. Ref. Church are not now the legal Consistory, Classis ignores their illegal missive, but also decided that a copy of this decision with an accompanying letter called them to repentance from the above mentioned sins be sent to this group, and that Classis further decide to proceed to the order of the day. Motion Carried."

In the name of the King of the Church we call you to repentance from the sins enumerated in the above decision, and pray that God may give you His grace to heed this sincere admonition.

Your Brethren in Christ,  
Classis East of the Prot. Ref. Churches.

Grand Haven asks for Classical Appointments. The following schedule was drawn up and adopted:

- |                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| April 8, J. A. Heys    | June 3, M. Schipper     |
| April 15, R. Veldman   | June 10, H. Kuiper      |
| April 22, G. Vos       | June 17, G. Vanden Berg |
| April 29, C. Hanko     | June 24, E. Knott       |
| May 6, B. Kok          | July 1, H. De Wolf      |
| May 13, H. Veldman     | July 8, A. Petter       |
| May 20, J. Blankespoor | July 15, J. A. Heys     |
| May 27, G. Lubbers     |                         |

A protest of Rev. A. Petter against the Declaration of Principles is read. This protest is ruled out of order because Rev. Petter did not come to Classis through his Consistory.

An instruction of Hamilton is read requesting disbanding of the congregation there.

In the Hamilton case the following decisions were made by Classis:

They were advised to disband since two families cannot very well constitute a congregation.

Classis will pay the moving expenses of Rev. Veldman from Hamilton to Grand Rapids.

Rev. H. Veldman is advised to bring his membership papers to one of our consistories so that his status as a minister of the Gospel may be maintained.

Classis declares that Rev. Veldman is eligible for a call.

Classis instructs its Classical Committee to give financial support to Rev. Veldman until Synod meets; and further decides to overture Synod to make the necessary provisions in this matter.

Brother S. Reitsma from Hamilton is advised to move to the vicinity of one of our churches.

The protests of the brethren H. De Raad, H. De Bolster and G. J. Koedoot were declared out of order because their consistory was not yet finished with the matter.

A letter is received from a Committee of Classis West informing us that this committee is arranging for the printing of a Servicemen's Meditations Booklet. This booklet will be made available to all our Consistories, and Consistories are requested to let the Stated Clerk know how many copies they will need.

Chatham's request of Classis East and Classis West, via Synod, that collections may be taken in all our churches in order that they may be enabled to buy a house for Rev. Petter, and in this way may receive sufficient money for the required first payment on this house. Classis granted this request.

Holland's Consistory protests the decision of the last Classis with respect to giving away children for adoption and the upholding of the protestants Kortering and Van Putten.

Classis maintains its decision in this matter on the grounds that Holland's Consistory did not bring any new grounds either for their own stand in this matter, nor against the action of Classis.

A protest of Mr. Van Putten against Classis is read. Classis maintains its former decision since the brother has again failed to prove his charges.

A letter of the Consistory of Holland, dealing with point 3 of their protest in re the candidacy of H. H. Kuiper is read. Classis decides to send this document through to Synod.

The following delegates to Synod were chosen:

MINISTERS		ELDERS	
Primi:	Secundi:	Primi:	Secundi:
H. Hoeksema	J. A. Heys	J. M. Faber	A. J. Kuiper
G. M. Ophoff	G. Lubbers	N. Kunz	P. Lubbers
R. Veldman	M. Schipper	D. Langeland	R. Newhouse
G. Vos	G. VandenBerg	N. Yonker	R. Regnerus

The following were chosen as Church Visitors: Primi: Rev. G. Vos and Rev. J. A. Heys; alternate Rev. C. Hanko,

The next meeting of Classis will be held in Holland, Michigan on July 11, 1951.

D. JONKER, Stated Clerk.