

# THE STANDARD

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## MEDITATION

### My Redeemer Liveth

"I know that my Redeemer liveth. . . ."

Job 19:25.

I know that my Redeemer liveth!

As a challenge over against every foe, as a shout of triumph when sufferings threatened to swallow her up, as a confident declaration of victory even when all flesh would despair, the church of Jesus Christ throughout the ages has always taken this word upon her lips.

When the adversary pressed relentlessly day and night, when a thousand fears beset his soul, when the night seemed utterly dark, without a ray of hope, the individual believer still sang in his heart and confessed with his lips: "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

We have the "cloud of witnesses" referred to in the Scriptures, men and women who lived and died in this assurance. Think of Abel and Enoch and Noah. Call to mind Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses, Rahab, Gideon, Samson and Samuel. Pause a moment to consider Daniel and his three friends who spurned the wrath of the king and faced death rather than deny their God.

We have the words of Job, a man who suffered unspeakable trials and afflictions. He lost all his possessions and was made childless in a moment. He was afflicted with a dread disease that brought him utmost misery. And in all that he was plagued by those who called themselves his friends. Yet out of the midst of his miseries arises the confident testimony of faith: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth."



My Redeemer!

A redeemer is, first of all, one who mediates for another, takes up his cause for him to help him. More-

over he pays the price of redemption. He is both able and willing to do this. And finally, he thereby vindicates his cause and delivers him from all his trouble. The very word suggests a rightful bondage, an obligation that cannot be met, a price that cannot be paid.

It implies that Job cannot meet the obligation. He cannot redeem himself. Except there be a talisman, an advocate, his cause is hopeless. But he has found such a man, one who is willing and able to take up his cause for him, to pay the ransom, to deliver him and to vindicate him. He refers, beyond a doubt, to the bondage of sin and death under the righteous judgment of God. He knows that he deserves God's curse and condemnation, so that God has just reason to condemn him to eternal woe of hell. But he knows of one who has paid the price of his redemption, has atoned for his sins, has delivered him from the bondage of sin and death, and assures him of eternal blessedness in glory with God.

He speaks of the promised Christ, the only possible Savior, the perfect and eternal Redeemer! "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Romans 8:34).

Job spoke of Him as he saw Him in prophecy, as the one that was still to come. He did not know the Christ in that full revelation in which He is revealed to us today. The promise was not yet realized. The Word had not yet become flesh. The Son of God had not yet borne the burden of sin and guilt by His death on the cross, and had not yet risen from the dead. Therefore Job could not see these things as clearly as we see them now. He still longed to see His day. In hope he witnessed with the saints of old: "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord!"

But that does not mean that Job was less convinced of his salvation than we are. It was just as real, just as sure and vital to him as to the saints of the new dispensation. In that same full conviction of heart and mind he could confess: My Redeemer lives.

His Redeemer, even as ours, is Jehovah, the almighty, unchangeable, sovereign God. God established

His eternal covenant with His servant Job. God had said concerning him, "This is my servant, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil." How could the Lord ever say that of him unless He had taken Job into His covenant. Was there ever a person born who by nature possesses these sterling qualities? Has ever yet even one individual been found of whom it could be said that he is perfect according to the standards of God's law? Is there any who never sins, never transgresses, not even in the secret recesses of his heart, but is always righteous, spotless before the God Who judges all men righteously? Is there any at all who is wholeheartedly a friend of God and an enemy of Satan, hating all evil perfectly? Anyone who knows the Scriptures and his own heart knows that this is impossible.

We are all conceived and born in sin. There is none that doeth good, not a single one. We have all departed from the way. We are become altogether corrupt. Before God's holy law no man is justified. This is equally true of Job. Yet God does not regard His servant Job as he is by nature, but rather as He knew him and loved him and chose him in Christ, even from eternity. God has eternally engraven His saints in the palm of His hands. He has made them His peculiar possession. Therefore, before Him they are holy and righteous, redeemed and sanctified in Christ. God sees no iniquity in Jacob and no transgression in Israel, for they are His royal priesthood, fitted to tell His praises forever. God sovereignly knows His servant Job as a perfect and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil.

Thus Jehovah also came to establish His covenant with Job. He dwelt by His Spirit in Job's heart, renewing him and turning him from death into life, from sin into the service of the living God. Job was made deeply conscious of his sin and guilt. He knew the depravity of his own heart. He was aware that he could only increase his sin and guilt continually. But he confessed his sin and obtained pardon. He experienced the blessedness of those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. His whole delight was in the law of God, according to the inward man. He loved God and hated evil. This was evident even at that moment when he was suddenly made destitute and childless. He rises, he rends his mantle, shaves his head, falls down upon the ground and worships. Humbly he confesses, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked I return thither. Jehovah gave, Jehovah hath taken away; blessed be the Name of Jehovah." Upon which the Scriptures add this remarkable testimony, "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." Surely here was a servant of God, perfect and upright, fearing God and eschewing evil, since God had taken him into His covenant by a wonder of grace.

It is in this consciousness that the servant of God can say: It is God who justifies. Who is the condemner?

No, the confession is much more personal than that. God is *my* justifier. Who is my condemner?

*My Redeemer lives!*



These words were spoken in one of the most bitter hours of all his anguish. Destitute and childless, afflicted with painful sores, a gruesome spectacle to those who formerly highly esteemed him, he complains, "Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with a net. Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but there is no judgment. He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and He hath set darkness in my paths. He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone: and my hope hath He removed like a tree. He hath also kindled His wrath against me, and He counteth me unto Him as one of His enemies. His troops come together, and raise up their way against me, and encamp round about my tabernacle. He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintances are verily estranged from me. . . . All my inward friends abhorred me: and they whom I loved are turned against me." How true this complaint was, for the very friends who came to comfort him turn against him, accusing him of grievous sin which has brought this wrath and visitation of the Lord upon him.

What can Job answer? What can he offer in his own defence? Can he plead sinlessness? Can he justify himself on the basis of his own righteousness? He knows he cannot! He would be forced to silent despair, if it were not for the fact that there is One Who mediates for him, One Who takes up his cause even now, One Who justifies, vindicates, and ultimately gives him the victory.

"I know that my Redeemer liveth."

He lives!

He is the Almighty, unchangeable Jehovah, Who keeps covenant with His people forever. He sovereignly rules over all things, so that not a hair can fall from our heads except by His will. He has the storms in His hands, the lightning that took Job's sheep, the wind that destroyed his children. Even the wrath of men shall praise Him, for devils, and Sabeans, and Chaldeans, and all wicked men are but instruments in His hand to carry out His counsel. His grace abideth ever. He will not always chide, neither will He keep His anger forever. His anger lasts a moment, His favor all the day. For He has not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us. Like

as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.

He lives! Jehovah, the God of our salvation lives.

How much richer these words are for us now, since the cross and the resurrection have become a historical reality. The Son of God came into our flesh, suffered, died and was buried. For a moment even the disciples despaired, so that they hid themselves in bitter sorrow.

Their master had been taken from them. The One Whom they professed to be the Christ, the Son of the living God, had perished in the hands of wicked men, and His body was laid away in the grave. They failed to understand the cross, and therefore all looked so utterly dark and hopeless. Yet that one flame of faith and hope within their souls never entirely faded out. On the contrary, it suddenly flared up to shine forth in glorious brilliancy.

Jesus arose as victor over death. He had paid the ransom for sin. He had satisfied God's justice. And God raised Him up to exalt Him to power and glory in the highest heavens. We now see Jesus with an eye of faith, crowned with glory and honor, living and reigning with God forever! "He arose, a Victor from the dark domain, and He lives forever with His saints to reign."

He lives! Yes, we know He lives, for He has come to dwell with us in the Spirit. He lives even now within our hearts.



I know! That is the testimony of faith.

The assurance of faith is always personal. Faith says: *I know*. Faith speaks of *my* Redeemer. Faith testifies: *I know that my Redeemer liveth*.

No one can actually know God without knowing that this God is his God, the God of his eternal salvation. No one can know Jesus Christ as the Savior of sinners without knowing that this Jesus is also his personal Savior. No one can believe in God and in Jesus Christ without putting all his trust in them. He who confesses God with a sincere heart also says: *My God*. And he who confesses Jesus to be the Christ also adds the personal assurance: *My Lord and my God*.

Not as if this assurance is not frequently and sorely tried. The believer is beset with many fiery trials from day to day, for the Lord is purging him, even as silver is purified by fire. There are, first of all, the many temptations that beset us. Our salvation is heavenly, but we are earthly. The world and its lusts still appeal to our sinful flesh. The scorn and sneer of the world still fill us with dread and terror. The devil still goes about as a roaring lion, seeking to devour us, even coming at times in sheep's clothing and as an angel of light. Secondly, there is our old nature with all its sinfulness. Constantly we must still complain that even while we will the good we do the evil,

for in our flesh dwells no good. If God should mark transgression, none of us could stand in His judgment.

And finally, there are the sufferings that we must bear. Often it seems as if wicked men prosper, while suffering is the constant lot of God's people. Disappointments, adversities, pains and distresses crowd in upon our lives. We are inclined to wonder why, yet we find no answer. Seemingly all these things are against us. If God loves us, has mercy upon us, and blesses us, why should these things be. His hand seems heavy on us, our soul finds no relief. With the psalmist we are inclined to complain: "Will God cast off forever? and will He be favorable no more? Is His mercy clean gone for ever? Doth His promise fail forevermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies?"

Yet through it all the triumph of faith is: *I know!* I know that my Redeemer liveth.



You ask, how is this possible? The answer is, that God has spoken to us in the Scriptures. He has revealed His eternal love for His people. He has made known His pardoning grace and saving mercies for those who are in Christ Jesus. He has promised the ultimate victory in the glorious inheritance which He has prepared for His saints. But how do we know that these gifts are also for us? What would it avail us if we knew that they were for others, but that we have no part in them? The Spirit assures us of all these benefits by a personal testimony within our own hearts. By means of the Word, the Holy Scriptures, and the preaching of that Word, He convicts of sin, but He also speaks of pardon through the blood of the cross. He makes weary, but He also assures of rest. He casts down in bitter anguish of soul, but He also lifts up and delivers. He makes hungry and He feeds the hungry. He makes thirsty and He causes the thirsty to drink of the streams of living water. He promises blessedness to those who trust in Him, but He also gives grace to trust in Him. He approves of those who fear Him and turn away from evil, but they experience that this is only the fruit of His love in them.

It is the church's well-known victory song that has re-echoed down the ages, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

C. Hanko.

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EDITOR — Rev. Herman Hoeksema

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**EDITORIALS****Why Not Protestant Reformed**

The heading above this series of articles: Why Not Protestant Reformed, is the title of an article which appeared in a weekly periodical of the Netherlands, I believe, in the month of February of this year. This weekly periodical is the well-known "Het Gereformeerd Gezinsblad". We understand that this periodical has a greater circulation among the readers in the Netherlands than the Reformatie. It is also widely read by the Canadian immigrants. In this article, signed by three former members of the late Protestant Reformed Church of Hamilton, the reason is set forth why they and many others separated themselves from the Protestant Reformed Church of that city. We quote from the article as follows (the translation is of the undersigned): "During the last months various events have occurred especially in Hamilton, Ontario, which shall have become known also in the Netherlands, and which, to avoid misunderstandings, demand to be placed in the proper light. We remark that the undersigned and many others have separated themselves from the Protestant Reformed Church of that place and have affiliated with the Canadian Reformed Churches. The reason for this action they would now set forth as clearly as possible with the means at their disposal."—end of quote. This quotation speaks for itself.

In this article the beginning of the Protestant Reformed Church of Hamilton is briefly set forth. Then the attention of the readers is directed to the struggle which ensued, especially after the coming of the undersigned to Hamilton. And, of great importance, it seems to me, is the conception which the writers of this article entertain of my preaching in Hamilton and of the truth of the Protestant Reformed Churches.

The purpose of this article and of subsequent articles, which, the Lord willing, will follow, is two-fold. First, we write these articles to refute the malicious and wicked slander which is directed in this article of former members of our Hamilton Church, not against the undersigned but against our Protestant Reformed Churches. That their criticism is directed against our Protestant Reformed Churches and not merely against the undersigned is apparent throughout the entire article. This article, for example, declares that there is no difference between the Protestant Reformed theologians, that all the Protestant Reformed theologians reject the Liberated conception of the promise, and throughout the entire article it speaks of the doctrine of the Protestant Reformed Churches. Hence, in the first place, we write these articles to expose and

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*Notice!* — as is customary, the July 15 issue of the Standard Bearer will not be published.

refute this malicious and wicked attack upon our Protestant Reformed Churches. We should bear in mind that this caricature of our Protestant Reformed truth has appeared in a paper of the Netherlands which has a wider circulation than the *Reformatie*. Secondly, the purpose of these articles and the desire of the undersigned is that the eyes of our people may be increasingly opened and that they may be alerted to the Canadian menace which confronts our Protestant Reformed Churches. To this end, we expect to quote from sermons which we delivered in Hamilton and to which also this article refers, and we propose to ask the Liberated brethren of the Netherlands whether the truth as set forth by the undersigned in his sermons is Reformed. The undersigned has nothing to hide. He is only too glad and too eager to let the churches know what he preached in Hamilton. And, this is all the more necessary and urgent in the light of Rev. De Jong's account in *Concordia* of his trip to the Netherlands. It can hardly be said of these articles that they alerted our people to this menace. Nothing is said in these article of the differences between the Liberated Churches and our churches, except that such differences existed, whereas the brother describes in detail the things which we have in common with them. I repeat: these articles did nothing to acquaint our people with the situation as it truly exists.

We will refrain from all personalities in our answer to this article which appeared in the "*Gereformeerd Gezinsblad*". This is somewhat difficult for the undersigned in the light of the writers of the article. However, we will remain objective. The only purpose of these articles of the undersigned is the welfare of our Protestant Reformed Churches. However, we do wish to make on remark for the sake of the record. In the light of the "horrible" doctrine which the undersigned proclaimed from the pulpit in Hamilton and which indeed should have demanded his deposition from the office of the ministry, it is surely amazing that I never received a visit from any member of the consistory or congregation of Hamilton to discuss his grievous deviations from the Reformed truth.

Finally, in this introduction, we will not quote the entire article. The article itself is six columns long. We do not deem it necessary to quote the entire article, although we do expect to quote the entire passage in it which describes our Protestant Reformed truth. That is indeed worthy of our consideration. For the rest, however, it will not be necessary to quote the article in its entirety. We are all acquainted, I am sure, with the fact that the Protestant Reformed Church at Hamilton is no longer in existence for the simple reason that they refused to be or become Protestant Reformed. I was suspended because I refused to submit to the basis as willed by the consistory. This is literally their decision.

We shall now proceed with the matter at hand. First, we quote the following: "First, be it stated how the Protestant Reformed Church really began in the beginning of 1949. After meeting and discussing with various American ministers, we were of the opinion to have found the True Church. The preachers, in general, emitted a good Reformed sound, and the less known sounds we received, with eyes half shut, in the bargain (met half gesloten oogen op de koop toe)." Incidentally, permit me to acquaint our readers with the three writers of the article which we are now answering: Th. J. Hart, elder of the church at Hamilton, W. Wildeboer, and J. J. Knecht Jr., whom many of our young people will recognize as the president of the Hamilton young people's society. This quotation is striking, is it not? Compare this statement with the assertion which has been made, that these Liberated immigrants are willing to become Protestant Reformed, to listen to our instruction, that the disagreements will disappear if we only discuss the differences with them calmly and carefully. Please note. Generally speaking, our preachers emitted a good Reformed sound. This refers, of course, to generally accepted Reformed truths which, of course, are also heard in the Netherlands, and as these immigrants were accustomed to them also in the Netherlands. But, please notice the other half of the sentence. The less known sounds they received in the bargain with eyes half shut. To what do they refer? These less known sounds refer to our Protestant Reformed heritage, or, if you will, to our distinctly Protestant Reformed doctrine. And did they intend to submit to these "less known sounds?" By no means. They received them in the bargain with eyes half shut. Or, if I may express it very bluntly: when they heard them in the preaching, they received them in such a manner that they entered the one ear and went out the other. Or, as another must have expressed himself: I take what I like and let the other lie. This, dear reader, is the statement of these immigrants themselves.

In this same connection I wish to quote the following: "We knew that our conceptions with respect to Covenant and Baptism differed, but we sought a way to come to a synthesis. The synthesis was mostly sought by us in referring to the dangers which we thought to see in the conceptions which we had acknowledged in the Netherlands. For, was it not true that many expressions catered to Remonstrantism? People were of the opinion that both contrasting conceptions with respect to Baptism and Covenant came down to the same thing." This means, does it not, that these immigrants sought a way to come to a synthesis. This does not mean that disagreements would disappear, but that both contrasting conceptions would exist side by side. It is true that this article declares that "both contrasting conceptions came down to the



same thing". But, how is it possible that contrasting *conceptions* and that *contrasting* conceptions came down to the same thing? Conceptions are more than terminology, are they not? Besides, if it be merely a difference of terminology between us, why do these immigrants not accept our terminology? Why do they insist on their own terminology? Were they not members of the Protestant Reformed Churches? Did they not join our churches? Why, then, not accept our way of speaking, if we say the same thing anyway? However, let none be deceived. It was not a matter of terminology between our churches and these Liberated immigrants. And, this was made perfectly plain to them *before they were organized*. However, it is worthy of note that they knew of these existing differences, that they were aware of the contrasting conceptions of Covenant and Baptism, but they simply let the "less known sounds" enter in through the one ear and go out through the other. In the meantime they were determined to maintain their own conceptions. Please understand: I am speaking only of the Liberated immigrants around Hamilton, not of the Liberated Churches of the Netherlands.

I must continue. I quote the following: "At the organization, however, the consistory submitted entirely to the instruction which was given in the Protestant Reformed Churches. Everyone was convinced of the propriety of this insight. People were of the opinion that both contrasting conceptions with respect to Baptism and Covenant came down to the same thing." The last of these statements clearly proves that the first statement is contrary to fact. How is it possible to submit to Protestant Reformed instruction if they were determined to maintain their own conception of Baptism? Later in this article I read the following: "The relationships within the congregation became worse. Communion could no longer be celebrated, confession of faith was not accepted (of course not; they refused to confess the doctrine as taught in this Christian Church—H.V.), and the communion of saints was no longer felt. All these events within the church caused us to inquire into the cause of this. The consistory sought it in the action of Rev. Veldman (which action was that I simply enforced a decision of the October, 1950 classis, to which I have already referred in previous articles—H.V.) and men desired a solution by *permitting both doctrines within the church*. It soon appeared that this must create an impossible condition. Parents who *rejected the Protestant Reformed doctrine, withdrew themselves and their children from the administration of the Word and catechism*." (the underscoring is of the undersigned). Besides, the statement that "the consistory submitted entirely to the instruction which was given in the Protestant Reformed Churches" is untrue. The classical committee, which met twice with the con-

sistory, will support me when I say that the consistory of Hamilton contended exactly that they had been deceived by the Protestant Reformed Churches and that their organization had occurred without any binding.

Before I continue with this article as such I wish to quote the following: "Thus also the Protestant Reformed Church in Hamilton cannot have the right of existence and we who brought the church unto organization have, because of too little insight in the Scriptures and simplicity of faith on the one hand and a desire to regulate too much and a running ahead upon God's way on the other hand, permitted ourselves to be convinced by reasoning to which we could not give the scientifically formulated answer. We have not followed the advice given at the time of Prof. Holwerda and known to us, and the Lord let us run ahead and we came upon the wrong path."—end of this quote. Does this reference to Prof. Holwerda's advice not cause us to wonder? Does this quotation refer to the advice which Prof. Holwerda gave to the immigrants around Chatham? If so, we need not wonder how the Hamilton immigrants understood this advice. However, the possibility also exists that this quotation refers to advice which Prof. Holwerda gave the Hamilton immigrants at the time of Hamilton's organization. This quotation speaks, does it not, of the time when Hamilton was organized. However, it can also refer to the advice which was given to the immigrants around Chatham. May we receive a little light on this matter?

We continue. I quote the following: "The picture changed somewhat when Rev. H. Veldman was called and came to Hamilton. At the time when we first became acquainted with him he let us know that we are dealing with a supralapsarier. That was his point of procedure, as such he would approach the congregation, and as such we had to accept him. Supralapsarianism was according to his conviction the only doctrine of salvation, and that supralapsarianism alone would be the ground and content of his preaching and instruction."—end of quote.

I am very happy to have the opportunity to comment on this. The undersigned had preached in Hamilton and discussed the truth with the immigrants about Hamilton several times before he received the call to Hamilton. I believe, however, that this particular statement refers to November 6, 1949, when I was considering the call to Hamilton and discussed this call with the consistory and congregation prior to my acceptance of it, although I must confess that already before November 6, I had given them the assurance that I was supralapsarian in my thinking. The undersigned endorses this entire statement or quotation. Is it my conviction that Supralapsarianism (as currently understood and not, of course, implying a time order in the counsel of God, is the only doctrine of salvation?

It is. Infralapsarianism and Supralapsarianism are not both correct. It is for me one or the other. Would Supralapsarianism alone be the ground and content of my preaching and instruction? It would be. Would it be my point of procedure, approach the congregation with it? It would be. Hence, I surely endorse this quotation as such.

However, I must add the following. Does this mean that "supralapsarianism" would almost constitute every other word in all my preaching and instruction? Of course not! Did not L. Van Huizen remark at the January 11 consistory meeting that if I had only continued in my preaching as during the first months of my labor in Hamilton, everything would have been alright? I say this to emphasize that I proceeded very slowly and cautiously. Does this mean that only a supralapsarian can be saved? Of course not! Yea, does this mean that I took the stand that we would only accept supralapsarians as members of the congregation of Hamilton? Again, of course not! And, permit me to emphasize at this time that the congregation of Hamilton knew this. I refer to the three questions which I have just asked and answered. From this point of view, also this quotation is an expression of malicious and wicked slander. The impression is left (and this impression is also intended) that the dispute between our churches and the Liberated revolves about the infralapsarian-supralapsarian controversy. Also Prof. Schilder wrote along these lines in his articles which treated the Declaration. **THIS IS EMPHATICALLY NOT TRUE.** And, if I may use the expression, I have practically stood on my head to emphasize this.

However, this brings me to an interesting point to which I wish to call attention. It is a well-known fact that our Protestant Reformed Churches are supralapsarian in all our preaching and instruction. We do not hesitate to say this. I do not write this because it is my intention at this time to enter into the infralapsarian-supralapsarian controversy. But, I do wish to call attention to this in connection with the question how we can be supralapsarian and still be confessionally sound. And, in connection with this, how does it affect our attitude toward these Liberated immigrants?

That our churches can be supralapsarian in our preaching and teaching and also be confessionally sound is due to the undeniable fact that Supralapsarianism has never been condemned. It is true that our Confessions are infralapsarian. This, too, is undeniable. Attention has been called to this repeatedly in the past. Even a hasty reading of our Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordrecht will convince anyone of this fact. Both proceed from the fact of our sin and misery. But, although our Confessions are infralapsarian, our fathers never had the courage to condemn the supralapsarian conception of things.

Hence, one can indeed be supralapsarian and be confessionally sound and reformed. This also explains why the undersigned never presented infralapsarianism as a barrier to membership in our Protestant Reformed Church at Hamilton. But, to this must be added that the infralapsarian-supralapsarian controversy only pertains to the counsel of God, to the question whether the Lord, in His counsel, viewed the human race as fallen or to fall. Infralapsarianism does not teach that the promise is for all the children of the covenant, that the promise gives all the children the right to eternal life, that the sacrament of baptism is a sign and seal of the general love of God for all the children within the church of God. That infralapsarianism does not teach these things is evident from the fact that these things are not taught in our Confessions. Infralapsarianism does not deny immediate regeneration, or, let me put it this way: our Confessions, although teaching a mediate regeneration (to which also our Protestant Reformed Churches subscribe) do not teach mediate regeneration at the cost of immediate regeneration. In other words, there is a regeneration, also in Scripture, which occurs mediately. This, however, does not imply that the truth of immediate regeneration is not taught in our Confessions. We believe that it certainly is. This simply means that one can speak of regeneration in more than one sense of the word. But, the teaching that the promise is for all, that God loves all the children and would save all the children, is not infralapsarianism but Arminianism.

Hence, we stand in the unalterable conviction that the Protestant Reformed Churches proclaim and teach the Reformed truth in all its purity. I repeat: our churches certainly teach the perfect doctrine of salvation. We say this in our forms, do we not? What do we teach that we should not teach, or, what do we fail to teach that we ought to teach? The struggle of the undersigned in Hamilton did not concern the Liberated Churches in the Netherlands, but simply my solemn calling and obligation to uphold and maintain the truth which I promised to maintain in the Formula of Subscription. It was and is my conviction that a denial of the truth as taught in our churches is simply a denial of the Reformed truth. We alone uphold the truth of our Reformed Confessions. And our present conception, not merely based upon the definition of a word, is that marvelous presentation of God's realization of His friendship which occurs only with the elect, in the line of generations, and that all things, also as in the midst of the world, occur with a view to the salvation of God's eternally elected Church and the glory of His Name. That is our heritage, not the personal opinion of certain individuals, but the blessed truth of the everlasting God as revealed in the Scriptures and expressed in our Three Forms of Unity. May we never lose that heritage! Does this shut the door to Liber-

ated immigrants? Of course not. Are we not willing and eager to proclaim the truth as it is taught in our churches? We indeed are. But we insist on one thing: all our teaching must be distinctively Protestant Reformed. If we lose this, our very right of existence disappears.

H. Veldman.



## THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE

### An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

#### PART TWO

#### Of Man's Redemption

#### LORD'S DAY XXX.

#### Chapter 2.

#### Proper Partakers. (cont.)

But there is more. According to the Heidelberg Catechism it also belongs to the proper partakers of the Lord's table that they trust that their sins are forgiven them for the sake of Christ, and that their remaining infirmities are covered by His passion and death. According to the Form for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, they are those that believe the faithful promise of God that all their sins are forgiven them only for the sake of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, and that the perfect righteousness of Christ is imputed and freely given them as their own, yea, so perfectly as if they had satisfied in their own person for all their sins and fulfilled all righteousness. The mere knowledge of sin is not sufficient to approach the Lord's table. For the table of the Lord is the symbol of covenant fellowship with God. The act of coming to the Lord's Supper is symbolic of the act of faith whereby we enter into the holiest, into the sanctuary of God. And that fellowship with the ever living God, that entrance into the sanctuary, is possible only on the basis of perfect righteousness. Hence, the proper partaker of the Lord's table must be conscious of the fact that all his sins are forgiven him and that he is perfectly righteous before God, and that, too, in spite of the testimony of his own conscience and of the many infirmities that still remain in him. And this confidence can be based only upon the sacrifice of Christ, the signs of which are exhibited in the bread and wine of the Lord's table. On nothing else his confidence of righteousness must be based. Not on the fact that he is born of believing parents, or that he is baptized, not on his own works, not on his piety, not on his religion; but only on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ his Lord must his trust for perfect righteous-

ness be based. He must approach the Lord's table heeding the exhortation of Hebrews 10:19-22: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

Finally, the proper partakers of the Lord's Supper are, according to the Catechism, those "who also earnestly desire to have their faith more and more strengthened, and their lives more holy." According to the Form for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, they are those who purpose henceforth to show true thankfulness to God in their whole life and to walk uprightly before Him, as also whether they have laid aside unfeignedly all enmity, hatred, and envy, and do firmly resolve henceforward to walk in true love and peace with their neighbor. This requirement may be regarded as the seal and test, and at the same time as the fruit, of the former two. One who knows his sin and abhors his corruption before God and is filled with a true sorrow after God not only longs for forgiveness, but also for sanctification. He cannot rest until he is perfectly delivered from all his corruption. Besides, true sorrow over sin is rooted in the love of God. And the love of God manifests itself in the love of the brethren. The same is true of the trust and confidence of perfect righteousness in Christ: justification and sanctification are inseparably connected. In fact, he that embraces Christ by a true faith and knows that he is righteous in Him before God is already sanctified, and therefore longs for perfect holiness. The careless and profane, who do not desire to increase in holiness, have no place at the Lord's table. For, according to the Catechism, "it is impossible that those, who are implanted into Christ by a true faith, should not bring forth fruits of thankfulness."

But the Catechism also speaks of those that ought not to approach the Lord's table. Regarding this it instructs us as follows: "but hypocrites and such as turn not to God with sincere hearts, eat and drink judgment to themselves." Mark you well, the Catechism does not say that the church ought to bar these hypocrites and insincere people from the table of the Lord, but that they are not proper partakers, and that therefore they ought not to come, and at the same time assures them that they can never receive a blessing at the table of the Lord, but that they eat and drink judgment to themselves.

What is a hypocrite? A hypocrite is a spiritual cheat. He is, according to the simile which the Lord uses, like a whitened sepulchre, that appears beautiful on the outside, but is within full of dead men's bones



and uncleanness. He is a man that puts on a mask of the child of God, while he is a child of the devil. He is an ungodly man that plays the part of the godly. From certain selfish motives he puts on the appearance of a good Christian in his outward confession and walk. But inwardly he is an unbeliever. His secret life is that of the ungodly. He has not the love of God. He is not filled with sorrow after God, and does not repent of sin before God. Nor does he put his trust in Christ. He is not a believer, but an unbeliever. He is a lover of self. Moreover, the hypocrite is known as an ungodly man only to God and to himself. As long as he plays the role of a hypocrite, he is not known to others. You cannot therefore call a man a hypocrite. God knows him, however, and the Word of God judges him and condemns him as an ungodly and wicked man. Hence, he also knows himself. Before his own consciousness he stands condemned as an unbeliever. From this it also follows that one need not be afraid that he himself is a hypocrite. It is indeed not difficult to understand that believers sometimes are struck with fear that they are hypocrites and not real children of God. We do not like to appear before one another as we appear before God. Our outward appearance is by no means always a perfect representation of our inward state and condition. In our old nature we are always insincere. Insincerity cleaves to our very best works, to our confession and walk, and even to our prayer. We need not be surprised, therefore, that even believers sometimes have the feeling that they are really hypocrites. But the differences between the real hypocrite and that feeling of hypocrisy is that the hypocrite has no life, and knows it; that he puts on an appearance of being a living child of God, while he knows that he is inwardly wicked. He is not afraid that he is a hypocrite, but he is assured of it. The principal difference between him and the child of God is always that while the latter repents of his sin before God, even of his insincerity and hypocrisy, the former never does.

But the Catechism speaks also of those that turn not to God with sincere hearts. There is undoubtedly a distinction between these and the hypocrites. Those that do not turn to God with sincere hearts may be children of God that refuse to repent temporarily. There is, for instance, the sin of hatred and envy against the brother. And for a time they nourish that sin in their hearts. Perhaps they attempt to repent of all the rest of their sins and to confess them before God and to receive forgiveness and peace of heart and conscience. But of course, they fail to receive these blessings of grace. The Lord does not answer such prayer, or rather, says to that child: "You go back, and confess the rest of your sins also. I am not going to forgive 75 percent of your sins if you want to keep 25 percent for yourself." Or in the words of the Lord

Jesus: "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." Matt. 5:23-26. Of course, this condition of insincerity may be permanent. In that case the insincere is not a child of God at all, and is similar to the hypocrite. But whether it is temporary or permanent, one that is characterized by such a disposition of heart and mind should not come to the table of the Lord. For according to the Catechism, he eats and drinks judgment to himself.

That the hypocrites and insincere eat and drink judgment to themselves is based upon I Cor. 11:29, 30: "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." The meaning is that by eating and drinking unworthily, that is, by approaching the Lord's Supper merely to eat bread and drink wine, without discerning the Lord's body spiritually, or in other words, by approaching the Lord's table without faith and repentance one incurs a judgment of God upon himself rather than a blessing. This judgment of God which one receives by eating and drinking unworthily does not *necessarily* mean that by so doing one eats and drinks eternal damnation to himself. The context seems to point in a different direction. For in verse 30 the apostle explains that because of that disregard and profaning of the Lord's table many are weak and sickly in the congregation, and many sleep. These words refer undoubtedly to physical sickness and physical death. And the apostle evidently regards the fact that so many in the congregation were stricken with disease and that so many died as a chastisement of the Lord to manifest His displeasure upon the church for their profaning the Lord's table. But although these words do not *necessarily* refer to eternal damnation, this is certainly included in this judgment of God for all those that permanently profane the table of the Lord and do not discern His body. The hypocrites and wicked certainly receive the bread and wine, but no more. And as is the case with the preaching of the Word, namely, that it is a savor of death unto death for the wicked reprobate, so it is also with the sacrament of holy communion: the wicked eat and drink damnation to themselves. They do not receive the grace of God, but His curse. And His wrath abideth on them. Ursinus in his exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism mentions

four different reasons why unbelievers and ungodly bring upon themselves condemnation by eating and drinking the signs of the holy supper. First, they receive a curse because they profane the signs, and therefore they profane the thing signified, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, as they take to themselves those things which were not instituted for them but only for the believers. Secondly, by taking to themselves the signs of the covenant in the holy supper they profane the covenant of God itself. They desire to appear in covenant with God when they are in league with the devil. And thus they make God appear as if He were the Father of the wicked. Thirdly, by partaking of the signs of the bread and wine and outwardly receiving the benefits which God designed only for the believers they do not discern the Lord's body, and they trample the blood of the Son of God under their feet. And finally, they condemn themselves as hypocrites because in coming to the Lord's table they profess that they believe the doctrine that there is no salvation outside of Christ, while in the meantime they themselves never repent and believe. And therefore they condemn themselves.

Such then is the answer of the Catechism to the question as to the proper partakers of the holy supper. Only they who evince this spiritual disposition can obey the injunction of the Lord, spoken at the institution of His supper: "Do this in remembrance of Me." And what it means to remember the Lord Jesus Christ at His table is beautifully explained in our Form for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, the words of which we desire to quote at the close of this chapter:

"Now after this manner are we to remember him by it:

"First. That we are confidently persuaded in our hearts, that our Lord Jesus Christ (according to the promises made to our forefathers in the Old Testament) was sent of the Father into the world; that he assumed our flesh and blood; that he bore for us the wrath of God (under which we should have perished everlastingly) from the beginning of his incarnation, to the end of his life upon earth; and that he hath fulfilled, for us, all obedience to the divine law, and righteousness; especially, when the weight of our sins and the wrath of God pressed out of him the bloody sweat in the garden, where he was bound that we might be freed from our sins; that he afterwards suffered innumerable reproaches, that we might never be confounded; that he was innocently condemned to death, that we might be acquitted at the judgment-seat of God; yea, that he suffered his blessed body to be nailed on the cross—that he might fix thereon the handwriting of our sins; and hath also taken upon himself the curse due to us, that he might fill us with his blessings: and hath humbled himself unto the deepest reproach and pains of hell, both in body and

soul, on the tree of the cross, when he cried out with a loud voice, 'My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?' that we might be accepted of God and never be forsaken of him: and finally confirmed with his death and shedding of his blood, the new and eternal testament, that covenant of grace and reconciliation when he said: 'It is finished.'

"Secondly. And that we might firmly believe that we belong to this covenant of grace, the Lord Jesus Christ, in his last Supper, took bread, and when He had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, 'Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of me; in like manner also after supper he took the cup, gave thanks and said, Drink ye all of it; this cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins; this do ye as often as ye drink it in remembrance of me': that is, as often as ye eat of this bread and drink of this cup, you shall thereby as by a sure remembrance and pledge, be admonished and assured of this my hearty love and faithfulness towards you; that, whereas you should otherwise have suffered eternal death, I have given my body to the death of the cross, and shed my blood for you; and as certainly feed and nourish your hungry and thirsty souls with my crucified body and shed blood, to everlasting life, as this bread is broken before your eyes, and this cup is given to you, and you eat and drink the same with your mouth, in remembrance of me.

"From this institution of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, we see that it directs our faith and trust to his perfect sacrifice (once offered on the cross) as to the only ground and foundation of our salvation, wherein he is become to our hungry and thirsty souls, the true meat and drink of life eternal. For by his death he hath taken away the cause of our eternal death and misery, namely, sin, and obtained for us the quickening Spirit, that we by the same (who dwelleth in Christ as in the head, and in us as his members), might have true communion with him; and be made partakers of all his blessings, of life eternal, righteousness and glory.

"Besides, that we by this same Spirit may also be united as members of one body in true brotherly love, as the holy Apostle saith, 'For we, being many, are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.' For as out of many grains one meal is ground, and one bread baked, and out of many berries being pressed together, one wine floweth, and mixeth itself together; so shall we all, who by a true faith are ingrafted into Christ, be altogether one body, through brotherly love, for Christ's sake, our beloved Savior, who hath so exceedingly loved us, and not only show this in word, but also in very deed towards one another."

H. H.

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## OUR DOCTRINE

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### The Hexaemeron or Creation-Week

#### II.

#### SCRIPTURE'S VIEWPOINT OF THE ACCOUNT OF CREATION

*First, let us repeat: the beauty of the Scriptural account of creation is its revelation unto us of the living God.*

First, the majestic words: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, are the keynote of the entire passage. We have more or less grown accustomed to this sublime and majestic truth, and can scarcely estimate and appreciate its force and grandeur. At the time when Moses recorded these words, through the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit, the world was steeped in idolatry and the vain idols of the nations vied with one another for supremacy. How majestic, therefore, and how grand is this amazing utterance which is emphasized throughout Holy Writ: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth! All of creation is ascribed to the only true God.

Secondly, the Scriptural record of the creation of the universe is so emphatic and wholly unique. How simple, and yet, how emphatic and unique are the words: God said . . . and it was so. Of course! When God speaks it is and when He commands it stands. For, this word of the living God is but the symbol, the vehicle of the irresistible and omnipotent will of God. When the Lord speaks He speaks creatively. And instead of ascribing the existence of the things to an eternal matter, or instead of defining their coming into existence as the result of a long process of development, Holy Writ simply tells us that God spake, and, of course, when He speaks: And it was so.

Thirdly, we should also note the completeness of this creation in this infallible Scriptural narrative. On the one hand, we read the ever recurring expression: And it was so. This implies perfect correspondence of the result with the Divine intention and creating. It was always exactly as the Lord spoke. Things always occur exactly as the Lord speaks and wills them to happen. This applies to creation. However, we may also apply this to all things. The Lord calls the things into existence which He has sovereignly willed from before the foundation of the world, and therefore all the things that are and occur are and occur exactly as He willed them. This must also be applied to the preaching of the gospel and its obvious effect upon its hearers, be it unto their salvation or unto their condemnation. And, on the other hand, we also read the

ever-recurring expression: God saw that it was good. This surely emphasizes the completeness, the perfection of the work of God's hands, especially because *God* saw and it was good. When God looks at a thing He views it thoroughly and completely.

Finally, Scripture also reveals unto us the progressiveness of the creation progress. To this we will also call attention in connection with the six days of creation. We may note, however, that the creation account is characterized by an ever ascending scale so that creation finally reaches its climax in man.

*Moreover, the viewpoint of the Scriptural account of creation is earthly, or the earth.*

This appears from the Scriptural narrative itself. We read in Gen. 1:1: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." And then the narrative continues in verse 2: "And the earth with without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." It is evident, therefore, that Holy Writ immediately focuses our attention upon the earth and its creation.

The earth, therefore, is, according to the Word of God, the center of the world's creation and of history; all things revolve about the earth. This, we understand, must not be understood in the physical and geographical sense of the word. Modern Science informs us, and this we need not deny, that the earth is one of the smallest bodies which moves about in the mighty universe. There are other bodies, planets which are greater than our earth. In fact, things do not move about the earth but about the sun; the sun, therefore, and not the earth, is the center of our solar system.

However, Scripture measures importance and greatness not as modern science does. This is clear, for example, from the content of the book of Genesis. In the early chapters of this book of "beginnings" we have an account of the creation of the world, and also of the history of the world, as before the flood, along very broad lines. Very briefly we are given a "bird's-eye view" of the first one thousand six hundred and fifty years of the world's history, although we should bear in mind that also this history is recorded from the viewpoint of the two-fold seed in the midst of the world. But, soon after the flood, Scripture limits its account of the history of the world to but one family, that of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and our attention is directed to the history of the development of God's covenant in the midst of the world. This, we understand, is completely in harmony with the Scriptural truth that all things revolve about the people of God and that God's kingdom and its development is indeed the center of the world's history. Also from this viewpoint we find no support in Scripture for the theory of "Common Grace" which would focus our

attention upon the glory and beauty of the world which lies in darkness, which speaks of a life in and of this world, apart from grace and the regenerating Spirit of God, which is good before God and worthy of our praise and admiration. This theory of "Common Grace" which lauds the natural man and this world apart from the regenerating Spirit of the Lord finds little support in Scripture's account of the world before the flood.

That the Word of God should describe things, as in Gen. 1, from the viewpoint of the earth is, of course, perfectly understandable. It is simply a fact, is it not, that the earth is the center of the history of the world. It is upon this earth that the struggle occurs between the Seed of the woman and that of the serpent, and it is upon the earth that the Christ is born. This struggle is limited, of course, to this earth. The question might conceivably arise whether a similar spiritual conflict is also occurring upon other planets, whether the Lord has elect and reprobates also in other parts of our mighty universe. Does the fact that the Scriptures give us an account which is exclusively earthly necessarily imply that God's covenant is therefore limited to our earth? To this we reply that Christ suffered and died upon the earth, that upon the cross He suffered an eternal death, and that therefore it is quite impossible that Christ should have suffered and died several such eternal deaths in other parts of our universe. Hence, God chose this earth as the sphere of the spiritual conflict which is connected with the development of His covenant. Here occurs the struggle between light and darkness, righteousness and unrighteousness, the truth and the lie, the Seed of the woman and that of the serpent; here, upon our earth, Christ assumes our flesh and blood, suffers and dies, merits everlasting life and righteousness. And He is the Head of the creation of God in Whom all things shall be reunited, the things which are in heaven and the things which are upon the earth.

We need not be surprised, therefore, that Genesis describes the creation of the world from the viewpoint of the earth. The fact remains that the importance of anything must be determined, not by its size or weight, but by its place which it occupies in the history of God's covenant and kingdom. Greatness, true greatness is only that which is great in the sight of the Lord. We often lose sight of this truth and we often measure a man's greatness according to our own carnal and human standards. A striking example of this truth is the importance of John the Baptist. We read of him that he shall be called great. Now it is simply a fact that the entire ministry of the Baptist was confined to a period of some six months. Such an one would hardly be called great in our day and age. Nevertheless we read of this forerunner of the Lord that he would be called great. His greatness must not be determined by a standard of human greatness but by the

place which he occupies and fills in the development of God's kingdom and covenant. We so often admire and respect an individual because of his stature according to the standard of worldly power and riches, and thereby also fall into the evil of being disdainful of that which is truly great in the sight of God. James 2:1-7 is a clear and striking example or passage which throws light exactly upon this matter. We need not quote this passage. Let us, therefore, strive to be great, not in the sight of men and according to the standard of the world, but in the sight of God and according to the standard of the Lord. This also enables us to understand why the earth is the center of the universe, and that the viewpoint of the earth is the viewpoint of Scripture's account of the creation of the world.

### THE FIRST DAY.

*Genesis 1:1-5.*

We read in this passage: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day."

In connection with this passage we would remark in the first place that we understand Gen. 1:1 as referring to the very beginning, the first moment of time, when the Lord created, in principle as it were, the heavens and the earth. Then the material, the basic substance was created. Then the Lord created time. Hence, verse 2 must therefore be regarded as referring to the time after God created, "in the beginning," the heavens and the earth and before He created the light.

This implies that the earth in the second verse of Gen. 1 is meant as it existed immediately after the act of God recorded in verse 1. That earth was without form and void. It was without form and order, without any ornamentation or inhabitants of any kind. It was empty, devoid of life, utterly waste and desolate. And darkness, we read, was upon the face of the deep. This darkness refers to the original darkness, the "un-created" darkness, the darkness of utter nothingness. This darkness was upon the face of the deep, that is, the deep waters which covered the face of the earth as a garment. We are reminded of what we read in Psalm 104:6 and 2 Pet. 3:5, and we quote: "Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains . . . For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the

water and in the water." And the Spirit moved upon the face of the waters. In this expression the Spirit of God is surely meant. The imagery used here is that of a bird as it flutters over her young. The Spirit moved upon the face of the waters, to support and preserve, as it were, the created earth and waters as they had been called into existence according to verse 1. Even as the Spirit of God, also today, preserves and sustains all things, so He also sustained the original creation of Gen. 1:1.

*Upon the first day God created light.*

First, light is life, inasmuch as light is movement. We all have heard of waves of light. Fact is, darkness was upon the face of the deep. As already stated, this is not the darkness of our night, but the uncreated darkness. The darkness of our night is a created darkness, a creature, for the Lord created the darkness and the light. The darkness of our night is but a shadow, a shadow of or caused by turning, the turning of the earth upon its axis. We will have more to say about this when we discuss the creation of the sun, moon, and stars upon the fourth day. That the darkness of Gen. 1:4 where we read: "And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness," is not the darkness of verse 2 is evident from the text. First, it is evident that the darkness of verse 2 preceded the creation of the light. And, secondly, the darkness of verse 4 is called Night in verse 5, whereas the Lord called the light Day. Obviously, therefore, the darkness of verse 4 is the darkness of our night, and this night as well as the day are created by the Lord. Light is life. Physical light is the life of all substance and matter. It is movement, waving, undulation. We are all acquainted with the waves of light. Light is the life of substance and matter, revealing itself in electrical and magnetic powers. Before the creation of this light the chaotic earth and the universe was lifeless, without movement, a lifeless mass. Interesting is the question: How must we conceive of this light and also of its operation? Did it have, as our present light, a center, and did also then the earth move and revolve, so that the change of day and night was caused in approximately the same manner as now? Or, must we conceive of matters in such a way that everything stood still, and that in a manner which we cannot understand, the Lord called each morning the light into existence and withdrew it each evening? The Scriptures give us no definite answer to this question. Nevertheless we prefer the first of these interpretations, that it had, as our present sunlight, a center, and that for the following reasons. First, according to the second interpretation, the light which the Lord formed upon the first day would then have been destroyed each evening. Each day, then, the Lord would withdraw the light, and cause, as it were,

the original work of His hands to recede into the original darkness, emptiness, vacuum, nothingness. Then we would not have a repeated exchange of light and darkness, of the day and the night, but a repeated destruction and recreation of the light. This explanation, however, is obviously impossible. The Lord did not repeatedly destroy what He had once made. Secondly, closely related to the immediate preceding, light is a creature of God which was certainly not repeatedly annihilated. Light was created by God, received existence therefore in distinction from His own being by the almighty word of His power, not to be destroyed repeatedly, but to be preserved and continued in its existence by the same mighty and all-sustaining Word of the living God. Thirdly, that God created light on the first day does not conflict in any sense of the word with the fact that He created the sun, moon, and stars upon the fourth day. Upon the fourth day the Lord simply created those heavenly bodies which would be the centers of the light which He created upon the first day. The Lord simply concentrated the light of the first day in the sun, moon, and stars. Upon the fourth day no other light was called into being. Hence, the light of the first day remained, was not recalled or destroyed, proceeded unquestionably, even as now, from a certain center. And, therefore, already upon the first day, because of the waves of light and the revolving earth, the change between light and darkness, day and night, was formed also upon the first day. The darkness of the night is nothing else than a shadow, a shadow of turning, and caused by the turning of the earth upon its axis as it revolves about the sun.

Secondly, light is the basis for all fellowship throughout the creation of God. This applies, first of all, to the fellowship of the creatures with one another. For, on the one hand, light and warmth are inseparably connected. The chaos was darkness, but that darkness was also characterized by the absolute cold. Light imparts heat and warmth. And warmth is the indispensable requisite for life, and that of the life of man and animal and plant. But, on the other hand, light is the basis for all fellowship, also of the creatures toward and with one another, because of the peculiar characteristic of light. Light is movement, moves, we are told, at the rate of 186,000 miles per second. And the outstanding peculiarity and characteristic of light is that it reflects upon the things, and returns with the image of the things. Hence, light enables us to see things. And therefore light is the indispensable requisite for all life and fellowship. However, this also applies to the fellowship between creation and God. God saw the light and judged that it was very good. This light proceeded from God, shone upon the things, reflected them to the Lord, carried the image of the things back to the eye of the Creator.



Finally, this physical light of the first day is also the basis and figure of another and higher light. Presently the Lord will create man and He would create in that man, adapted to the light of creation, a two-fold light. There is, first of all, the light which we would designate as the rational light. Thereby man, endowed with this rational "eye" as well as the physical eye, would be able to see the works of God's hands understandingly. Also the dog, cat, etc., see the things round about them, are endowed with physical light or the physical eye, although even from a physical point of view, it is said, do not see the things exactly as we see them. Man's eye is the most wonderful of all sight organs of the living creature. But even if the animal could see exactly as we do, it does not see understandingly, does not recognize in all things the works of the living God. Man sees things understandingly, recognizes the handiwork of the Creator, is endowed with a rational eye. And, in the second place, we would speak of spiritual light, the spiritual eye. With this "eye" Adam saw his God spiritually, saw Him with all the love of his heart and soul, saw the beauty and greatness of his Maker and praised and loved Him with all his being. And this light is symbolic of the light of love which God now pours into our hearts and minds by His Holy Spirit. Even as physical light is that movement which proceeds from God and takes up the image of the things and reflects them to our eyes, so spiritually light is that movement of the grace of God upon the creature, who is adapted to His service, whereby man can once again "see" God, see Him with the eye of love, "see" Him in all His glory and perfection, know Him as we are known. Then God's fellowship with His people will be perfected, and His tabernacle with man will be complete, in the heavenly, eternal perfection whereof the first Paradise was an earthly symbol.

H. Veldman.

#### CLASSIS EAST

will meet in regular session, Wednesday, July 11, at 9 o'clock A.M. in the Protestant Reformed Church at Holland, Michigan.

D. Jonker (S.C.)

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*Notice!* — as is customary, the Standard Bearer will not be published for the 15th of July.

## THROUGH THE AGES

### John Calvin and The Reformation In Geneva

*Life of Calvin.* Calvin's dates are 1509-64. He was born in Noyon, Picardy, France. He came from a good family. His father was secretary to the bishop of Noyon. At the age of twelve he was made a beneficiary chaplain in and near Noyon, which brought him an income. But he was never ordained priest and took no degree. Having been provided with an income, he entered the university of Paris where he completed his undergraduate studies. Leaving Paris, he went to the university of Orleans to study law. He also took up the study of Greek with a Lutheran teacher, Melchior Wolmar. Having already mastered the Latin in the university of Paris, he continued his study in Greek and in addition took up the study of Hebrew in the College de France in Paris. Thus far he had shown no particular interest in matters of religion. At this time he was still untouched by the Reformation, its doctrines and struggle. Yet he was not ignorant of the issues; for Luther's books had already penetrated France. But in 1533 Calvin was converted and henceforth religion was to him a matter of prime importance. He now began the work of an evangelist in Bourges. Receiving tidings of the death of his father he went to Noyon, the place of his birth. Here he again preached the gospel to the people of Noyon and of the neighboring towns. A few were converted to His gospel but the majority was hostile and Calvin sought a new field of labor in Paris.

Here in Paris Calvin wrote an inaugural address for Cop, the newly elected rector of the university of Paris. Though written by Calvin, it was delivered by Cop. The key-note of the discourse was the "Grace of God the one sole fountain of man's renewal, pardon, and eternal life." It was spoken on all saints day, yet it contained not a word about the saints. The result was that a storm broke loose and Cop and Calvin were pronounced heretics. The officials of the city went to arrest Calvin, but he eluded them and fled to a city, Angouleme by name, and found safety in the home of a friend, Louis du Tillit. Finding here a large library he spent his time in reading and meditation. After a half year Calvin left his hiding and went to Poitiers, where he drew disciples around him. The fruit of his labors here was the organization of a small congregation.

From this city Calvin went to Noyon where he severed the last link that bound him to the papacy by resigning his benefices. From Noyon he went to Paris,

and met Le Febre and other reformers. Feeling perhaps that France was too perilous for him, he quitted Paris and set out for Germany. Hardly had he crossed the borders of Germany, when persecutions once more broke out in France. Had Calvin been in Peris when the storm broke, he would certainly have been numbered among the victims. This persecution had been occasioned by the publication of a tract or placard fiercely denouncing the mass. The paper was headed, "True articles on the horrible, great, and intolerable abuses of the Popish Mass."

The year 1534 found Calvin safely in Protestant Basel. He was now twenty five years old. Here he wrote his "Institutes of the Christian Religion" dedicated to Francis I of France. The work had been begun in Anguoleme. It is prefaced with a letter to the king, and its purpose was to defend his (Calvin's) slandered fellow-believers. On the publication of his Institutes in 1536, Calvin once more visited Noyon, the place of his birth. From there he proceeded to Basel, and August of this same year found him in Geneva. He had come to rest only for the night to depart on the morrow. But he was pressed into service in Geneva by Farel. Calvin first refused. He believed his sphere was his library and his proper instrument of work his pen. He believed he could best edify all the churches from the privacy of a study-room. But Farel commanded Calvin to remain, and imprecated upon his studies the curse of God, should he make them the excuse for declining the call.

*Reform of Geneva prior to Calvin's arrival.* Geneva for two centuries had been governed politically by its bishops and the Count of Savoy. But in 1526 it had gained its independence and made alliance with Berne and the Swiss. The new government, formed of citizens of liberated Geneva, allowed Wm. Farel, Peter Viret, and Antoine Froment to preach the Gospel in Geneva, and it officially adopted the advocated reforms. The mass was abolished, images and relics were removed, the bishops were banished, all Catholic worship was forbidden, a school and a hospital were founded, daily sermons, simple communion, and a strict discipline was introduced.

*The character of the Genevan reform prior to the arrival of Calvin.* The Genevans, being a liberty-loving people, had expelled the pope's bishop, who had fastened himself upon them as a political as well as an ecclesiastical ruler. The hatred of the Genevans of Rome and all things Romish, also explains the action of the Genevan new government, according to which it introduced the ecclesiastical reforms advocated by Farel. It was hatred of Rome that made them do this but not love of God and of the truth and of holy living. Fact is that, as their treatment of Calvin was to indicate, the great majority of them were haters of God and of His truth and of holy living. They were licen-

tious and loose-living. For centuries Geneva had known almost nothing of moral discipline. This was the case not only in Geneva but throughout Europe, in every city of the patriarchate of the Pope of Rome. Wittenburg, the center of the Lutheran Reformation, was that corrupt, that Luther more than once threatened to quit the city.

As to Geneva, before the expulsion of Rome, its clergy was profligate, its government tyrannical, and its people demoralized. The Genevans revelled, danced, played at cards and fought in the streets; they sang indecent songs, uttered fearful blasphemies, indulged in short, in all sorts of excesses. The people had adopted protestantism but not with their hearts. Many of them were still papists at heart; some were anabaptists, and others were deeply tainted with infidel and materialistic philosophy. And this whole population was in the church and were members of it in good standing, however unworthy. There was no church discipline. All these libertines were allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper under the reign of the Roman bishops. In those days everybody belonged to the church, infidel and believer, saint and sinner alike. And the great weakness of the Lutheran Reformation was that it allowed the world to continue in the church.

The world was in the church when Calvin arrived in Geneva, and this despite the fact that Geneva had embraced Protestantism. The great achievement of Calvin was that through the vigorous exercise of church discipline by the ruling ministry which he restored to the church, the world in Geneva was cast out of the church.

*The new political government in Geneva after the expulsion of Rome.* If we are to have understanding of Calvin's struggles and achievement in Geneva, we must know how its government was organized. There was 1) the Council-General, the convention of all the citizens of Geneva; 2) the Council of two hundred, called the Great Council and chosen by the Council-General; 3) the Little Council or Senate formed of twenty five members and chosen by the Great Council. As was said, the Great Council was chosen by the Council-General, but in 1542 this was changed, contrary to the protests of Calvin. In this year the election of the Great Council was taken away from the people and given to the Little Council or Senate. The Council of twenty five was the ruling body in Geneva.

*Calvin's first labors in Geneva.* Calvin was appointed to give lectures on the Scriptures and to preach, which he did, not in the school, for there was none, but in the Cathedral; and not to students, for there were none, but to the common people.

Within three months from the commencement of these labors he had compiled a brief but comprehensive creed of the Christian faith, and a Catechism for the

instruction of the youth. Both were adopted and approved by the Council of two hundred.

Calvin also recommended that the government appoint certain persons who, in connection with the ministers, should take oversight over all the citizens of Geneva and report the unworthy to the church for discipline and, if need be, for excommunication out of the church. This recommendation was adopted by the Council of Two Hundred.

Calvin next drafted a number of rules for the reformation of the morals of the city. The government adopted these rules and placed them on the statute books. These rules forbade games of chance, oaths and blasphemies, dances and lascivious songs, and the farces and masquerades in which the people had publicly indulged. They enjoined all persons to attend the sermons on the Sabbath and on the week-days and retire to their homes at nine o'clock at night. The masters of hotels and cabarets were to see to it that their guests observed these regulations.

*Calvin banished from Geneva.* The fundamental cause. This cause was the hatred of Calvin by the worldly element in Geneva, the libertines. This element continued in their lascivious ways. Calvin thundered reproof from the pulpit against their vices. This was more than they could endure. Especially did they resent the "excommunication". For the ministers would remove from the rolls of the church the names of members who lived in sin but would not repent.

*The immediate occasion of Calvin's banishment.* The opposition to Calvin's "excommunication" was so strong that the Council of two hundred ruled that the Lord's Supper should be refused to no one. Calvin, of course, refused to comply. The libertines also demanded that the Lord's Supper be dispensed with unleavened bread. Again the civil authorities so ruled without consulting the ministers. This was laying the church in bondage and Calvin therefore refused to comply also respecting this matter, though he had no objection to dispensing the Lord's Supper with such bread. That to him was a matter of indifference.

The sentiment of Calvin became known. As the Sabbath approached upon which the Lord's Supper was to be served the fury of the libertines increased. They ran through the streets at night yelling, "to the Rhone with them (the pastors). They would stop before the pastors' houses and fire off their firearms. Frightful confusion prevailed in Geneva. "I have lived here," says Calvin himself, describing these agitations, "engaged in strange contests. I have been saluted in mockery of an evening before my own door, with fifty or sixty shots of arquebuses. You may imagine how that must astound a poor scholar, timid as I am, and as I confess, I always was."

On the Sabbath that the Lord's Supper was to be administered, the two churches in Geneva were filled to

capacity. The libertines were there too in great force. In the one church Calvin preached; in the other Farel. Calvin, as did Farel in his church, expounded in his sermon the nature of the Lord's Supper; he described the attitude required of those who would worthily partake of it; and recalling the disorders which had reigned in the city in the past weeks, he declared that this day the Lord's Supper would not be dispensed to prove that the disorders were not those of the majority assembled. Sooner should his blood dye the boards he stood upon than that he would be guilty of the profanation demanded of him, namely, that he serve the Lord's Supper to libertines who were present in large numbers. "We protest before you all", he said, "that we are not obstinate about the question of bread, leavened or unleavened; that is a matter of indifference, which is left to the discretion of the church. If we decline to administer the Lord's Supper, it is because we are in great difficulty, which prompts us to this course."

In the evening Calvin preached again. While he was preaching, a storm broke loose, on account of what he was saying. Swords were drawn, and infuriated men pressed forward to the pulpit. A single stroke and Calvin's career would have been ended. But friends threw themselves between the pulpit and the mob, and remonstrated with it. The result was that the affair passed without bloodshed.

The next day the Council of Two Hundred met, and pronounced sentence of banishment upon Calvin and Farel. The sentence was ratified on the following day by the Council general or assembly of the people. The Council rested its sentence of banishment upon the question of unleavened bread. Herein it acted deceitfully. For Calvin had made it plain that the question of unleavened bread was with him an open one. The real reason of the banishment was that Calvin and Farel had refused to serve the Lord's Supper to the libertines on account of their blasphemies and immoralities. Before being condemned, Calvin asked to be heard in his defense before the Council-general, but his request was refused. It is important to mark at this stage that the principle on which Calvin rested his whole scheme of church government was: holy things are not to be given to the unholy. In other words, what he labored for in the first place is purity of the church and in the second place morality in the state.

Calvin now went to Stasburg, where he remained for two years and a half before returning to Geneva. In his new sphere at Strasburg, Calvin preached four times a week and discharged all the other duties of a faithful pastor. He also lectured every day on theology to the students of the Academy, taking as his text book the Bible. The fame of his lectures drew students from other countries, and Stasburg promised to rival Wittenburg as a school of theology.

Yielding to the petition of the Genevans that he return, Calvin was back in Geneva. The public feeling in Geneva regarding Calvin had undergone a great change. The faction of the libertines, reinforced by Anabaptists and Papists, had grown ungovernable. Licentiousness and tumult ran riot now that Calvin was gone. The Council, helpless in the face of these disorders, repented of what it had done. And the citizens all cried out, "Calvin, Calvin!" We wish Calvin, the good and learned man, and true minister of Jesus Christ."—the citizens, exclusive of course of the libertines and the papists. Calvin did not want to return. Going back was like lying down on a bed of torture. The thought, he tells us, filled him with horror. But his brethren in Stasburg told him that Geneva was his post of service and Bucer bade him beware of the punishment of Jonas for refusing to go and preach repentance to Nineveh. This was enough for Calvin. He went back.

G. M. Ophoff.

## Contributions

### DE AANBIEDING VAN BROEDER K. C. VAN SPRONSEN AANGENOMEN

En met dit gezegde is de "Verklaring", volgens broeder Van Spronsen voldoende gevild. Nu het lijkt nergens op. Als onderscheiding moet opgemerkt worden, dat de aanhaling, zeer duidelijk, de zaak waarover het gaat, ontduikt. Want er wordt niets in gezegd betreffende het verschil tusschen voor- of onvoorwaardelijke belofte. Integendeel, de aanhaling, of tegen argument heeft betrekking op onderwijs alszoodanig, en de inhoud van dat onderwijs bevat alleen maar twee vage voorwaarden. Voorwaarden van wat? Twee onbepaalde, bloote voorwaarden, zonder meer. Dr. Schilder kan b.v. de eene aannemen en de andere verwerpen. Dit is toch zeker zeer onduidelijk, en bewijst het ontduiken der zaak waarover het gaat. En echte debateur onwaardig. Deze gestelde voorwaarden zijn vleeschelijk; ze zijn, of behooren bij Dr. Schilder, en broeder Van Spronsen, doch niet bij, of van God. Nu wil ik nog een laatste aanhaling geven uit den brief van 15 Feb. — Niet de scherpere, doch de scherpe pen schrijft het volgende als een illustratie:

"To use an illustration: It is possible that according to God's counsel, which is absolutely unconditional (that is, it is realized irrespective of what man does), it is decreed that Rev. Hoeksema shall preach the Word next Sunday in his fine big church on Fuller Avenue. However, that can only be realized if Rev. Hoeksema arise on Sunday morning, eats, reviews his sermon and leaves his parsonage and goes to church. And then

there are many more conditions that must occur. For example, his members must also go to church to listen. These are all conditions which must be accomplished if God's counsel in this instance shall be realized. God could also do it unconditionally. For example, if He treated man as a stock and block. (In the Netherlands there are thousands of these false mystics who hold to such a "faith"). God could treat Rev. Hoeksema as an automaton and move him from his bed to the pulpit and there let him automatically speak. That is all possible. But God does not will it so. God has established *conditions* which Rev. Hoeksema must execute, unto the realization of His holy will for that Sunday morning. And also the execution of these conditions is *grace and grace alone!*"

Bij het lezen der sterke uitdrukkingen in beide brieven, werd mijn gedachte onwillekeurig bepaald bij Goliath, doch hij werdt geduchtig verslagen.

Doch laat mij vervolgen met opmerking en kritiek. Allereerst dan het woord "mogelijk" betreffende Gods Raad in deze illustratie is buiten orde, want het woord mogelijk veronderstelt ook "niet mogelijk", of twijfel. In en bij God is geen twijfel. Er is niets onmogelijk bij God. Gods Raad, Gods Wil, Gods Liefde, Gods Verbond, Gods Woord, Gods Belofte, Gods Genade is *niet* veranderlijk, maar *onveranderlijk*. Is eeuwig vast. Is van eeuwigheid tot in eeuwigheid. God is, *die* Hij is; en zal zijn, Die Hij zijn zal. Ik ben, Die Ik ben, spreekt de Heere. Dit moet worden vastgehouden. Zoo heeft God Zich geopenbaard en bekend gemaakt. Indien de zaak zoo staat, en zoo is het; Hoe is God in Zijn Raad, (hetwelk absoluut onvoorwaardelijk is, afgedacht wat de mensch ook doet) toch nog *afhankelijk van voorwaarden*, gesteld door Zijn Wil, die de mensch vervullen moet? De stelling der illustratie alszoodanig is niet alleen tegenstrijdig, doch het tracht God te berooven van Zijn Eer. Want volgens de illustratie is Gods Raad in strijd met Gods Wil. Het staat er toch duidelijk. Gods Raad is absoluut onvoorwaardelijk en wordt bevestigd, onverschillig wat de mensch doet, doch God wil het zoo niet, en stelt den mensch voorwaarden die hij vervullen moet en dat geschiedt dan door Genade alleen. Gods onvoorwaardelijke Raad is dus afhankelijk van Gods voorwaardelijken Wil. De broeder raadt aan om voort te gaan met duidelijke onderscheiding. Nu in deze illustratie wordt *scheiding* in God gemaakt, inplaats van *duidelijke onderscheiding*.

De illustratie tracht zich voort te bewegen op een dubbel spoor wat noodzakelijk en zeker uitloopt op een ontsporing. In de Concordia van 15 Maart zegt broeder Van Spronsen, dat hij soms glimlachen moet over ons schrijven van artikelen, men noemt zulks, zegt hij: "Klaar is Kees". Mag ik de broeder verzoeken deze laatste woorden ook op hem zelve toe te passen. Het geheele betoog in de twee genoemde brieven, bevat

geen enkele aanhaling uit de Schrift of Belijdenis, ten bewijze van zijn geschrijf. Persoonlijke veronderstelde gedachten, die zijn er, als sterke uitdrukkingen neergeschreven, en zoo is het dan zie zoo: Klaar is Kees!

Er is ook bezwaar tegen het gestelde in de "Verklaring": "Dat de Belofte des Verbonds is *niet* voor allen, (hoofd voor hoofd) die gedoopt zijn." Voor degenen die dit *wel* beweren, zijn natuurlijker wijze geroepen, dit uit de Schrift en Belijdenis duidelijk te bewijzen, want de Prot. Geref. Kerken hebben hunne beschouwing dienaangaande overvloediglijk bekend gemaakt en bewezen. Is er soms bevreesdheid onder de vrijgemaakten die beschouwing duidelijk te bewijzen? Vergun mij twee vragen betreffende die beschouwing te mogen stellen. "Hoe moet verstaan worden, dat *niet allen*, hoofd voor hoofd, gedoopte en belijdende leden, der uitwendige Kerkengroepen, verkorenen, of kinderen Gods zijn? Indien er beweerd wordt dat dit wel het geval is, dat zij allen kinderen Gods zijn, hoe moeten dan de woorden van Jezus die Hij sprak, verstaan worden in Joh. 8:31-59? Hier leert Jezus duidelijk dat de joden die Hem geloofden als zaad Abrahams, die *toch niet* in Zijn Woord geloofden, zij zijn daarom geen kinderen Abraham's, omdat hunnen vader niet God maar den duivel is. Zij zijn kinderen des duivels, en toch zaad Abrahams. Waren deze Joden dan geen verbondskinderen onder de besnijdenis? En toch waren zij uit den duivel en zochten Jezus te dooden. Hoe (zoo vraag ik) zijn deze Joden *toch* door Jezus erkend, en aangesproken als Verbondskinderen, die de Belofte van Gods Verbond deelachtig zijn? Zij kennen noch Christus, noch den Vader, ofschoon zij God hunnen Vader noemen. Christus toont hier zeer duidelijk aan, het verschil van tweeërlei zaad uit geloovige ouders, in dit geval uit Abraham. Geldt ditzelfde dan niet in verband met den doop? Christus' Woord van den Vader is toch zeker beslissend, ook in onze dagen? In betrekking met dit: Hoe is het gezegde in de "Verklaring", hetgeen de Prot. Geref. Kerken belijden, zoo voldoende gevild? Wat, en waar is de scherpste van de scherperen pen? Het wordt zoo beslissend in de twee brieven gezegd, dat Gods beloften (niet enkelvoud, doch meervoudig—J. K.) alle voorwaardelijk zijn.

Doch hoe nu moet datgene, wat God tot Noach sprak, in betrekking tot deze aarde? Noemt de broeder dit niet, volgens Ursinus, onvoorwaardelijk? Maakt duidelijke onderscheiding, roept men ons toe! Hierop te wijzen, toont reeds aan, dat er te haastig is geschreven. Het betoog in de twee brieven, schijnen en klinken aan de oppervlakte wel heel mooi, doch ze bevatten geen diepte. Een Hollandsch spreekwoord zegt: "Het is niet alles goud, dat blinkt of klinkt." Nu veel goud is er niet, in het betoog der brieven. Onderzoeken we dit nader in Gen. 3:15: Volgens den broeder bevat dit de vloek over Satan, en is in geen geval de *moeder-*

*belofte*, doch profetie is heel iets anders dan Belofte. Wellicht is de versverdeeling in mijn Bijbel anders, dan die van den broeder, want ik lees in Gen. 3 vers 14 de eigenlijke vloek over den slang, en in vers 15 de verdere werking dier vloek. De beide verzen zijn niet te scheiden, doch te onderscheiden. In vers 14 *is*, (nadruk op "is") de slang vervloekt, boven al het vee en gedierte des velds, op haren buik zal zij gaan, en stof zal zij eten alle dagen haar levens. Dit gesproken Woord Gods is zekerlijk, en op het moment, zonder eenige voorwaarden. In de kracht van Gods spreken treedt dit onmiddelijk in werking. Dit geldt ook van het spreken Gods, in vers 15. God zegt: (en niemand meer, en ook zonder eenig voorbehoud of voorwaarde) "*Ik zal zetten*". God spreekt en doet het. Gods kracht is in Zijn spreken. De zekerheid is in Gods spreken. Want door Zijn Woord is het heelal geschapen of gemaakt. Dit moet allereerst dus voor ons vast staan. Wat wij Gods Belofte noemen, is voor Hem Zijne zekerheid. Zoo bezie ik het, omdat God Zich zoo heeft geopenbaard, en bekend gemaakt. Zoo dan, God zet vijandschap tusschen den slang en de vrouw. *Dat* doet God, zonder eenige voorwaarde. Beide de slang en de vrouw zijn onwederstandelijk. Verder, die vijandschap werkt door, in beider zaad. God doet *dat*, zonder meer. Het kenmerk van deze vijandschap is, dat het ééne zaad zal het zaad der vrouw de verzenen; doch het zaad der vrouw zal den kop der slang vermorzelen. Die vijandschap treedt onmiddelijk in werking.

Het natuurlijke zaad der slang wordt hier niet bedoeld, en het natuurlijke zaad der vrouw ook niet, doch het zaad der leugen, hetwelk de slang de vrouw voorstelde, en wat de vrouw in verleiding heeft aangevaard, en ongehoorzaam werd aan het zaad der waarheid, het welk God in Zijn liefde tot den mensch stelde. Het is dus de vijandschap tusschen leugen en waarheid, die God deed zetten. *God deed dit*. Dit tweeërlei zaad ontwikkelt verder, in en uit de vrouwe en man, in zijn organischen zin, omdat zij reeds te voren door God vruchtbaar waren gemaakt. Gods liefde is Gods Waarheid, hetwelk de leugen haat, overwint en verdelgt. Dat is het wat God spreekt in Gen. 3:15. En Zijn Woord is waarachtig. Gods spreken is zeker en gewis. Gods Belofte is *Zijn zekerheid*. Zoo moet Gods Belofte verstaan worden. En dan ook maar *ééne* Belofte, n.l. *de zekerheid* van Gods liefde. En dan ook maar *ééne* liefde. *God is liefde*. Alzoo is Gods liefde, *de waarheid*. In Gods liefde sprak God de waarheid in Gen. 3:15 en haatte de leugen. Het uitgaande gesproken woord Gods mag hier dan *profetie* genoemd worden, doch de krachtdadige werking van dit uitgesproken woord Gods is Gods zekerheid. De zekerheid is bevestigd, is ingesloten in Zijne liefde. Wanneer God dus spreekt spreekt Hij in en van Zijne liefde. Profetie beteekent eigenlijk: "zegt het voort". Op God



toegepast, beteekent dit: God zegt Zijn woord voort in zekerheid. Hieruit blijkt duidelijk dat profetie en belofte niet te scheiden zijn, doch zijn onlosmakelijk aan, en in elkaar verbonden. Gods belofte is de zekerheid van Gods profetie, en Gods profetie bezit in zichzelf, Gods belofte van zekerheid. Zoo is profetie dan niet *iets anders* als belofte. Deze lijn van beschouwing loopt langs zuivere banen. Want wanneer God spreekt spreekt Hij in, uit, en van Zichzelf, en Zijn gesproken woord keert weder tot Hem, en dit vanwege Zijne liefde. Zoo is Gods verbond.

Zoo heeft Gods Zoon (het gesprokene Woord Gods, dat vleesch geworden is) Zijn God en Vader geopenbaard en bekend gemaakt, en is wedergekeerd tot den Vader, uit dewelke Hij was uitgegaan. In Gen. 3:15 is het Gods Zelfopenbaring. Allereerst openbaart God Zich in Zijne Almachtigheid, door het zetten van vijandschap. God openbaart hier Zijn raad, Zijn plan, Zijn wil, en dat alles in Zijne liefde. In de diepere zin des woords, God openbaar hier Zijne liefde. Hij doet dit in, uit, en van Zichzelf, door den mensch. Wanneer God nu spreekt dat *het zaad* der vrouw, den kop der slang zal vermorzelen, geschiedt dit metterdaad in zekerheid. *Dat*, en dat alleen, is de Belofte Gods van Zijn spreken in Zijn verbond der liefde. Het zaad der vrouw, waarvan God hier spreekt, is de zekerheid van moederschap. Zoo versta ik dit, als de *moederbelofte*. En het zaad der vrouw is het zaad der Waarheid, dat het zaad der leugen openbaart en verdelgt. Zoo kan Adam dan zijne vrouw "Eva" noemen, omdat zij moeder aller levenden is. Zij is moeder Gods, omdat God door haar Zijn *zaad* der Waarheid en liefde doet openbaren. God werkt Zijn liefde in de vrouw niet *om* de vrouw, maar God heeft de vrouw lief, omdat zij door God, uit Zijne gelijkenis is genomen. En God is in Zijn liefde-werk volkomen onafhankelijk. God werkt, zooals het Hem belijft, zonder eenige voorschriften of voorwaarden. Gods liefde is in Zichzelf. Gods liefde openbaart zich als "de Waarheid", tegenover den leugen, hetwelk door God is gehaat. Zoo kan Christus zeggen: "Ik ben de waarheid". Het is dus Gods liefde, die Gods haat openbaart tegenover de leugen en ongehoorzaamheid. Het is door den weg van Gods liefde dat God in Hemzelf door de vrouw Zijn doel bereikt. Daarom kan Christus ook zeggen: Ik ben de Weg en het Leven. Want Gods liefde is ook Gods leven. Schriftuurlijk bewijs voor mijn bovenstaand betoog is veelvuldig, doch vergun mij slechts enkele aanhalingen. We lezen in 1 Joh. 4:7: "Dat de liefde is uit God, en een iegelijk die liefheeft, *is* uit God geboren en kent God." Dit is duidelijke taal. Doch nadruk moet gelegd worden: dat dit liefhebben *is alleen* in betrekking tot degene die uit God geboren is, waarin God Zijne liefde openbaart. In vers 8 wordt gezegd: Die *niet* liefheeft, die heeft God niet gekend, want God is liefde. In vers 16 lezen we verder: "en die in de

liefde blijft, die blijft in God en God in hem." Het blijven in Gods liefde, moet ons geen parten spelen, en zeggen of beweren dat God ons zekere voorwaarden zou stellen, tot volharding. O neen! Wat God begonnen is, zal Hij ook voleindigen. Dat is Gods zekerheid. (Belofte). Want wij hebben God lief, omdat Hij ons eerst liefgehad heeft, en dat wel in Zijn Zoon Jezus Christus, want het is alleen de Zoon die in de liefde Gods, Zijnen Vader is, en blijft. Zoo is dan God de Vader in den Zoon Zijner liefde blijvende. Gods liefde is Gods leven. Het is Gods innerlijk liefde leven. De innerlijke kracht van Gods innerlijk liefde leven, bevestigt, openbaart, en maakt bekend, (door het gesprokene Woord dat van God uitgaat) dit liefde leven. De kracht in en met Gods liefde, gaan altijd met Gods Woord samen. Ze zijn in elkander, inbegrepen en ingesloten. Zoo dan, Gods liefde leven is eenig en volmaakt, in harmonie, en werkt in volkomen perfectie. Voorwaarden zooals wij menschen dit verstaan en trachten dit zeer dikwijls er aan toe te voegen, zijn absoluut buiten gesloten. Dit liefde leven Gods, zou ik Gods verbond willen noemen, omdat liefde, kracht, en woord, alle drie in God, in één verbonden en ingesloten zijn. Want God is liefde en de kracht in de liefde zendt uit het woord der liefde. Het is Zijn verbond in Hem. Het is Gods eenig verbond, alleen in zichzelf. Geen twee-of-meer verbonden. Geen werk en daarachter het genade verbond. Neen! Maar een enkel verbond Gods. Het verbond in liefde. De kracht of geest der liefde Gods bevestigt en getuigt de bekendmaking of openbaring, het woord dat van Gods liefde gesproken van Hem uitgaat. En de getuigenis is waarachtig, want zij getuigen van elkander en zoo zijn er dan drie die getuigen. En wat wij menschen nu trachten te noemen onder Gods belofte is de zekerheid, het waarachtige van Gods verbond.

Wel verstaan in Gods verbond, Zijn liefde leven, zijn alle dingen opgesloten, die wij als menschen in ons aardsch spraakgebruik zouden kunnen opnoemen. Gods verbond is volkomen en volmaakt in perfectie. Er ontbreekt absoluut niets aan. Het is een absolute schoonheid. Gods genade beteekent Gods schoonheid. God is alomtegenwoordig. Hij is zonder begin of einde. God is almachtig en alwetend, en dit alles is bevat in Zijne liefde. Daarom is God de schoonheid zelve. In betrekking tot dit alles is het zeker wel duidelijk dat God geheel en al onafhankelijk is. Zoo bezien, hoe kan God dan toch nog afhankelijk zijn van iets buiten of in Hem, dat dienst zou moeten of kunnen doen, tot bevestiging of uitvoering van Zijn raad, plan, wil, verbond of belofte? Dit zoo toch te stellen, is een trachten tot berooving van Gods eer. Daardoor zou God verkleind worden. Gods Woord leert zulks niet.

(wordt vervolgd)

J. R. Kuivenhoven.  
Kalamazoo, Mich.

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## IN HIS FEAR

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### Church Membership In His Fear

13.

WHERE?

#### *The Proper Viewpoint.*

Thus far we have discussed rather negatively various attitudes which may be and often are assumed toward the question, "Where must I join myself as a church member?"

We found that the attitude of the undenominationalist is to be rejected, that the attitude of those who place implicit trust in a certain institute is essentially idolatry, that those who simply go along with a certain movement of churches for various carnal reasons are carelessly indifferent traditionalists, and that those who view the whole matter from the standpoint of the possibility of avoiding hell-fire are utilitarian in their approach. We furthermore emphasized the idea that we are not always free of these tendencies ourselves, even though it be true that we would not easily jump denominational boundaries. What this means for us as Protestant Reformed members is easily seen. We do not hesitate to say that the Protestant Reformed Churches are the purest manifestation of the body of Christ in the world. If you and I, then, are members of those churches, the objective fact is that we are members of the purest manifestation of the body of Christ in the world. But the subjective question remains: why are we members? And if our membership is motivated by any of the attitudes described above, we still are walking in a wrong way, yes, walking in sin, contrary to the fear of the Lord.

Hence, we must be moved by a different attitude in this matter. And our attitude must be that of the question, "Where must I, before the face of God, belong?" It is certainly not true that one can relegate every church but his own to the class of *totally false*. It is historically incorrect to say that once a church has erred in doctrine or in discipline, it at once deserts all the truth and all Christian discipline. Such things take place only gradually, in the way of increasing and progressive departure from the truth, and, as all history teaches us, over a period of years. The beginnings of error, for example, were present in the Romish Church centuries before the Reformation took place; but during those same centuries the Romish Church was the only instituted church there was. And therefore, while there comes a time when a church must finally be classified as false, so that it would be impossible for a living, consciously believing child of God

to resort under its ecclesiastical roof, it is incorrect to single out one single organized and instituted church as the only true church. From the point of view of objective fact, we must certainly distinguish degrees of purity and degrees of falsehood, according as a church denies or confesses the truth on the various truths contained in the one truth of Scripture. On any other basis one would certainly have to maintain that he who lives and dies outside of the Protestant Reformed Churches,—or to make it very broad, the Reformed Churches—goes to everlasting destruction.

But in order to understand our duty in this respect, we must first rid ourselves of every notion that the church is a sort of institute for saving souls. Your and my salvation is not the purpose of the church's existence in the world. The matter stands just the other way: the church—also as it is instituted in the world—is the purpose of our salvation. God wants His holy, catholic church, with Christ Jesus as its Head and King, to be manifest in this present world. He purposes that it shall be manifest in the preaching of the gospel, of the truth as it is in Jesus, the truth of Holy Scripture. He purposes that it shall be manifest in the administration (and thus, of course, also the partaking) of the sacraments as Jesus Christ has ordained them. He purposes that it shall be manifest in the exercise of church discipline according to the principles of the Word of God. This is His purpose because the church must be to the glory of His Name as it is revealed in His Son Jesus Christ.

It is because of this that our fathers also found the distinguishing marks of the church to consist in the pure preaching of the Word, the pure administration of the sacraments, and the right exercise of church discipline. They maintained that the true church could not be distinguished by its size or numbers, as though the majority decided where the church was. They understood full well that the true church is often small, that according as the church in the world grew large and prosperous it usually became apostate and corrupt. They saw very well that the true church was not to be discerned from the false by the criterion of the decrees and acts of its councils or by the edicts of princes and magistrates. Nor were they deceived by the claim of the antiquity of a certain institute, which, though it could boast of centuries of existence, could become corrupt and depart from the orthodox Christian faith.

Rather they recognized, according to Article 29 of the Belgic Confession, three infallible signs by which the true church becomes recognizable, namely: the pure preaching of the Word, the proper administration of the sacraments, and the faithful exercise of Christian discipline. Where these marks are present, there is the true church. Where they are wanting, there the church is not. And where these signs,—though not

utterly wanting,—are corrupted, there the church must repent or die.

In a sense all three of these marks are comprehended in the first, the pure preaching of the Word of God. For, in the first place, the administration of the sacraments and the exercise of Christian discipline have no meaning apart from the preaching of the Word. They stand in the service of it. In the sacraments the Word of God is presented in visible and tangible form. And the essence of Christian discipline is the very Word of Christ. Besides, the sacraments are not likely to be profaned where the Word of God is purely preached; nor, essentially, is Christian discipline neglected there, since such preaching is already the exercise of Christian discipline. We may, therefore, safely say that the central, all-important mark of the true church is the pure preaching of the Word of God.

The reason for this is easily understood. The church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone. But that foundation is exactly the Word of God. And that Word of God is contained in the Scriptures. Whoever, therefore, proclaims another word, the word of man, does not build upon the one foundation. And not building upon that one foundation, he does not build the church. Furthermore, we must remember that it pleases Christ to call, preserve, and defend His church through the Word preached. Only where the Word is preached, therefore, according to the Scriptures, there is heard the voice of the Son of God. Where the Word is not preached, there Christ does not speak His Word of salvation, and there the church is not gathered.

There is, therefore, a very definite standard by which the church may be known. Nor need we object at this juncture that what is pure and impure preaching of the Word is a debatable subject in last instance. For then we assail Holy Writ itself. We surely must maintain that on no cardinal point of doctrine does Holy Writ leave the slightest room for difference of opinion, but on the contrary is very clear as to what is the truth and what is the lie. Scripture is the objective and clear standard whereby the preaching, the administration of the sacraments, and the exercise of discipline are to be judged.

In the light of the above, to what conclusions may we come?

In the first place, we must emphasize that the whole question must be viewed in the fear of the Lord from the viewpoint of the question, "Where does God require me to be?" The question is not at all, "Where *may* I be?" but, "Where *must* I be?" The question is not, "Which church will best serve me, and how will it serve me?" but, "In which church do I stand in the

service of God's holy catholic church to the utmost of my power?"

In the second place, the answer to that question must always be: in the church where, according to my earnest conviction before God, in the light of Holy Scripture, the Word of God is purely preached, the sacraments are properly administered, and Christian discipline is faithfully exercised. There may, indeed, be other churches, where the Word has not been utterly forsaken, where the sacraments are not entirely profaned, and where the exercise of Christian discipline is not completely forgotten. It may also be that God has His people there yet, and that the Almighty has a reason for having His people there. That is not the question, not the question for you and me in the matter of our membership. It is in view of the fact that the marks of the true church may not yet be absent but may be corrupted, that the standard of membership is usually resolved by us into a matter of belonging, according to our conviction, in the light of Scripture, to the *purest* manifestation of the body of Christ in the world.

In the third place, it follows that the moment that I recognize that the church to which I belong is in error on a given point in respect to Word, sacraments, or discipline, I stand in duty bound before God to point the church to that error, and if it fails to repent to separate myself and join myself to a church more pure. And if the latter is impossible, then I must continue under protest and continue protesting until the Lord opens the way to separation.

In the fourth place, it follows also that if I join myself to a church which I know to be walking impenitently in the way of error, I am in principle aiding and abetting the cause of the false church. I myself am walking in a wrong way, and unless I repent, I shall die. God and His Word are not to be mocked! In that respect the matter of our church membership is certainly a matter of our salvation also. There is no salvation for him that wilfully and impenitently walks in the way of opposition to the truth of Scripture.

And so the matter is very serious. We, as Protestant Reformed people, must be always aware of it. We may not listen to the siren song of church union. We may not be deceived into recognizing any other standard of membership than that which we have, according to our Reformed Confessions. It may very well be, in fact, it is true that there are many other people of God outside of our churches. It is also true that our calling is to seek unity with all the people of God. But that unity may only be upon the basis of the pure truth of God's Word. To any who do not stand upon that basis you must say, "Repent!" To any church that does not stand upon that foundation you must point the way. You may never be a party to any attempt to lower denominational walls at the expense

of the truth of God's Word, at the expense of the truth as we confess it as Protestant Reformed Churches. And you must always, as an active member, a living member, maintain, defend, cherish, preserve, support, seek and develop, proclaim within and without, that truth, even as you value your life!

And the more serious is that calling because of the times that are upon us, of which the Scriptures speak, when men will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. II Tim. 4:3. Times they are when men turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables. II Tim. 4:4.

Turn away, therefore, from every form of false doctrine. Find, and join yourself always to the true church of Jesus Christ, never working in the direction of the false church, as you do if you follow after any false doctrine. Find and join yourself always to the true church in its *purest form*, where the Word of God is proclaimed in all its purity. And let no earthly, carnal inducement ever move you to separate yourself from its fellowship.

That is the fear of the Lord!

H. C. Hoeksema.




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## FROM HOLY WRIT

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### Exposition Of Philippians 1:9-11

The passage from Holy Writ to which we would call attention in this article reads, in full, as follows: "*And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.*"

This passage is a statement by Paul to the congregation of Philippi concerning his prayer to God for her. It is more than an exhortation to the congregation. Certainly there is also an indirect exhortation to the congregation in this prayer unto a more earnest walk in love, but it is nonetheless the prayer of the apostle to God. No doubt, this is a brief summary of the content of his daily prayers for her. But it touches the very heart of the prayers that Paul has sent up to the throne of mercy, and which prayers, therefore, are present before God.

That this is a prayer of the apostle directed to God is evident, first of all, from the fact that the apostle

speaks in the immediate context of his prayers to God for the congregation upon every remembrance of them. The writer "makes prayers for them." He wrestles before the throne of God in their behalf. And having added the great confidence he has in God concerning them, namely, that He who has begun the good work in them will finish it even unto the day of Jesus Christ, he now continues to tell what his prayer is in their behalf. And therefore we hold that this is a prayer to God for the church.

Then, too, it should be evident from the very content of this prayer itself. For the increase of love in knowledge and all judgment is not something that the believers can simply give themselves. For this they too are dependent upon the ever new supply of the Spirit of grace. It is dependent upon Him who has begun this good work in the saints, and who having begun this work does now not leave it in its further development and continuation in the power and free-will of man, but who also gives the continuation of faith and love even to the very end. Perseverance of the saints rests in the preservation of God!

Our Reformed fathers felt this truth very keenly when they, in the Staten-vertaling, translate "And this I pray God . . ." They added the name *God* as being understood from the context. In our interpretation of this prayer as not simply referring to an exhortation to the congregation, but very really as a prayer to God, we are in good company.

Paul has reason to pray this prayer in behalf of the believers in Philippi. And what were these reasons? Briefly we can state it as follows: Although there was love in the congregation at Philippi so that the believers esteemed one another in the Lord, yet, it must be added, that this love was not yet perfected as it ought to be.

Surely there was spiritual life in this church. They had had fellowship in the gospel from the first day that it had been preached to them by the riverside until the very moment in which Paul is writing this letter from the prison in Rome. Had not this church sent once and again to fulfill the needs of Paul when he was laboring in Thessalonica? And had not they recently sent, by the hands of Epaphroditus, a gift for the temporal needs of Paul. Surely the bowels and mercies in Christ were in evidence in this church. And Paul also receives these gifts not simply as a gift, as a thing in itself, but rather does he look at it as a fruit of grace, a fruit of righteousness in their lives. It is such a fruit that it is a sacrifice of a sweet savour unto God and unto the glory of God's name.

It was not because there was not spiritual life at all in this church that Paul writes as he does. Hence, he writes not simply "that your love abound", but he writes, "that your love abound *yet more and more*"! He writes in the same strain as John does when he

says: I write you not because ye do not know these things, but because ye do know them!

What was there then, to speak very concretely, wrong in this church in the life of her love?

There seems to have been a lack of love, a lack of all seeking the *one* thing in Christ. There was the case of Euodias and Syntyche, women who were living at odds with one another. That was a lack of heaven's wisdom and understanding due to the lack of love being perfected in their mind and understanding. They are told by Paul that they should walk in love. No, they must not "patch up" their difficulties, it must not be a mere give and take proposition, but it must be a matter of being "of the same mind in the Lord"! That is different. It is that which is excellent.

But shall this lack be supplied then it must come from heaven, from God who had begun this good work in them and who shall therefore also certainly finish it even unto the day of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Only when the love of God comes mightily and richly in our hearts shall we even understand and be able to practice this more excellent way.

And that is what the apostle prays for to God!

The supply from the Holy Spirit must come. Paul is, indeed, in prison far removed from this church, but God is very near to his help. In Him he places all his confidence and trust.

Yes, this love must become yet more and more abundant "in knowledge and all judgment". For without this knowledge and judgment there can be no "being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are in Christ Jesus our Lord."

How come? What is this "knowledge and all judgment"?

The "knowledge" here spoken of is not simply a knowledge of facts as they appear to the natural man, but it is the knowledge that is exact and precise; it is the knowledge by which one sees the very truth and reality of things in the light of the soul-searching Word of God. It sees through the difficulties of the problems of life as originating in sin, under the wrath of God, but also sees that the joy and happiness is in walking together in the Lord. And since it is a knowledge of love, of the love of God multiplied in our life, it is a knowledge, that acknowledges the truth. It is for this reason that the Staten Vertaling translates this by "erkenenis". The Greek "epignosis" means accurate knowledge, penetrating insight. And he who under the love of God had this knowledge surely *acknowledges* the truth. Where this is done in sincerity, there the truth is obeyed. That must be more and more the reality in the hearts and lives of the church in Philippi.

Closely connected with the foregoing, in fact included in it, is also the matter of "all judgment". This is translated in the Staten Vertaling by "in alle ge-

voel", in all feeling. The term in the Greek really allows for more than one rendering. The thought expressed in this term is that of accurate moral judgment. Greijdanus translates it as "in alle fijngevoeligheid". I believe the Rev. H. Hoeksema in his school-lectures spoke of it as "spiritual sensitiveness." It is really such a walking in love that one instinctively feels whether it is in the way and mind of Christ or not. It is like a Helen Keller, who, although both blind and deaf, can nonetheless feel the presence of people near her. She has a very keenly developed sense of feeling. A Maestro musician has this in music, in the detecting of the flaws in the rendition of music. So the Christian has this in the art of living the life of godliness.

The apostle adds: in *all* judgment. It is a spiritual sensitiveness all along the line. Life is full of judgments that must be made along the whole line of God's commandments. And always it must be: Love for God above all and for our neighbor as for ourselves. When the love of God floods our souls in this knowledge of his will then the moral judgment becomes keen. Then we are not like the floundering man who drowns, nor are we like the drunken man in his stupor, nor like the blind man feeling his way at the wall, but we are like the wise who are perfect in their ways.

Such the Christians at Philippi must become.

Then their lives shall be constantly filled with the fruits of righteousness which are in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

This being filled here is not a momentary something. The apostle employs a term in the Greek that refers to our lives as not filled with gaps of foolishness, blindness, envy and stupor of sin. Then our works will be full before God. They shall be as full as the law of God itself, when we have love abounding in knowledge and all spiritual sensitive judgement. Then each will surely esteem the other greater than themselves. Euodias and Syntyche will seek and find each other in the Lord. The find and the intent that was in Christ will then be in them. And great joy in the Holy Spirit will be their portion.

Such is the fruit of righteousness. It is peace and rest of soul. It is the quiet contentment of godliness that is the great gain. And it is all in Christ Jesus our Lord. In and through Him God sheds this love abroad in our hearts upon the prayers of the saints. And it is all fruit in our lives as branches in the vine, Christ Jesus. For without Him we can do nothing. But we can do all things through Christ, who strengthens us. Then the weak are made strong, and the barren are made a fruitful vine.

And herein is the Father the heavenly Husbandman glorified, that we bear much fruit.

Such is the ever repeated teaching of the Scrip-



tures. So it is also here. Paul adds: *unto the glory and praise of God.*

The thought is, no doubt, that in this fruitfulness of love in all knowledge and spiritual sensitive judgment, the glory of God's work of salvation is manifested. God is objectively glorified in it. His virtues of holiness, justice, power and grace, mercy and love are manifested in the same. He is our Maker and we are His workmanship in our being fruitful in the Lord. And that is ever more *unto His glory.*

This is also unto His *praise.* Praise is the recognition of the glory as this is expressed from the lips of men and angels and all of God's creatures.

And this latter is the highest end of all.

Thus Paul surely has a prayer to God, which rests in God's own purpose to save to the utmost, a prayer that is to the glory of God and to the joy and salvation of the saints.

G. Lubbers.



## PERISCOPE

*The Synod of 1951 continued.*

Tuesday morning and part of the afternoon were spent in reading the material regarding the Declaration of Principles. In our last number of the *Standard Bearer* it was pointed out that the Committee of Pre-advise which was given this material for consideration was divided in their advice. Synod first took up the advice of that part of the committee which recommended that Synod declare that the action of the last Synod was church-politically incorrect. In the discussion of this question the time of the Tuesday afternoon session and all the Wednesday sessions was taken up. During this time it became necessary for the Rev. Vermeer to leave Synod and Rev. J. D. De Jong took his place. During the Wednesday afternoon sessions the Rev. M. Gritters who had been ill for some time visited the doctor and was forbidden to attend any more of the sessions. Rev. De Boer, his next alternate, was summoned from Edgerton, Minn., and in the meantime Synod tabled the matter of the Declaration to take up routine matters. Rev. De Jong was elected assistant clerk in the place of Rev. Gritters.

Synod now took up the matter of finances. The requested subsidies were granted together with a request for an additional \$600.00 from Randolph Wisconsin, and \$800.00 to Orange City, Iowa whose support, through an oversight, had been cut off when their pastor left. The congregation of Chatham was given permission to ask for collections in classis West with a view to their obtaining a parsonage. The re-

ports of the auditors and the treasurer were approved. The assessments were reduced from \$33.50 per family to \$26.50 per family, due to the lessened need of the Mission and the balances on hand in all the funds. Synod also went on record as favoring the policy of two missionaries and in case we obtain a second then the Fuller Avenue congregation will be requested to assume his support.

It is next decided to raise the salary of our missionary by \$500 per year. In the case of Rev. H. Veldman it is decided to pay his salary for one year together with his house rent and to request the Fuller Ave. congregation to make him emeritus minister of Fuller Avenue.

It is decided to send a letter of appreciation to Mr. Fred LaGrange who has been our treasurer for 25 years.

Synod votes for members of its standing committees. The following are chosen: Mission Committee, Rev. Hanko, Elders J. Faber, D. Langeland and N. Kunz. Theological School Committee: Revs. Heys and Vos, and elders Bylsma and Newhof. Needy Student Fund Committee: S. De Young. The Synodical deputies for examination of Classis West are appointed as suggested in the nomination of Classis West.

Synod now takes up the matter of relations with other churches: First of all it is decided that the Committee for Correspondence with other churches draw up a constitution including terms of members and present it to the next Synod for approval.

With respect to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod it is decided to refer this matter back to the committee for Correspondence in order that they may present Synod with a well-motivated advice in 1952. This Ecumenical Synod does not meet until 1953.

Regarding the proposed Reformed Missionary Council Synod decides to instruct our Committee for Correspondence to take part in the preliminary work toward the establishment of such a council without definite commitment regarding membership.

It is decided to table the matter of contact with the Reformed Churches of Netherlands (Art. 31) until after our decision on the declaration of principles. Likewise the matter of the answer to the Canadian Reformed Churches is tabled.

Friday morning Synod again takes up the discussion of the Church Political question with respect to the declaration. Friday afternoon it is put to a vote and the motion to declare the action of the 1950 Synod church politically incorrect fails. Three ministers and three elders ask to have their stand on this matter recorded.

Synod then decides to adjourn until the last Wednesday in September in order to take up the unfinished work of the declaration at that time. J. Howerzyl.