

The Standard Bearer

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Magnify God with Thanksgiving

I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.

Psalm 69:30

Many in the United States have come to refer to Thanksgiving Day as “Turkey Day.” We do not want to do this if it is a way to avoid reference to the One to whom all thanks must be given.

All thanks is to be given to God, for He made and He sustains the heavens and the earth and all things that are in them. As the Giver, to all, of life and breath and all things (Acts 17:24, 25), He is worthy to be thanked and worshiped by all. “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Rev. 4:11).

Professing believers have additional reason to be thankful. The free and gracious gift of salvation from all their sin and sinfulness gives them reason to make

thanksgiving an everyday experience. “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Col. 3:17). “In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (I Thess. 5:18).

Our Canadian readers should know that this meditation is written on Canada’s national Thanksgiving Day—even though it will be printed to coincide with the Thanksgiving Day of the United States.



The setting for Psalm 69 is the evil treatment that the psalmist had received from his enemies. He speaks of those who hate him without a cause, that they are “more than the hairs of mine head” and “they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty” (4). He adds: “Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face. I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother’s children. For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up: and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me” (7-9). “Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heavi-

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ness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink" (20). This treatment resulted in the experience of deep affliction: "the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God" (1-3).

Instead of being angry at those attacking him and retaliating in kind, David repeatedly asks God to deliver him. "Save me, O God" (1). "Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel" (6). "My prayer is unto thee, O LORD" (13). "O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation. Deliver me out of the mire and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters" (13, 14). "Hear me, O LORD; for thy lovingkindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies" (16). "Draw nigh unto my soul and redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies" (18).

After making these many petitions for divine help, David closes the psalm by exulting in God as if God had already given him the victory. It is in this conclusion that we find the text.

To "magnify" is to cause to grow, to make something great or important. "O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together" (Ps. 34:3). With a microscope we magnify very small things, so we can see them. With a telescope we magnify distant things, bringing them close so we can appreciate their very great size.

We are to magnify "God" and His "name." This is over against magnifying ourselves (cf. Ps. 35:26). The name "God" speaks to the fact that the one with this name is full of every perfection and that He is infinitely full. It is very sad that we say this name often without realizing what we are saying. That He is full of perfections makes Him worthy of our praise and thanks! God's "name" is the revelation He has given of Himself. God's greatness is so great that no creature can know Him unless He reveals Himself—makes Himself known. God has revealed Himself to human

creatures in all His works in creation (Rom. 1:18ff.), in the Scriptures, and in Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1-3).

How do we magnify God? It is impossible for us to make God greater than what He is. We cannot add to Him or to His glory. Instead, the restriction is always in us (in our minds and hearts). We limit God, for we are blind to His constant presence and to His greatness. Our sinful nature and little faith blind us to Him, His attributes and His abilities, His revelation in creation, and His work in the events of history. Our pride dims our sight of His wisdom, justice, love, faithfulness, righteousness, etc.

God is magnified when we acquire fresh, personal, penetrating understandings of His great goodness. This often happens when we experience His gracious goodness in a deliverance—as is David's experience in this psalm. God's Spirit, with the Word, opens our eyes to see more and more of His work and of His amazing grace!

Our text adds that we are to "praise" God. To praise is to cause something to shine or to boast. All praise is to go to God, for He alone is worthy of glory and honor. He alone is good! Right praise arises from a heart deeply aware of God's goodness. His goodness is in His grace, i.e., in His unfathomable love in Christ in contrast to our great unworthiness to have only hell. And then His goodness is shown in all the things He gives: food, shelter, family and home, church. On Thanksgiving Day we praise and thank God for the material blessings He gives. But we realize that the material gifts to His children arise out of the same undeserved favor that gives salvation from all sins and sinfulness! He is truly worthy of praise!



How is God to be magnified and praised?

"With thanksgiving!" Praise God with thankfulness! Gratitude is the expression of the heart to Him whom we identify as the Source and Giver of all the things we are grateful for. He has given us everything material: food, shelter, transportation, houses, bodies, measures of health and strength, etc. He has given us everything spiritual: His truth, Scripture, a Reformed heritage, Christ the Savior, forgiveness, righteousness, love, mercy. In Christ, God freely gives us all things. In our text David is thanking God for an anticipated deliv-


erance based on promised care. For him, God's promise was a sure thing!

An individual's willingness to give thanks increases in proportion to his awareness of his unworthiness to receive anything good from God. The more we see ourselves to be unworthy of anything good, the greater we see His attitude of love for us to be an amazing gift!

Also, God is praised "with a song." Songs are words set to music, which have the purpose of praising God. When God's "salvation sets my soul on high; Then I will sing and praise Thy name, My thankful song Thy mercy shall proclaim" (Psalter #187, stanza 3). "Then will I praise my God with song, To Him my thanks shall rise, And this will please Jehovah more than offered sacrifice" (Psalter #186, stanza 2).

Words with music powerfully convey the moods of the words. Music moves the singer to greater praise than just saying the words. David is inspired to declare that such songs of praise and thanksgiving please God more than the most costly sacrifices of the old dispensation: an ox or a bullock!

The poet George Herbert wrote: "Give thanks! O Thou, who hast given us so much, mercifully grant us one more thing—a grateful heart." Those who have such a heart see their cup to be running over, because goodness and mercy follow them all the days of their life!

May God graciously grant that your Thanksgiving Day is one in which you praise the name of God with a song and magnify Him with thanksgiving. 

EDITOR'S NOTE

Anniversary

One month ago, with little notice and no fanfare, the *Standard Bearer* entered its ninetieth year of publication. The handful of men that met in 1924 to form the Reformed Free Publishing Association, and the main writers, Revs. Danhof, Hoeksema, and Ophoff, could not have imagined that their fledgling Reformed magazine would still be coming off the press and mailed to subscribers ninety years later. The Lord has graciously blessed their work.

God's blessing is indispensable for the continuance of the *SB*, and for that we give thanks today. Our thanks is not merely that the *SB* continues as a magazine. Other religious periodicals have a longer history than that of the *SB*, though not as a subscription-based religious periodical. Our cause for gratitude is that God has preserved the *SB* to promote, expound, and defend for these ninety years the very doctrines for which the original writers stood so resolutely.

The evidence of God's blessing continues. We writers are grateful indeed for the continued zeal of the RFPA, which enables the writers to print their work, much as the Association did for the original writers ninety years ago. We are very appreciative to the Protestant Reformed congregations who faithfully take collections, and for other individual contributors, whose financial support make it possible for the RFPA to offer the *SB* for a price that is below the production and mailing costs.

The continued efforts of the RFPA are manifest in this very issue in the secretary's report and the speech the RFPA board requested of Rev. Huizinga for the annual meeting of the Association. Do take the time to read them carefully.

New for this volume year

Each year the *SB* staff meets to approve plans for the new volume year. Changes for the *SB* are minimal. We are happy to announce that two ministers gladly agreed to join the staff of regular writers. Rev. Martyn McGeown will be writing for "All Around Us," replacing Rev. DeVries. His first contribution is in this issue. Since Rev. McGeown is the minister/missionary of the Covenant PRC in Northern Island, serving in the Republic of Ireland (Limerick), we look forward to reports on church events from a different perspective. Rev. Brian Huizinga will be replacing Rev. Allen Brummel as one of the writers in "Strength for Youth." Rev. Brummel plans to continue to bring us articles that summarize biographies of missionaries.

A hearty thank you to our former and current writers for their work.

We covet your prayers for God's continued blessing, indispensable blessing on the *Standard Bearer*.

RJD 

“Whose Is the Work of Missions?” (2)

The October 15 editorial made a beginning in answering the question, somewhat controversial, “whose is the work of missions?” Does mission work belong to the local congregation or to the denomination? After the editorial urged us to unite behind the work of missions for the cause of God, it pointed out the official stance of the PRC. The constitution for missions is clear: “...mission work is the calling of the local church.” And “*some* mission work may also *become* the work of the churches in common” (emphasis added). The important and complete first sentence under *Definition* in the Constitution of the Domestic Mission Committee is, “Although mission work is the calling of the local church, by virtue of the voluntary church federation some mission work may also become the work of the churches in common.” For this editorial to be understood, this statement is crucial. Every word of it.

Knowledge of this statement will help church members be careful in judging the propriety of consistories’ engaging in mission activities that do not (yet) involve the denominational committees.

Previous article in this series: October 15, 2013, p. 29.

The last editorial included a promise to show how the PRC came to this position. I do that now, not only because the history itself is interesting, but especially because the history of this statement’s adoption shows the strength of conviction in the churches about the position.

The Most Basic Point: Synods Do Not Do Mission Work

Mission work is not the work of the synod or classis. The broader assemblies do not *do* missions. Only local churches do missions. How our churches came to this conviction is also important, and it relates to the statement quoted above.

It is worth noting, even if it may not be a point worth quibbling over any longer, that the original statement for the constitution adopted by the PRC synod did not give to synod *any* of the *work* of missions. Originally adopted, the statement read: “Although mission work is the calling of the local church, by virtue of the voluntary church federation some mission work may also become the *concern* of the churches in common.” How the word “work” rather than “concern” came into the constitution was likely an innocent mistake. And whether it ought to be changed is a good question. But

it is of consequence that synod gave the *work* of missions to the local congregation, and gave to herself as synod only a *concern* regarding missions. Synod did not want to take to herself the prerogatives of the local congregation. Broader assemblies do not do missions.

That broader assemblies do not do missions is the practical outworking of proper Reformed ecclesiology (the doctrine of the *church*). I should say, a specific strain of Reformed ecclesiology refuses to give broader assemblies—classes and synods—the right to preach the gospel, administer the sacraments, or exercise discipline. Whose *is* the right to preach and administer sacraments? Who *may* exercise discipline? Members and friends of the PRC know that these questions lie at the very origin of the PRC as a denomination, when two broader assemblies of the CRC (wrongly, we believe) took upon themselves to exercise the discipline of deposing officebearers. Early in PRC history a great deal was written about the question, “May a classis depose a consistory?” Google the three words *classis depose consistory* and find the first seven entries are writings by PRC authors about the authority of ecclesiastical broader assemblies.

PRC understanding of ecclesiology is that the power and authority of broader assemblies is *limited*.

Broader assemblies certainly have power and authority. But it does not include the power and authority to preach, exercise discipline, or administer the sacraments. This power belongs to the local congregation alone. Not all Reformed churches embrace this doctrine of the church. The CRC did not when the PRC was yet a part of her.

That incorrect ecclesiology in the CRC not only allowed their broader assemblies to exercise discipline. Applied to missions, the doctrine also allowed the CRC in 1912 to decide: “The calling and sending of missionaries is the task of a local church. If, however, the circumstances demand it, the calling and sending is to be done by a combination of churches....” In CRC ecclesiology, the power and authority of the broader assemblies *includes* the power to preach, send ministers, and exercise discipline.

This is not the ecclesiology of PRC history.

If any hint of that incorrect ecclesiology remained in the PRC, it was finally swept away in the 1970s when an overture was brought to synod to change what appeared to be a remnant of it in the Mission Committee Constitution. At that time, the constitution gave to the Mission Committee the right to “send” missionaries, the power “to engage in mission activity,” and the right to “serve in” and “officiate at” the organization of new congregations (Acts 1976, 116). The overture succeeded in having synod remove that right from the synod, and to emphasize that the right to

preach, administer the sacraments, and exercise discipline is the exclusive domain of the local congregation. Denominational committees have only a supervisory role.

To come full circle, perhaps now we can better understand the relatively significant difference between the present wording in our constitution that gives synod some of the *work* of missions and what was originally decided, a *concern* over the work. But that wording probably does not matter now because just about everyone knows that synod does not *do* missions, even if she does have a *work* that *concerns* missions.

The Present Question: What is the relation between denominational committees and mission work?

That same 1970s overture spurred synod to appoint a study committee to draw up principles on the basis of which new language could be used in the constitution, language that would express proper ecclesiology. I now condense three synods (1976-1978) into one short story.

The study committee, after having worked for a year, proposed to synod that the Mission Constitution should declare: All mission work is the concern of the synod. The local church will *perform* the work, but synod will supervise *all* of it. During synod’s discussion of the study committee’s proposal, an amendment to the motion was made that significantly changed the direction of the proposal, and re-

sulted in the wording the PRC has in 2013. The amendment reworded the constitution to allow *some* mission work to be performed *without* synod’s oversight.

Taken aback, one of the seminary professors—advisors at synods who participate in deliberations but not in the decisive matter of voting—quickly prepared a written objection to the new language and convinced synod to enter his objection as a part of the official record (Acts 1977, 112). Then, at the following synod, the brother brought formal protest against the change. He objected both to the manner in which the change was made—an amendment from the floor and without any grounds—and also to the change itself, which he labeled *independentism*. But at both synods—the first synod that adopted the amendment, and the next synod that heard the protest—the new wording was retained (see synod’s answer to the protest in 1978 Acts, 39, 40). After careful thought and deliberation, synod concluded: *All* mission work is performed by the local church. *Some* missions may become the concern of the denomination.

And that’s that. Synod decided. The matter is settled and binding in the PRC.

Some Mission Work Becomes the Concern of the Synod

Some mission work does become the concern of synod. But at what point? For what reasons? What would compel a local congregation, doing the work of missions, to ask a

denominational committee to oversee what is properly their work? And from the other side, would the denominational committee ever say to a congregation, "We would like to concern ourselves with your mission work"?

At least two factors are involved in determining whether or not there is denominational supervision in mission work: expertise and finances. Theoretically, if a local congregation has both the expertise and the financial ability to do the mission work God gives her, there might not be denominational involvement. Remember, "*some* mission work may become the work (concern) of the churches in common."

Finances

All the local congregations should, and most do, perform the work of missions called local evangelism. Very few local congregations have the denomination supervising that work. The exception to this is a struggling church that has asked synod for assistance and then must give to synod an account of the money they spend. But most local churches usually have the financial ability and know-how to bring the gospel to their own locale.

Matters are different when the Lord blesses that witness so that a full-time missionary is needed. Local congregations usually would not be able to afford supporting the large enterprise of a missionary and his work. The local church then asks the churches in common (synod) to help them in the mission endeavor, at which time the synod,

through her Mission Committee, oversees the work where these monies are used. That is, the mission work of the local congregation becomes their "concern." Rightly so.

Expertise

Hypothetically, however, a local congregation may have the financial wherewithal to support a missionary and his work. But even in that case, it is highly questionable whether she ought to perform missions with a full-time missionary all on her own. Missions is a difficult work that involves dozens of complex issues that confront a missionary and perplex even the wisest of them. The questions, coming with the regularity of ocean waves, need to be answered, and often without much delay. It is a rare (and perhaps naïve) church that supposes she can properly carry out the high calling of supervising a full-time missionary without the help of a 'multitude of counselors.' The committees have collective experience, which is invaluable.

The difficulties are increased when one thinks of missions in a foreign country with an unfamiliar language and culture. That was brought home to the PRC less than a decade ago when one of our mission committees wrote a sad report to synod of a failed mission work, and concluded their findings with these sobering words: "While it could remain a possibility to work in another area...we are convinced that we are not capable of undertaking such a work at this time." So vast were the difficulties of this foreign work that even the synodical committee who had experience was

overwhelmed by them. Missions in a foreign country takes strength, experience, maturity, wisdom.

But even pastors who have undertaken the work of *domestic* missions will testify of the great difficulties of this work, and increasingly so as American society itself becomes multicultural, more secular, pagan, and post-modern. Is there a congregation that would have everything it needs to do even domestic missions on her own?

Let us work together: Unity in Missions

The PRC's mission constitution may be clear in declaring missions to be the *work* of the local church, and in its allowing only *some* mission work to become synod's concern.

Certainly, some work ought to remain for a time the concern of the local congregation only. *When* it should become synod's concern the local consistory will struggle with, seeking the best for the work. Important questions need to be asked, such as, Is the work only "contacts" that are best developed by the personal work of a local consistory? Does the synodical committee have experience in this area of the world? Do they have manpower to help us at this point?

I am confident of the wisdom of the elders to judge all the circumstances and do what is right for the cause of God's gospel.

And when the work grows to the stage at which, *according to the judgment of the local church*, the gospel is best served by the churches working together, then let us work together. ☞

Revelation, Inspiration, and Infallibility (4)

What the Bible Says about the Bible: Scripture Cannot Be Broken

The Bible is the infallibly inspired written Word of God. This is the believer's heartfelt conviction and bold confession concerning Scripture. Simply put, the Bible is the Word of God, the Word of God in the words of men. Because it is the Word of God, the Bible is the supreme authority in the life of the believer. Only God has supreme and ultimate authority. Because the Bible is the Word of God, it has supreme and ultimate authority over the church and over the members of the church. It is authoritative over faith (what we believe) and morals (how we live). The church dare not demand that members subscribe to any decision or enforce any practice or make any change—let us say, in worship—that is not grounded in sacred Scripture. Scripture's authority is the authority of God Himself—divine authority.

The Bible *alone* is the divinely inspired Word of God. Not only does faith receive for truth all that God has revealed in His Word, but faith receives *only* the Word of God as a book that is divinely inspired. The Scriptures alone and the Scriptures in their entirety are the Word of God. There is no other book like the Bible. The Bible is a unique book, an altogether unique book. No other book may make this claim for itself, or have this claim made about it by its adherents, that it is the Word of God. To say this about any other book is to make the most arrogant, preposterous, and foolish of claims. One book and one book alone is God's book, and that book is the Bible.

The Bible has been regarded as a unique book for cen-

turies, some thirty-four centuries. It was a unique book in Old Testament times, when it was not yet a complete book but in its formative stage. It was a unique book in the Old Testament, when it served as the Scriptures of the Jews, God's covenant people in the old dispensation. It was regarded as a unique book by Jesus and His disciples. The apostles and the apostolic church regarded the Old Testament as the Word of God and honored the Scriptures with the honor that the Word of God deserves. This deference for the Scriptures was passed on by the apostles to the early church. It was to the Scriptures that the early Christians appealed in order to settle the doctrinal controversies that threatened to divide the early church and remove her from the sure foundation upon which she had been established. Time and again the Scriptures were the means by which God kept His church from going down the road of apostasy, or was the means used by God to restore the church after she had begun to depart.

After a time of departure during the Middle Ages, the Reformation restored to the church the proper regard for the Scriptures, calling the church once again to honor the Scriptures as the Word of God. The Reformers were united in their view that Scripture must be regarded, handled, made use of, read, and preached as the very Word of God. From this view of Scripture, many who belong to churches that have their roots in the Protestant Reformation have by our day departed. Some in these churches scoff at such a view of the Bible, considering it to be beneath their educated dignity to entertain such a primitive and unscientific belief that a book written by men could possibly be the Word of God. And although the Bible is lauded as a religious book unparalleled in its dignity and for the influence that it has had over genera-

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Previous article in this series: December 1, 2012, p. 104.

tions of readers, like all other religious books it contains the views of the world, of the human race, of origins, and of the purpose of the universe, and even of God that its writers held. In the end, the Bible is not the Word of God but the human writers' words about God. That at its very best.

The trouble is that this is a far cry from what the Bible says about itself and from the claim that the Bible makes for itself. The Bible is the Word of God, and, not unexpectedly, this is the claim that the Bible makes concerning itself—that it is the Word of God. Now if this claim is inaccurate, if this claim is in fact a lie, the Bible ought not to be regarded as a religious book of great value for all who read it. Rather, it is deceitful, and the danger exists that it may lead astray those who read it. The real danger exists that people will read it and actually come to the preposterous conclusion that it is what it claims to be—the Word of God. The Roman Catholic Church was perhaps right after all in forbidding the reading and the translating of the Bible.

Not so! Not so! “Open thou mine eyes [dear Lord], that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law” (Ps. 119:18). Because the Bible is what it claims to be, the very Word of God, may our prayer ever be as we take this word up into our hands in order to read, to study, to meditate on, and even (especially!) to preach: “Give me eyes to see, a mind to understand, and a heart to believe Thy Word of truth.” The Bible is the Word of God. And this is what the Bible claims to be.

The Self-Authenticating Nature of Scripture

In our previous article we began to examine what the Bible teaches about itself. We looked at the two “classic” Scripture passages on divine inspiration: II Timothy 3:15-17 and II Peter 1:19-21. We saw that the Bible teaches about itself that it is the inspired Word of God. The Protestant Reformers recognized this. They spoke of the fact that Scripture is self-authenticating: *autopistia*. The Belgic Confession of Faith, in Article 5, gives expression to this truth when it says about the books of the Bible that “they carry the evidence in themselves” that they are the Word of God.

This evidence is the evidence of *faith*. The proof to the believer that the Bible is the Word of God is the

Bible's own testimony concerning itself. It is as simple as that. Faith believes the Word of God. The content of faith is sacred Scripture, nothing more and nothing less. To put it another way, faith is informed by the Bible. Not something outside of Scripture, but Scripture itself is the object of true faith. In the language of the Heidelberg Catechism, faith “hold[s] for truth all that God has revealed to us in His Word” (Q.A. 21). And the very first truth that is revealed in the Word is that the Word is the Word of God.

It is significant that Scripture makes this claim concerning itself. It might have disavowed divine authorship, as certain of the apocryphal books indeed do.¹ Or, the Bible might have said nothing concerning its inspiration, neither claiming nor disavowing divine authorship. But instead, Scripture insists that it is the very Word of God. Augustine said long ago: “What Scripture says, God says.” The fact is that Scripture does say that, in Scripture, God speaks.

Neither is this reliance on circular reasoning, as the enemies of biblical inspiration often allege. Scripture is the Word of God. Only God has the right to vindicate the genuineness and the authority of His Word. He is God, after all. The authority of Scripture depends on God alone whose Word Scripture is. Scripture is God's Word not because we say that it is God's Word, or because we have shown it to be God's Word, or even because the church says that it is God's Word. But Scripture is God's Word because God Himself says that it is His Word. John Calvin teaches this fundamental truth concerning Scripture:

It is utterly vain then to pretend that the power of judging Scripture so lies with the church that its certainty depends upon churchly assent. Thus, while the church receives and gives its seal of approval to the Scriptures, it does not thereby render authentic what is otherwise doubtful or controversial. But because the church recognizes Scripture to be the truth of its own God, as a pious duty it unhesitatingly venerates Scripture. As to their question [thinking here of the Roman Catholic doctrines]—How

¹ This is stated by the author in the introduction to Jesus Syrach, or, Ecclesiasticus, and is stated a number of times by the writer of 1 and 2 Maccabees. This fact makes the Roman Catholic elevation of the apocryphal books to the level of the books of the Bible all the more preposterous.

can we be assured that this has sprung from God unless we have recourse to the decree of the church?—it is as if someone asked: Whence will we learn to distinguish light from darkness, white from black, sweet from bitter? Indeed, Scripture exhibits fully as clear evidence of its own truth as white and black things do of their color, or sweet and bitter things do of their taste.²

A little later, he goes on to say:

[H]ence, it is not right to subject it to proof and reasoning...we believe neither by our own nor by anyone else's judgment that Scripture is from God; but above human judgment we affirm with utter certainty (just as if we were gazing upon the majesty of God himself) that it has flowed to us from the very mouth of God.... We seek no proofs, nor marks of genuineness upon which our judgment may lean; but we subject our judgment and wit to it as to a thing far beyond any guesswork!³

Benjamin B. Warfield, the well-known early twentieth-century professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, was an ardent defender of biblical inerrancy. Like the sixteenth-century Reformers before him, he maintained the self-authenticating nature of Scripture. Defending what he termed “the Church doctrine of inspiration,” Warfield writes:

The Church, then, has held from the beginning that the Bible is the Word of God in such a sense that its words, though written by men and bearing indelibly impressed upon them the marks of their human origin, were written, nevertheless, under such an influence of the Holy Ghost as to be also the words of God, the adequate expression of His mind and will. It has always recognized that this conception of co-authorship implies that the Spirit's superintendence extends to the choice of the words by the human authors (verbal inspiration), and preserves its product from everything inconsistent with a divine authorship—thus securing, among other things, that entire truthfulness which is everywhere presupposed in and asserted for Scripture by the Biblical writers (inerrancy). Whatever minor variations may now and again have entered into the mode of statement, this has always

been the core of the Church doctrine of inspiration. And along with many other modes of commending and defending it, the primary ground on which it has been held by the Church as the true doctrine is that it is the doctrine of the Biblical writers themselves, and has therefore the whole mass of evidence for it which goes to show that the Biblical writers are trustworthy as doctrinal guides. It is the testimony of the Bible itself to its own origin and character as the Oracles of the Most High, that has led the Church to her acceptance of it as such, and to her dependence on it not only for her doctrine of Scripture, but for the whole body of her doctrinal teaching, which is looked upon by her as divine because drawn from this divinely given fountain of truth.⁴

“And the Scripture Cannot be Broken”

When it comes to Scripture's testimony concerning itself, besides the two “classic” passages on inspiration, there are two additional Scripture passages of great significance: John 10:35 and Romans 3:2. Let's look first at John 10:35.

In John 10:35 Jesus is responding to the unbelieving Jews who have charged Him with blasphemy. Their charge arises out of the fact that “thou, being a man, makest thyself God” (v. 33). Jesus' response to their charge of blasphemy was, “Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken....” Jesus' response is very significant.

It is significant, first of all, because in His response Jesus calls the Old Testament Scripture the “word of God.” The specific passage of the Old Testament to which Jesus is referring is Psalm 82:6, 7: “I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.” The judges and elders to whom the Word of God came in the Old Testament are called “gods” in Psalm 82. They are called “gods” because they represented God, received directly from God His Word to speak to His people, and were called

² John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960) 1.7.2, 1:76.

³ Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.7.5, 1:80.

⁴ Benjamin B. Warfield, “The Real Problem of Inspiration,” in *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1970), 173-4. Some, for good reason, may take exception to Warfield's designation of the human writers of Scripture as “human authors,” or the precision of his thought in speaking of the “human origin” of the words of Scripture. But that does not detract significantly from the main point that Warfield is making in this paragraph.

to judge God's people. Jesus' argument is that if they are called "gods" by the Scripture who as men were recipients of the Word of God, then, because the Scripture cannot be broken, it is no blasphemy that He who is the Son of God, sent by God in order to reveal God, should also be called and call Himself "God." According to Jesus' teaching, Psalm 82 is not simply the word of the psalmist, the word of the human writer of the psalm, whom the heading of the psalm identifies as Asaph. The psalm, therefore, is no merely human word, but it is the very Word of God. This is Jesus' teaching inasmuch as He refers to the Old Testament Scriptures as "the word of God."


But what is equally significant is what Jesus says about Holy Scripture. He says that Scripture "cannot be broken." It is *not able* to be broken. It is *impossible* to break the Scripture. And it is impossible to break Scripture because Scripture is the Word of God. Not only *may* it not be broken; not only are men *forbidden* to break the Scriptures. But in actual fact, they *cannot* break the Scriptures because the Scriptures are the Word of God.

That the Scriptures cannot be broken means that they cannot be emptied of their authority. Their binding authority cannot be set aside. "Binding" is a good word to use in connection with Scripture's authority. The word translated in the Authorized Version as "broken" means literally "to loose, to untie, to release from bonds." Thus the idea is that no one can be released from the binding authority of Scripture. Scripture's authority as the very authority of God is binding upon all men. But the Scripture's binding authority cannot be set aside exactly because it cannot be shown to be erroneous—mistaken in any respect. As the holy and perfect Word of God, all men everywhere are called to submit to the authority of the Scriptures.

What is significant here is not only what Jesus says about Holy Scripture. But what is significant is that in saying what He says, Jesus *appeals to Holy Scripture*. He appeals, as we have seen, to Psalm 82. Jesus does not ground His teaching in John 10 in His own inherent authority as the Son of God. He does not say, "You must believe what I am telling you because I am the Son of God, very God." He says no such thing. Rather, the Son of God says in effect, "You must believe what I am telling you because this is the teaching of Scripture." Christ Himself, the Son of God in our flesh, appealed to Holy Scripture as the final authority for His teaching. That establishes Scripture's ultimate authority.

B. B. Warfield makes this comment about Psalm 82:6 and our Lord's appeal to it in John 10.

Now, what is the particular thing in Scripture, for the confirmation of which the indefectible authority of Scripture is thus invoked? It is one of its most casual clauses—more than that, the very form of its expression in one of its most casual clauses. This means, of course, that in the Saviour's view the indefectible authority of Scripture attaches to the very form of expression of its most casual clauses. It belongs to Scripture through and through, down to its most minute particulars, that it is of indefectible authority.⁵

This to begin with, then, is what the Bible says about the Bible. It says that Scripture cannot be broken. Indeed, Scripture *cannot* be broken. Instead, they who make such a foolhardy attempt are themselves broken by the God whose Word Scripture is. 

⁵ Warfield, "The Biblical Idea of Inspiration," in *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, 140.

ALL AROUND US

REV. MARTYN MCGEOWN

"This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge...."

Genesis 19:9

Rev. McGeown is missionary-pastor of the Covenant Protestant Reformed Church in Northern Ireland stationed in Limerick, Republic of Ireland.

Pro-homosexuality agenda

With the radical secularization of Western nations, we are witnessing increased suppression and silencing of Christianity and Christians, with an increased promotion of anti-Christian beliefs and practices. Arguably, the greatest anti-Christian voice in Western nations—especially Europe, the United States, and Canada—is the pro-homosexual lobby. These nations, under the guise of tolerance, promote aggressively the notion that

homosexuality is a good and acceptable way of life that must be tolerated—nay, affirmed and celebrated—by everyone. Christians remain among the few voices left in society who question and oppose the pro-homosexuality agenda.

Their voices must be silenced—through intimidation and finally through legislation.

The Sodomites took umbrage with Lot's words in Genesis 19:7: "I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly." It was Lot's accusation of wickedness that caused them outrage, or, to speak in the language of modern anti-discrimination legislation, that caused them "harassment, alarm, or distress." The ancient Sodomites threatened Lot with violence. The modern homosexual will take his alarm and distress to the police and to the courts—and, increasingly, he will win!

The following cases are just a sample.

Take Tony Miano, an American preacher arrested in London, England, on July 1, 2013, for an alleged violation of Section 5 of the *Public Order Act* (with a "homophobic aggravating factor"). The *Public Order Act* prohibits threatening and abusive behavior and speech, but increasingly it is used to silence street preachers who have the temerity to suggest that homosexuality is sin. Should a passerby take offence at a street preacher's remarks, the police can be dispatched and the offending preacher arrested, locked up for hours, fingerprinted, and interrogated. Whether or not one agrees with the style of many street preachers, this trend will surely have a chilling effect upon freedom of speech. The entire transcript of the police interview, as well as the video of Miano's arrest, are available online.¹ In the course of the interview, the police officer asked Miano, "She [the supposed complainant in this case] heard him [Miano] say, 'Homosexuality is a sin; we all know it's wrong.' Did you say that?" Upon Miano's affirmative response, the interviewing officer remarked: "Okay, she says she was extremely offended by this, which caused her a lot of distress." Later, the officer added, "She said due to the man making homophobic statements, saying homophobic statements in a public place, that she felt an offense had been committed, and she called the police."

So, in England, one can be arrested if a homosexual "feels" distressed, offended, or alarmed by another per-

son's words, even if those words were not abusive, threatening, or violent. The complainant in the case even admitted to mouthing swear words at Miano—*those* words were not considered threatening, abusive or alarming, only Miano's unacceptable and supposedly homophobic words that homosexuality is sin!

Take Hazelmary and Peter Bull, a couple who run a guesthouse in Cornwall, England. Since their guesthouse is also their home, they insist that only married couples may share a double bed on their premises. That position brought them into conflict when in 2008 two men in a "civil partnership" desired to stay there. In keeping with their Christian moral code, the Bulls refused to permit two homosexual men to share a double room. Instead, they offered the men two single rooms. This led to a court battle in which it was determined that the Bulls may not discriminate against homosexual couples. When the Bulls argued that they did not discriminate, because they did not permit unmarried heterosexual couples to share a double room either, their appeal was denied. The Bulls have suffered a campaign of intimidation, vandalism, and abuse, and now they face financial ruin—simply because they refused to sanction a same-sex relationship. One might argue against the inconsistency of the Bulls' position—for example, how do Christians run a guesthouse on Sundays; and how do they treat divorced and remarried couples?—but cases like this show that the Christian position is being marginalised, while the pro-homosexual agenda marches on.

Take Joe and Helen Roberts in Lancashire, England. In 2005, they wrote a letter of complaint to their local council about the official promotion of "gay rights," something the Roberts find offensive. Several days later, they were subjected to a lengthy interrogation in their own home by two police officers, who advised them that they were being investigated for a reported "homophobic incident." Reportedly, the police warned them that they were close to a "hate crime" and were "walking on eggshells"—and this because they had disagreed with the promotion of "gay rights," which someone (possibly a council worker) had found "offensive"! After a protracted legal battle, the police and council admitted in December 2006 that they had acted inappropriately in the case of the Roberts, and, in an out-of-court settlement, the Roberts received compensation.

¹ <http://www.archbishop-cranmer.blogspot.ie/2013/07/tony-miano-arrested-for-hate-speech.html>

Take Dr. Alan Clifford, pastor of Norwich Reformed Church, who was visited by an officer from his local police force, the Norfolk Constabulary, on August 17, 2013. A complaint had been filed against him. His crime? He had sent two tracts by e-mail, “*Christ Can Cure—Good News for Gays*” and “*Jesus Christ—the Saviour We All Need*.” Some offended persons reported Dr. Clifford to the police—the allegation against him is “homophobic hate.” Unfortunately for Dr. Clifford, and unfortunately for free speech, a “homophobic incident” is, according to the official police literature, “any incident which is perceived to be homophobic by the victim or ANY other person.”² If beauty is in the eye of the beholder, homophobia is in the perception of the perceiver! Interestingly, Clifford’s Christian complaint against the public display of homosexual propaganda is dismissed. Christians are not permitted to be offended by homosexuality, and they certainly may not express their offence. Clifford was told that he had two options. Either he admits his guilt and pays an on-the-spot-fine of £90 (c. 145 USD), or he can contest the claim, in which case a senior officer will decide whether or not to refer the case to the CPS (Crown Prosecution Service; British equivalent of DA). After opting to contest the claim, Dr. Clifford gave a statement to the officer, who passed it to his superiors. Dr. Clifford now awaits a decision on whether or not he will be prosecuted, and if convicted, he could face a jail sentence.

The fact that these cases did not end in prosecution or conviction does not mean that the law will not continue to be misused in this manner, so that every aggrieved or insulted homosexual, whose perception of being insulted is taken much more seriously than any other group’s, can bring his complaint to the police, who will then waste their time on an alleged “homophobic incident,” or even “hate crime.”

But surely our American brethren enjoy First Amendment rights of freedom of speech and religion?

Those rights are being challenged by the pro-homosexual lobby, again under the guise of tolerance. On August 22, 2013, the Supreme Court of the state of New Mexico ruled that a photographer *must* take photographs at a same-sex “commitment ceremony,” even though “same-sex

marriage” is not (yet) lawful in that state. Elane Photography, run by Elaine and Jonathan Huguenin, declined in 2006 to photograph the commitment ceremony of two lesbians, a ceremony that included vows, rings, a minister, flower girls, and a wedding dress. The offended lesbian couple filed suit. The case went to the State Supreme Court. The findings of the court were interesting—and troubling. The Huguenins fell afoul of the New Mexico Human Rights Act (NMHRA). The Supreme Court of New Mexico ruled that, in refusing to photograph a same-sex “commitment ceremony,” Elane Photography “violated the NMHRA in the same way as if it had refused to photograph a wedding between people of different races.” What the Huguenins and business owners in a similar situation could do is “post a disclaimer on their website or in their studio advertising that they oppose same-sex marriage but that they comply with applicable antidiscrimination laws.” Moreover, “the NMHRA does not permit businesses to offer a ‘limited menu’ of goods and services to customers on the basis of a status that fits within one of the protected categories. For example, a photographer may not offer to photograph a birthday party, where no homosexuality is obvious in the photos, but decline to photograph a wedding or commitment ceremony, where homosexuality is promoted, endorsed or approved in the photographs themselves.” A company such as Elane Photograph “can remain in business, but it can cease to offer its services to the public at large.” Justice Richard C. Bosson wrote the Conclusion:

The New Mexico Legislature has made it clear that to discriminate in business on the basis of sexual orientation is just as intolerable as discrimination directed toward race, color, national origin or religion.... The Huguenins today can no more turn away customers on the basis of sexual orientation—photographing a same-sex marriage ceremony—than they could refuse to photograph African-Americans or Muslims.

What Justice Bosson writes next is, in his own words, “sobering”:

All of which, I assume, is little comfort to the Huguenins, who now are compelled by law to compromise the very religious beliefs that inspire their lives. Though the law requires it, the result is sobering. It will no doubt leave

² The official pamphlet can be accessed on <http://www.norfolk.police.uk/>

a tangible mark on the Huguenins and others of similar views.... This case teaches us that at some point in our lives all of us must compromise, if only a little, to accommodate the contrasting values of others.... In short, I would say to the Huguenins, with the utmost respect: it is the price of citizenship.³

There is the choice—photograph same sex “commitment ceremonies” (marriage ceremonies, as Justice Bosson describes them) or go out of business. These kinds of cases raise a whole range of questions. Should a Christian baker refuse to make a “wedding” cake for two men; should a Christian printer refuse to make “wedding invitations” for two women? And, if so, where does one draw the line? One wonders how the apostle Paul ran his tent-making business in Corinth, for example.

³ The full judgment can be read online at <http://www.nmcomp-comm.us/nmcases/nmsc/slips/SC33,687.pdf> Accessed on October 1, 2013.

But, let us remember the facts—a same-sex couple not only *may not* marry, they *cannot* marry. Marriage by definition—God’s definition, Christ’s definition, and the definition preached by the apostles—*cannot* be between two persons of the same sex (Matt. 19:4-6), and no person, theologian, politician, president, or human court can ever change that. Also, let us notice that Justice Bosson urges compromise, but the compromise he urges is in one direction only. The homosexuals need not compromise—they are a legally-protected, recognized minority.

Christians, we are told, must compromise.

And Christians *are* compromising. Churches are falling over themselves to compromise. They are looking for theological justification to compromise. Failure to compromise will incur the displeasure of the state.

But compromise will displease God. ☞

SPECIAL REPORT

MR. CAL KALSBECK

Reformed Free Publishing Association 2013 Annual Secretary’s Report

The tears of a slave girl just going to be put up for sale drew the attention of a gentleman as he passed through the auction mart of a Southern slave state. The other slaves of the same group, standing in line for sale like herself, did not seem to care about it, while each knock of the hammer made her shake. The kind man stopped to ask why she alone wept, and was told that the others were used to such things, and might be glad of a change from the hard, harsh homes they came from, but that she had been brought up with much care by a good owner, and she was terrified to think who might buy her. ‘Her price?’ the stranger asked. He thought a little when he heard the great ransom, but after a little paid it down. Yet no joy came to the poor slave’s face when he told her that she was free. She had been born a slave, and knew

not what freedom meant. Her tears fell thick and fast on the signed parchment, which her deliverer brought to prove it to her. But she only looked at him with fear. At last he was ready to go his way, and as he told her what she must do when he was gone, it began to dawn on her what freedom was. With the first breath she said, ‘I will follow him! I will serve him all my days.’ And to every reason against it she only cried, ‘He redeemed me! He redeemed me! He redeemed me!’ When strangers used to visit that master’s house, and noticed, as all did, the loving constant service of the glad-hearted girl, and asked her why she was so eager with unbidden service by night and day, she had but one answer, and she loved to give it—‘He redeemed me! He redeemed me! He redeemed me!’

That message of redemption full and free from the pen of B. J. Danhof, found in Volume 1 of the *SB*, is a message that serves as motivation to carry on, as the *SB* is about to enter its 90th consecutive year of publication.

Mr. Kalsbeck is a member in Hope Protestant Reformed Church, Walker, Michigan and secretary of the RFPA.

But to what extent will that comforting message be read? The RFPA Board has some serious concerns about that. Our subscription data does not lie! From a high of 2596 subscribers in 2005 to 2176 today is a decline of 420 subscribers. We realize of course that, in general, print media has fallen on hard times. We have tried to remedy that with our eSubscriptions (we currently have 86 of these), but it appears that more will need to be done to turn this dismal subscription trend around. That explains, too, the subject of tonight's speech: "Encouraging the Next Generation to Read." In this connection maybe we should take to heart some good instruction from a *new* New York subscriber to the *SB*: "I have only become confessionally Reformed in the last four years. I am an ex-Pentecostal. Late last year I was introduced to this great journal. I have found so much already. This is a Reformed journal that every Reformed believer should subscribe to. When I finish an edition, I now leave it in the narthex of my church for others to benefit from. Thank you for maintaining fidelity to God's Word as summarized in the Three Forms of Unity." Another subscriber, this one an eSubscriber from Chicago, provides good reasons for obtaining the *SB* in both digital and print form: "The *Standard Bearer* is a must read for any individual interested in the truth of the gospel. I purchased the esubscription to allow me to keep up with its contents during convenient times—my lunch, during my commute, when I travel...without taking the magazine out of the reach of my family. For a first try, the RFPA did a phenomenal job of formatting it for access on my Kindle." The RFPA Board will welcome other suggestions to remedy the decline in subscriptions, not merely because we desire more *SB* subscriptions, but because the *SB*'s message of "redemption full and free" merits wide circulation.

Speaking of that (wide circulation, that is), more and more of our publications are getting just that. We are seeing, for example, a gradual up-tick in both eBook and hard copy book sales through Amazon.com. Furthermore, we are confident that making all of our titles available in digital format will contribute to broader circulation. At present 15 of our books are available as eBooks, and rapid progress is being made on others. It should be noted that each new book we publish will be available in both eBook and hard copy format, and that

customer feedback on these ePublications is very positive. This one from Singapore is typical: "I especially appreciate your development of the eBook formats. Now those of us who cannot easily get our hands on physical copies of the books can still benefit from your publications."

Wider circulation of the truth is also being accomplished through translation of our books into other languages. Our Business Manager's report on translations reveals that eight of our books are in various stages in the translation process. Currently Brazilian-Portuguese, Portuguese, German, Dutch, Korean, Afrikaans, Chinese, Filipino, and Croatian are the languages of choice, and four of those are translating *Doctrine According to Godliness* by Rev. R. Hanks.

This fiscal year the RFPA has published *A Pilgrim's Manual* (commentary on I Peter), by Prof. H. Hanks; *Behold the Beauty*, volume 2, by Connie Meyer; *Battle for Sovereign Grace in the Covenant*, by Prof. D. Engelsma; *The Fruit of the Spirit of Jesus Christ*, by Rev. R. Smit; and Reformed Spirituality series volume 3, *All Glory to the Only Good God*, by Rev. Herman Hoeksema. Also this year, in part due to numerous requests for them, two of our out-of-print publications: *The Voice of our Fathers* (an exposition of the Canons of Dordrecht), by Prof. Homer Hoeksema, and *Doctrine According to Godliness*, by Rev. R. Hanks are once again available.

What about the future? We enthusiastically report our intent to publish the following books in the 2013-14 fiscal year: 1) *Our Reformed Baptism Form*, by Dutch Reformed theologian Dr. B. Wielenga. This is a commentary on our baptism form that we have had translated from the Dutch. 2) *DeCock's Reformation of the Church*, by Marvin Kamps. This book involves the history surrounding the Secession of 1834. 3) *Coming of Zion's Redeemer*, by Rev. R. Hanks. In this publication we will have a commentary on the minor prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. 4) *The Rock Whence We Are Hewn*, edited by Prof. D. Engelsma, will involve the documents surrounding the early history of the Protestant Reformed Churches. 5) *Behold the Beauty* #3, by Connie Meyer. This will be the last book in the art curriculum series and will not be a required book for Book Club members.


This ambitious plan will need your support. The publishing of books is expensive. Thankfully we have

faithful Book Club members that make this possible. While of late we have lost a few members (from a high of 1,236 to our present 1,207), we continue to solicit new members. Also, gifts have played and will continue to play a significant role in what we are able to publish. For example, the republishing of *The Voice of Our Fathers* and the upcoming translation of the commentary on *Our Reformed Baptism Form* would have been impossible apart from a large gift the RFPA received two years ago. Furthermore, these gifts make it possible for the RFPA to publish these books at an affordable price, one that we believe can be managed by our readers.

To help facilitate the gift-giving process the RFPA Board has adopted a "Gift and Bequest Policy." The policy's stated purpose reads this way: "This policy sets forth certain procedures in receiving individual gifts and estate bequests on behalf of the Reformed Free Publishing Association (RFPA). These procedures include the proper recording of the gift and its intended use; setting up the proper type of account to handle the gift and administration related thereto; and giving proper acknowledgment of the gift to the donor or estate representative,

and providing him with information necessary for tax or estate settlement purposes." Why do I mention this in our annual report? You guessed it: we would ask that you continue to consider the RFPA in your estate planning, as well as your regular gift-giving.

This report is getting much too long. Rather than thank all those who labor faithfully in the various areas of the publication process of the *Standard Bearer* and RFPA books *individually*, we now do so collectively: THANK YOU! And a special word of thanks to our office staff, one of whom recently discovered a way to sort our *SB* mailing to save about \$30 per issue on mailing costs. Not that big a deal, you say? Then consider this: had our present staff been around and made this discovery back when B.J. Danhof wrote what we quoted in the introduction of this report (89 years ago), a grand total of \$56,070.00 would have been saved.

It is our prayer that God will continue to provide as we take up the work of the 2013-14 fiscal year, doing so in the consciousness of and motivated by the truth that "He redeemed me!" 

FEATURE ARTICLE

REV. BRIAN HUIZINGA

Encouraging the Next Generation to Read (1)

An Introduction to the Subject

Picture a banqueting table—not round, but rectangular in shape, like that at which a wedding party typically sits. There are five positions at the table, that is, five chairs and five table settings. In position five is seated a man who has before him an empty plate. Next to him, in position four, is a man who has before him a

plate on which sits a good hearty meal. Next to him, in position three, is a man who not only has before him a plate on which sits a good hearty meal, but this man takes his fork, selects a choice bite, and moves it toward his mouth so that he can taste it. Next to him, in position two, is a man who not only has before him a plate on which sits a good hearty meal, and he not only selects a choice bite with his fork and moves it to his mouth, but he puts it *into* his mouth and chews the food. In position one, at the other end of the table, is a man who has before him a plate on which sits a good hearty meal. This man selects a choice bite, brings it toward his mouth, puts it

Rev. Huizinga is pastor of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Redlands, California.

This is the text of the speech Rev. Huizinga gave at the annual meeting of the RFPA on September 19, 2013.

into his mouth, chews it, and swallows it. He continues eating until his plate is empty.

If we were to name the men at this banqueting table, then seated in seat five is the “empty-plater”; in seat four the “full-plater”; in seat three the “taster”; in seat two the “chewer”; and in seat one the “devourer.”

Hear the prophet Jeremiah in Jeremiah 15:16: “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.” Jeremiah ate God’s words.

We have been given the figure. Now the reality: The good hearty meal represents sound, spiritually-edifying literature. The man represents the reader.

At one end of the table, in seat five, is the “empty-plater.” This man owns and reads nothing. His life is altogether devoid of sound, spiritually-edifying literature. In seat four is the “full-plater.” This man owns books. Walk in his house and see the books on his shelves. He reads none of them. In seat three is the “taster.” This man owns books and looks at them. After receiving a new title from the RFPA, this Book Club member holds his book in his hands and reads the back cover and even the table of contents. He pages through and looks at any pictures. If his friends are discussing the book after church, he will know what book they are talking about, although he cannot contribute to the discussion because he has not read it. He reads the front cover and the sympathy expressions on the back of his *Standard Bearer*, but little else. He tastes his books. In seat two is the “chewer.” He owns and reads good books and magazines. They do not nourish him in any significant and lasting way because he often skims through them or reads out of necessity, and thus does not reflect and contemplate. However, he does have a general knowledge of the content of the book. In seat one, occupying the other end of the table, is the “devourer.” At his own pace—some devourers eat quickly and some devourers eat slowly, but both devour their meal—he reads his books and magazines (and Bible!) and they impact his life. Excitedly he talks to others about the content of his literature. To use the words of Jeremiah, the words he reads are the joy and rejoicing of his heart. One book after another his soul devours, and his love for and gratitude to God grows.

“Empty-platers” have no books. “Full-platers” have

books, but do not read them. “Tasters” taste books. “Chewers” chew books. “Devourers” devour books. All sit at the table.

Where do you sit at the table?

Where are your children seated?

Where will the next generation sit?

It is the concern of the board of the RFPA that we are generally drifting away from seat one (“devourer”) and toward seat five (“empty-plater”). No one would say that as churches we are sitting in seat five, although some individuals do. But concrete evidence indicates we are drifting in that direction. The board of the RFPA notes continual decline in *Standard Bearer* subscriptions. At present only 64% of Protestant Reformed households subscribe to the *Standard Bearer*. That means 36% do not. Over one-third of our households do not even subscribe to the *Standard Bearer*, the unofficial magazine of our churches since 1924! Alarming! Of the 64%, how many are actually reading their *Standard Bearer* cover to cover? Furthermore, how many consistories give a book to the young people who have made confession of faith? Probably many do. Of all those who have made confession of faith in the past, say, fifteen years, and received a book, how many have read through that book?

Surely we read. Surely we have young people who read. But are we drifting down the table in the wrong direction? The purpose of this address is to encourage the reading of good, solid, spiritually-edifying literature, particularly among the next generation. Today and tomorrow may we find ourselves seated at or near position one and saying with Jeremiah, “Thy word was the joy and rejoicing of my heart.”

For sake of clarity, there are a few more comments by way of introduction. First of all, when I speak of reading, I am not referring to all forms of literature, though reading widely is obviously important and necessary for a good education. I am speaking of that good, sound, spiritually-edifying literature that includes the Bible and the confessions, but also anything that is an explanation of biblical concepts or sets forth the life and practice of the Bible. Most certainly I am not here referring merely to works of Protestant Reformed authors. Included in the scope would be devotionals or a collection of meditations, works of church history including biographies and autobiographies, commentaries, theological treatises or


dogmatics, theological journals, books on the Christian life (whether treating dating and marriage or enduring suffering or family worship or financial stewardship), helps for Bible study, books addressing contemporary issues in the church (on worship or doctrine), and certainly the publications of the RFPA, the *Standard Bearer*, but also the *Beacons Lights*, the *Perspectives in Covenant Education*, *Salt Shakers* out of Singapore, and also various online sources. This list is by no means exhaustive, but you understand the general scope to which I refer: good, spiritually-edifying literature.

Secondly, when I refer to the people of God reading, I do so *organically*, and not head-for-head. There are those who will never be able to read, perhaps because of mental disabilities or other conditions.

Thirdly, although I speak of *books*, I recognize some people do not read, for example, *The Attributes of God* by A.W. Pink in an old paperback, but on their tablet. I am not excluding tablets or the like from this address, though I speak of books.

Finally, in the near future, someone—probably a teacher and at a gathering broader than the annual teacher’s convention—must speak on the place of reading in *education*. For I have been told recently that the philosophy of education is changing, radically changing. Future teachers are taught that children need to know

only one thing: how to find the answer. They do not need to be lectured to (a method proven ineffective); they do not need to read books (they do not retain the information anyways). They do not need to know who the first president of the U.S. was, or if the earth rotates around the sun or the sun around the earth. Children must be taught one thing: how to find the answer. In their hands they will have powerful tools capable of giving them all the answers. They need only to know how to use their tools and how to discover the answers. This philosophy will have significant implications for catechism and preaching and life in the church in general. And as one astute observer recently pointed out, this is all preparation for the coming of the Antichrist, for he will come and tell the ignorant masses what to think, what is truth, and what they need to know, and who will know any better? Destroyed for lack of knowledge! However, I am not addressing the place of reading in education.

The subject of this address is encouraging the next generation to read good literature throughout all of their life. Why? Next time we will consider the necessity and even urgency of encouraging the next generation to read. The urgency arises out of reading’s very significant place in God’s covenant and reading’s disappearing significance in the modern world. 

SPECIAL ARTICLE

MR. CARSTEN LINKE

Jesus Christ Reveals the Name of God (3)

Comments on John 17:6-11

The preservation of the church is the work of the triune God

What does Jesus ask of the Father? In John 17:9 He

Mr. Linke is an elder in the Confessing Protestant Reformed Congregation of Giessen, Germany. The article appeared first in Bekenende Kirche. Translated by Mr. Peter VanDerSchaaf.

Previous article in this series, September 15, 2013, p. 492.

begins to pray for His people, and in verse 11 comes the central point. “Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.” That is the one concrete request in this text. Christ prays for the preservation of His church during the time in which He will not be with them in the flesh. The church has always belonged to the Father. He has given them to the Son and He in turn places them under the protection of the Father, who will preserve

them in His Name, that is, in His effectual salvation, as long as they are in this world.

Just a few chapters before, Christ described how this preservation would be manifest, “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:16-17).

What the Son of God proclaimed there, He now fulfills. He prays to the Father for the Comforter, who will preserve the church. The work of the Holy Spirit is part of God’s counsel. Each of the persons of the Trinity takes part in the preserving of the church. The members of the *one* people of God are members on the *one* body, the body of Christ. Therefore the purpose of this prayer for preservation is that they may *be one* (v. 11). The church of Jesus Christ is called to confess in this world that Christ is their only Lord and salvation, to hold fast to that *one* faith, to take the *one* word of God as their only guide for doctrine and life, to proclaim this Word, and to be bound together in *one* body with Christ and with each other. Where this takes place, there is the *one* holy, catholic, Christian church and there the *one* body of Christ is visible.

Christ reveals to His elect people the name of God. He accomplishes their salvation. He sees to their preservation. He prays for them. He stands before God’s throne for them. He maintains them as the members of His body.

He does not pray for the others. Not for the world. He does not expressly pray against the world. He ignores them. He excludes them. In this way He carries out the will of the Father just as Jeremiah once received the instruction, “Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee” (Jer. 7:16).

This fact is a great comfort. Christ prays for that which belongs to Him and the Father. He goes before the Father specifically for them whom the Father knows and acknowledges as His own. For no more, and also for no fewer. And God will let fall none of those whom He has chosen to be His own. For that reason we can be assured that this high-priestly prayer will be heard. We need not, and may not, doubt that.

God is glorified in the salvation of His people

In that Jesus Christ reveals the name of God to His congregation, in that He effectually calls His own, in that He saves them from the dominion of sin by His powerful Word and work, and leads them into the presence of God and keeps them, He glorifies Himself. In verse 10 He confesses, “I am glorified in them.” The redeemed church is His bride. She is His ornament, and He receives thanksgiving and honor from her. We have a very clear picture of this in the book of Revelation. “And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth” (Rev. 5:8-10).

And even the heavenly hosts take part in this song of praise, “And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing” (Rev. 5:11-12). Jesus Christ, the One who opened not His mouth and was led as a lamb to the slaughter, will inherit all honor and praise. He presents Himself in the book of Revelation as “the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last” (Rev. 22:13). That word “*end*” means literally “*goal*.” Christ in His glory is the goal of all things. For in Him the triune God at the last glorifies Himself. For this reason, all of the work of God in this time is directed to this *one* goal.

Conclusion

To sum up: Jesus Christ reveals to us the name of God. God the Father portrays Himself to us in His name as the God who certainly fulfills His promises regarding our salvation. When Jesus reveals His Father’s name to us, He seals to us in Himself the promises and the fulfillment that are grounded in Him, in His person.

God's promises are sure to those whom He has chosen from before the foundation of the world—those whom He gave to His Son before the foundation of the world. Jesus carried out His work of salvation for them only, and for them only He came before the Father as their high priest.

All of the work of Christ for us and in us is directed

to one goal: that He will be glorified in us. For that reason He received us from the Father, for that reason He revealed the name of the Lord, for that reason He earned our salvation on the cross, for that reason He holds us by His Holy Spirit through all temptations, afflictions, and opposition. And in the glorified Christ, the triune God glorifies Himself. ☞

CONTRIBUTION

REV. MARTYN MCGEOWN

Heidelberg Catechism Conference

My first impression on arriving at the conference in Hudsonville PRC was that the parking lot was almost full. That augured well for good attendance at the three sessions on Thursday-Saturday (October 17-19, 2013). I was glad to see such a lively interest in a conference for which the seminary and the Evangelism Committee of Hudsonville PRC had made such diligent preparation.

Entering the building itself, I was immediately drawn to the book tables. The seminary had set up one book table, ably manned by the seminarians themselves. It included a display of rare books from the library, with the Heidelberg Catechism in various languages. It also

boasted a collection of limited edition *Heidelberg Catechism Conference and Seminary* mugs and free pens. Gary VanDer Schaaf and the RFPA had informative displays and many suitable books to purchase. I did not buy any books because Rev. Stewart and I were scheduled to bring back two 50-pound boxes of books for the CPRC bookstore in Ballymena.

The Conference began with praise from the excellent Hope Heralds, a Protestant Reformed male voice choir. They sang—appropriately—a special number based on LD 1 of the Catechism. The second night there was another special number, this one by a talented young man from Southwest PRC, Bryan Westra. Other talent was showcased as well. The Seminary organized a writing competition, and the winners were announced by the chairman of the judging committee, Mr. Scott VanUffelen, a teacher in Covenant Christian High School, Grand Rapids, MI. The winners' essays will be published in the *Standard Bearer* and *Beacon Lights*, D.V. This year, none of the seminarians won, an anomaly explained by Prof. Dykstra—the seminarians were not permitted to enter!

The six speeches were excellent, and for those who were not able to join the event in Hudsonville (whose sanctuary was full, especially on Thursday and Friday evenings) the event was streamed live on the Internet. Over 200 people from various locations across the USA and further afield



Seminarians Aaron Lim, Justin Smidstra, Joe Holstege

Rev. McGeown is missionary-pastor of the Covenant Protestant Reformed Church in Northern Ireland stationed in Limerick, Republic of Ireland.



Speakers: Rev. Stewart, Dr. Klautke, Prof. Dykstra, Prof. Gritters, Prof. Cammenga, Rev. Haak

were able to join the conference live online each day. The speeches were recorded and are available on <http://www.hudsonvilleprc.org/>.¹

Dr. Jürgen-Burkhard Klautke from the BERG in Giessen, Germany gave the first speech, which was a history of how the Heidelberg Catechism came to be written. Accompanying his speech were slides of various historical figures and geographical areas associated with the Heidelberg Catechism. It was appropriate to have a German theologian introduce this history to us. One thing that impressed me was the miserable earthly circumstances of the average citizen of the Palatinate—the plague hit Heidelberg around 1563. The theme of comfort must have echoed in the hearts of those to whom the Catechism was first preached. Prof. Cammenga continued the theme of comfort in his speech, which was a stirring presentation of the gospel of grace. On Friday evening, Prof. Gritters reminded us of our rich heritage in Heidelberg Catechism preaching and gave eight blessings of such preaching for the churches. Rev. Carl Haak called us to a life of gratitude, using the theme of the Catechism's third section. Gratitude is "the echo of praise

reverberating in the chambers of the heart that knows its redemption and renewal by grace." On Saturday morning, it was said that numbers were down from previous days, but, if the breakfast line was any indication, there were plenty of people to enjoy the delicious spread provided by the Catering Committee of Hudsonville PRC! Rev. Stewart expounded the "War and Peace" of the Heidelberg Catechism—war against the false church and our own sins, and peace in the true church by the gospel of grace. Prof. Dykstra gave the final lecture, demonstrating ably that our beloved Catechism is thoroughly covenantal—as one would expect from a catechism that is experiential,

personal, and comforting—and supports the unconditional covenant in its language, being a development of some of the covenantal theology of Ursinus and Olevianus. These brief snippets hardly do any of the speeches justice. Listen for yourselves!

The conference was over too soon, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed it. Some traveled a great distance to attend. Not all were Michiganders by any means. Several US states were represented, and, as well as visitors from Germany, Ireland and Italy, we welcomed a sister from Singapore. Probably the one who had the most arduous journey was one young man from the Pittsburgh mission—he took a *bus* from Pittsburgh to Grand Rapids, with a *ten-hour* layover in Detroit! That is some commitment, but worth it to enjoy the instruction and fellowship.

The Seminary and Hudsonville Evangelism Committee did a fine job with the conference, and I look forward to the next one—maybe 2018/19 to commemorate the Synod of Dordrecht? We have a rich heritage in the truth. It was a joy to be among the happy throng commemorating our precious catechism of comfort and grace.



¹ A summary of the six speeches appeared in the November 1 edition of the SB, and much expanded versions of the speeches will be published in an upcoming edition of the *Protestant Reformed Theological Journal* (PRTJ).

October 9, 2013

Classis West held its fall meeting in Loveland, CO on October 9. The meeting date had been postponed from the usual September date, so that Classis could examine Candidate Erik Guichelaar, who had accepted the call to be the pastor of the Randolph, WI PRC.

Rev. Allen Brummel chaired the session. In addition to the thirty delegates from the churches in Classis West, Classis was attended by the synodical deputies from Classis East (Revs. Haak, Koole, and VanOverloop), and by Seminarian Joshua Engelsma, who is doing his internship in Peace PRC. Many members from Loveland PRC, as well as students from Loveland's grade school and high school, were found sitting in the pews during the examination. No doubt their interest in this particular exam was heightened by the fact that Mr. Guichelaar had served his internship in Loveland, CO last year, and several of the students had Mr. Guichelaar as their catechism teacher.

As part of his examination, Mr. Guichelaar led a worship service on Tuesday evening, preaching from John 12:26 under the theme "For Him Who Would Serve Christ." Classis judged Mr. Guichelaar's exposition to be sound, Christ-centered, and edifying. The text gave Mr. Guichelaar opportunity to witness of his own commitment to serve Christ, and reminded all the delegates that the way to serve Christ is the way of following Him.

Mr. Guichelaar's oral examination took all of Wednesday morning. Various ministers examined him in the six areas of Reformed doctrine, the knowledge of Scripture,

the knowledge of confessions, controversy, and practica. After lunch, Classis unanimously approved his exam, and advised Randolph PRC to proceed with his ordination into the ministry of the Word and sacraments. The synodical deputies from Classis East concurred with this decision. Mr. Guichelaar was ordained the following Sunday, October 13.

God be thanked, again, for the gift of ministers—and of this minister in particular! And God be thanked, again, for the gift we have in a denominational seminary, and for professors who are diligent in preparing men for the ministry of the gospel!

In other business, Classis received reports from its stated clerk, classical committee, and reading sermon committee. It also approved a classical appointment schedule for Doon PRC, the only vacant church in the Classis.

Crete PRC had requested Classis to designate the fourth Wednesday of September as the date for the regular fall meeting, in part to avoid travel the week of Labor Day. Classis did agree to try to avoid meeting the week of Labor Day in the future, but still denied Crete's request, giving Classis more freedom to schedule future meetings on a date that works best for that particular year.

The expenses of Classis totaled \$10,090.84.

The next meeting of Classis is scheduled for March 5, 2014—the first to be hosted by Heritage PRC in Sioux Falls, SD, God willing.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Douglas J. Kuiper, Stated Clerk

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

MR. BENJAMIN WIGGER

Congregation Activities

With the Word of God found in I John 4:11 in mind, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another," we extend our congratulations to two congrega-

Mr. Wigger is an elder in the Protestant Reformed Church of Hudsonville, Michigan.

tions celebrating anniversaries: the Wingham, Ontario PRC, organized November 25, 1979, and the Lynden, WA PRC, organized in November, 1951, the exact day unknown.

Members of the Hudsonville, MI PRC were invited to ride along on their bikes for their fourth annual

Church Bike Ride on Saturday, October 12. It proved to be a colorful ride through falling leaves along the shore of Lake Michigan, from Tunnel Park to Holland State Park and back again. Dinner was provided, and riders were also challenged to climb the stairs over the dunes if they still had some energy left.

The congregation in Spokane, WA, the Covenant of Grace PRC, enjoyed their Fall Family Supper on October 19. Everyone was reminded to bring a pot of either soup or chili and a salad to share. We are certain that a night of good Christian fellowship was also enjoyed that day by all.

Members of the Peace PRC in Lansing, IL were invited to celebrate together their 25th anniversary as an organized congregation on Sunday evening, October 20. Peace planned their evening worship service to be held in the Illiana Christian High School auditorium/chapel. This is the location where Peace gathered for worship for their first seven years. A short program was also planned after the evening service, and a light lunch followed in the school's cafeteria.

Rev. Martyn McGeown, missionary pastor to the Limerick Reformed Fellowship in Limerick, the Republic of Ireland, made the trip to Michigan and the Heidelberg Catechism Conference in Hudsonville, held in mid October; and since he was in the area over a Sunday, the Providence PRC in Hudsonville arranged for Rev. McGeown to preach for them Sunday evening, October 20. Shortly after that service, Rev. McGeown gave a PowerPoint presentation concerning his work as missionary.

Evangelism Activities

The Evangelism Committee of the Hope PRC in Redlands, CA sponsored a lecture on the campus of Westminster Seminary in Escondido, CA on Friday, October 4.

Professor David Engelsma spoke on the subject, "The Coming of the Kingdom: Christianizing the World?" As a follow-up to that lecture in Escondido, Rev. Brian Huizinga, pastor of Hope, led an evangelistic preaching service at the Best Western in Escondido on Sunday afternoon. Prof. Engelsma was originally scheduled to lead this service, but due to his recent infirmity did not preach. Rev. Huizinga brought God's Word found in II Timothy 4:1-4 under the theme, "Preach the Word"; I—The Command; II—The Urgency of It; and III—Our Obedience to It. We echo Hope's congregation when we add, may God be pleased to use these two events for the coming of His kingdom through the preservation and increase of His church.

Did you know that the Heidelberg Catechism was approved for use in the church on January 18, 1563? With that, and other facts concerning the Heidelberg Catechism in mind, the Evangelism Committee of the Edgerton, MN PRC sponsored a presentation given by their pastor, Rev. Doug Kuiper, entitled, "Presentation Commemorating the Heidelberg Catechism's 450th Anniversary," on October 4 at the Chandler Community Center in Edgerton.

The Evangelism Committee of the Randolph, WI PRC hosted a lecture on October 4 in their church auditorium. Dr. Nathan Lanning, a cancer biologist at the Van Andel Research Institute in Grand Rapids, MI, spoke on "Understanding Evolution from the Reformed Perspective." Dr. Lanning showed that

being a dedicated Christian scientist does not mean caving in to the pressures of modern evolutionism, but that one can and must maintain a faithful biblical stand while working in the sciences today

On Friday, October 11, the Bethel PRC in Roselle, IL sponsored a special Reformation Day Lecture at their church. This year's lecture was entitled, "The Comfort of Belonging," in commemoration of the 450th anniversary of the Heidelberg Catechism. The speaker was Prof. Barrett Gritters, professor of Practical Theology and New Testament Studies at our Protestant Reformed Seminary.

Mission Activities

On Sunday evening, October 13, Missionary Pastor Wilbur Bruinsma gave a presentation at the Cornerstone PRC in Dyer, IN, on the Pittsburgh, PA PR Fellowship and the work being done there.

School Activities

On Friday evening, October 11, and then again on Saturday evening, October 19, supporters of PR Special Education were invited to a Special Needs Benefit Concert featuring a performance of Handel's Messiah. These two concerts featured an orchestra of 19 musicians, a chorus of 34 voices, and 15 different soloists, all from our PR churches. The concerts were held at Central Reformed Church and St. Cecilia Music Society, both in Grand Rapids, MI.

Young People's Activities

All the Young People of the

Georgetown PRC in Hudsonville, MI were invited to play mud football at a farm belonging to one of Georgetown's members on Saturday, October 5.

In appreciation to their congregation for all of their financial support over the past years, the young people of the Southwest PRC in Grandville, MI offered their help to members of their congregation for free. This was not intended to be a

fundraiser, but simply a way to say thanks. Whether it was yard work, house-cleaning, babysitting, or whatever, the young people wanted to lend a hand. The only stipulation was that the help offered come between the dates of November 4 and 16.

The Young Adult Society of the Lynden, WA PRC hosted a desert and service auction on Friday, October 18. Proceeds from the

auction were to be used for the upcoming 2014 Young Adults Retreat to be held at Warm Beach Camp and sponsored by Lynden's Young Adults Society.

Minister Activities

Rev. Rodney Kleyn, pastor of the Covenant of Grace PRC in Spokane, WA, declined the call to serve as pastor of the Doon, IA PRC. ☺

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wedding Anniversary

■ On November 29, 2013 our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents, **Henry and JUDY BLEYENBURG**, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

To God be the glory for giving them the grace to instruct and guide us in His precious truths.

We pray that the Lord will continue to show His covenant faithfulness through them, bless them in their marriage, and care for them in the years ahead.

"Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it" (Psalm 90:16-17).

❖ Doug and Sue Bleyenburger

Katie, Cole, Kelli, Caleb

❖ Jim and Leah Lenting

Lee and Lauren Wiltjer

Jack, Charlie

Andrew, Jason, Grant, Cobie

❖ Ted and Audra Andringa

Jacob and Anna Andringa

Joseph, Samantha, Benjamin, Noah, Vanessa

❖ Jeff and Stephanie Zylstra

Zachary, Tyler, Jaedyn, Blake, Abby

❖ Joel and Amy Bousema

Jocelyn and fiancé Joshua Nollmeyer

Kenzie, Erica, Emma

❖ Eric and Monica Lindsey

Olivia, Eli

❖ Joel and Lanae Holstege

Lindsey, Jori, Spencer, Brady, Symone
Crete, Illinois

Resolution of Sympathy

■ The Council and congregation of Hull PRC express their sympathy to Bart and Jan Zandstra and family in the death of their father and grandfather,

BARTEL ZANDSTRA.

May our Father in heaven comfort their hearts by His word, "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work" (II Thessalonians 2:16, 17).

Rev. Laning, President
Gerald Brummel, clerk of records

Resolution of Sympathy

■ The Council and congregation of Hull PRC express their sympathy to Dennis and Michelle Hoksbergen and family in the death of their mother and grandmother,

MARY BRAS.

May our Father in heaven comfort them by His word, "Return to thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living" (Psalm 116:7-9).

Rev. Laning, President
Gerald Brummel, clerk of records

SB Index

■ A new improved digital index of the *Standard Bearer*, volumes 1-89, is now available at www.RFPA.org. The cost is \$10.