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MEDITATION

Blessed Peacemakers

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Matt. 5:9

The key-stone of all blessedness of God's Covenant!
The culmination of all things: peace, blessed peace.

Already in the Old Testament: Moses received commandment of God to speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make His Face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up His Countenance upon thee, and *give thee peace!*

And so through the ages God's people heard the announcement, as though God spoke to them: you are blessed, My people: you are kept, shined upon by the eternal light of His love, you are graced so that God will dwell within you, and the end was peace, blessed peace.

How fitting that our great Highpriest should take that blessing and utter it to the citizens of the Kingdom of God.

And also here the end is peace, blessed peace.

It is the peace of God, dwelling in the hearts of His children so that they become peacemakers on earth, and deserve to be called the children of God.

It is the last of the seven beatitudes.

The seven are a description of the children of God in the world.

And the end, the conclusion is that they are seen as the peacemakers in the world.

Blessed are the peacemakers!

* * * *

Blessed are the peacemakers!

The Holland translation is not correct: blessed are the peaceable ones. Not as though they would not deserve that name, but it is not according to the original. The English translation is correct. They are peacemakers. They make peace.

Peacemakers! And the whole world is inclined to shout: Amen!

The great men of this world all profess to be exactly that.

Many years ago I saw a cartoon in one of the leading magazines: the great statesmen of the warring nations at the peacetable with smiling faces. But behind them, behind their back, they firmly clutched their daggers and guns.

And why?

Because they sought peace without the Cross of Christ.

They sought peace without God.

And that's a mirage.

God said: There is no peace, saith the Lord to the wicked.

And: But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

But they never learn. They will continue to have their peace conferences; they will continue to build their peace castles, even though every age teaches the age-old lesson: there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

And the reason is simple.

All peace finds its source in God. Read Judges 6:24. We see Gideon building an altar to the Lord, and we hear him call it: Jehovah-Shalom, which means: God is peace, or, rather, Jehovah is peace.

If you shut out the living God from your conferences, you can never attain to peace. There is no peace outside of Him, apart from Him.

God is peace eternally, essentially, and in all His works.

Hence, God is the Fountain of all peace.

And that peace of God is vitally connected with His eternal covenant of grace. Read Numbers 25:12. "Wherefore say, Behold I give unto him my covenant of peace. And Isaiah 54:10, a very beautiful verse: "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."

Oh yes, God is the God of peace, even the peace of His Covenant of grace.

* * * *

And so God is the great, original Peace Maker.

He is at peace with Himself and in Himself. In His glorious Being He lives the life of His eternal Covenant. God is a Covenant God in Himself. Father, Son and Holy Ghost

live the life of peace, from eternity to eternity. With wondrous diversity of their personal lives, there is the unity of their Essence. Never is there the least ripple of discord in God. They love one another, they seek one another, they enjoy one another from everlasting to everlasting. They live the life of the Covenant of Peace.

That became evident in the creation of the first world.

Adam and Eve lived the blessed covenant life of God in the first paradise.

But through the temptation of Satan they lost that peaceful life and became rebels. They declared war with God and heaven. And misery was in all their ways. They became as the troubled sea when it cannot rest, and both Adam and Eve cast up mire and dirt. And their generations continued to do the same thing, only worse than their forebears. Witness the unspeakable unrest, war, and rebellion of the world against the God of peace. Henceforth they prate of peace, but it is all vain, the lie, utter deception: there is no peace, and there are no peacemakers among the children of men.

* * * *

But God has harboured thoughts of peace from everlasting. In time He speak of it: For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Jer. 29:11.

Ah, these Divine thoughts of peace!

They came to manifestation in the fulness of time when the Prince of Peace appeared, Jesus Christ the Lord. And make no mistake, He is no third party, He is the living God, the God of peace Himself who appeared among us as the great Peacemaker.

God is the Peacemaker *par excellence*!

And even then you are in danger of misinterpretation. He does not only excel in peacemaking, but He is the only Peacemaker!

He proved it when He rent the heavens and descended in Bethlehem. Listen to Paul; he is speaking of Jesus Christ, that is the God of our salvation: For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

There you have the whole story of the peacemaking of God through His dear Son.

In Jesus Christ, my dear reader, the Fountain of Peace is opened in Jerusalem. Jehovah took upon Himself all our war, and rebellion which we had declared unto and against God, and He destroyed, annihilated all that war and rebellion in His blessed cross.

And then He began to preach that peace through the

Gospel, working with that Gospel in the hearts of the elect so that they might believe in it and be saved.

Oh yes, God in Christ is the great Peacemaker!

* * * *

The Law which we hated and would not live in the midst of the world is now written in our hearts through the Holy Ghost of Christ that is given to us. And of that wondrous work we sing: Great peace have they that love Thy law. The law is love, love of God, and love of the fellow man. Walk in that love, live that love of God and you have great peace.

As soon as the power of the blood of Christ has found its mark you become peaceable. You rest in God. You partake of the life of His covenant of peace. And it grows still in your erstwhile turbulent heart.

And so you become a peacemaker.

No, you do not become some kind of goody goodies. You do not become a caricature of peaceableness. You will never forsake your convictions for the sake of outward peace. You do not pacify everyone. You can be a wondrous peacemaker and be at war at the same time. Then you fight the war of God. Look at David. His whole life was spent in warring with the godless nations around about Israel.

But you do become a peacemaker.

You do so by preaching and living the cross of Jesus Christ, through His Word and Holy Spirit.

And what glorious opportunity!

First in your own heart. You listen to Jesus when your heart is falling back into the unrest that first was your atmosphere: Let not your heart be troubled! We discipline our own hearts and minds by preaching the Cross of Jesus to ourselves. And when rebellious thoughts arise in our hearts and rebellious words are pressing to our lips for utterance, we kill our members that are on the earth. We sanctify God in our hearts and it grows still again.

We do so in our family life by bringing all under the discipline of God in Christ. And we experience that only the Cross of Jesus has the answer for every impatient question, every anxious and despairing thought. We lead them all captive to the obedience of Christ.

We do so in the church.

What an opportunity!

The church is not yet entirely delivered from the natural rebellion and war against the Almighty. But against all and everything that raises its head in disobedience to God and His Christ, we preach the Gospel of Peace.

And attend to this: we always have success with the elect of God. For they have the Spirit of peace in their hearts. They will listen to you.

And with the church we do so in the midst of a rebellious world.

We preach the Gospel of peace. We will tell them that all their attempts at peace are doomed before they start. We will tell them that they are at war with God Himself, and that their end is eternal unrest, unless they hear and be converted.

But we will make peace.

Even though the fools will tell us and ask of us with sneers and derision: Art thou he that troubleth Israel? We will say in the Spirit of God: No, but you and your father's house are those that trouble Israel. Hear and repent!

And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace!

G.V.

CHURCH NEWS

Reverend Marinus Schipper was extended a call from 2nd Church of Grand Rapids.

Rev. James McCollum was extended and has accepted a call from our Holland Congregation. Both of the calls were made in Congregational meetings held July 12.

All classical appointments for Holland after August 1 are cancelled. Services are now held at 13th and Lincoln.

Members of the Protestant Reformed faith in the Kalamazoo area began holding services there again on Sunday, July 18. Services at present are being held in the Kalamazoo YWCA.

BEAUSE THY TRUST IS GOD ALONE

Because thy trust is God alone,
Thy refuge is the Highest One,
No evil shall upon thee come,
Nor plague approach thy guarded home.

Angelic guards at His commands
Will bear thee safely in their hands,
Will keep thee, lest, if left alone,
Thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Though fierce and treacherous foes assail,
Their power and wrath shall not prevail;
Their cruel strength, their venom'd spite,
Thou shalt o'ercome with conquering might.

Because on Me he set his love,
I will his constant Savior prove,
And since to him My Name is known,
I will exalt him as My own.

As oft as he shall call on Me,
Most gracious shall My answer be;
I will be with him in distress,
And in his trouble I will bless.

Complete deliverance I will give,
And honor him while he shall live;
Abundant life I will bestow,
To him My full salvation show.

Psalm 91

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EDITORIALS

Autonomy

The next subject that was brought up in my examination in court, and which had been repeatedly referred to by the opposition, was Art. 31 of the Church Order.

Let me quote the article:

"If anyone complains that he has been wronged by the decision of a minor assembly, he shall have the right to appeal to a major ecclesiastical assembly, and whatever may be agreed upon by a majority vote shall be considered settled and binding, unless it be proved to conflict with the Word of God or with the Articles of the Church Order, as long as they are not changed by a General Synod."

Especially the next to the last clause: "unless it be proved to conflict with the Word of God or with the Articles of the Church Order" drew the attention in court.

Kok c.s. emphasized strongly that the proof mentioned in this article need not be given to the major assemblies in question. If one is convinced before his own mind and conscience that a certain decision is in conflict with the Word of God or with the Articles of the Church Order, that decision cannot, within the denomination, be settled and binding for him. In other words, in that case, he may simply disregard the decision and remain in the communion of the churches.

Such anarchy was, of course, practiced by them all the way through.

Now I will continue to quote from the record of the Court.

Q. Now what about Article 31. Does that give an individual the right to disagree with the decision of classis and synod?

A. No, sir, it does not. It does not at all, not in the sense in which it has been testified here in Court. Let me explain. All this has been in Court. I haven't said one word yet, and I want to make this plain before the Court. When anything is decided contrary to the Word of God according to my conviction, I can never subscribe to it for one minute. Of course not. That is impossible. If anything is contrary to the Word of God and to the Confessions, I will never subscribe to it for one minute. That is why I was deposed in 1924. It was the same thing. But, nevertheless, if that should ever happen, either of two things will occur — not as some of the witnesses have said here, that I could simply stay in the Protestant Reformed Churches on the principle of the freedom of my own conscience — by no means. Either I will, I would have to submit for the time being, until I could explain and prove to a major assembly the wrong of the decision, or I would have to get out. That is what I did in 1924. I got out. I was expelled. That is all right. But there is no view of church government that explains Article 31 in such a way that one can have the right of his own

opinion, even if he thinks a decision is in conflict with the Word of God, that he can have the right of his own opinion and preach in the church of which he is a member, in the communion of the Protestant Reformed Churches. No one ever claims that. I can prove that, too.

Q. Is that a matter that has been discussed by authorities on Reformed Church Polity?

A. Oh, yes. Oh, yes. That matter has been discussed, and so far as I know, Mr. Tubbs, there is only one official decision on this whole question in the churches. There is a decision that was taken by the Synod of the largest group of Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. A Church that comprises about seven hundred or eight hundred churches at present, the largest Reformed Synod in the world. In 1946, the synod, assembled at Utrecht declared as follows, and I translated. Yes, I have it here (indicating).

Q. I show you this printed document, and ask you if that is a copy of the articles of that meeting of Synod?

A. That is right.

Q. It is in the Holland language?

A. That is right.

Q. You are going to be quoting from Article 220?

A. Yes, but I have a little pamphlet here that is a copy of it and that is more handy, Mr. Tubbs (indicating).

Q. Are you going to be quoting from page 11, paragraph 7 of the pamphlet I now hand you (indicating)?

A. That is the same as the Acts, only it is a reproduction by the Synod itself.

Q. Will you translate it. (Mr. Tubbs hands booklet to opposing parties). Will you proceed, sir?

A. That is page 11, at the bottom of the page (reading):

"VII. A. That is the allegation, as if previous synods offered interpretations of Article 31 that are in conflict with one another, and also the allegation that these synods understood the words of this Article 31, 'unless it can be proved' in the sense of 'until it be proved,' are not sufficiently grounded in the facts and, therefore, must be denied;

"B. That at any rate, according to the judgment of Synod, this Article must be understood in such a way, that the being settled and binding of the decisions of ecclesiastical gatherings find their limitation in the agreement with the Word of God and the articles of the Church Order, with the understanding, however, that about the reality of this agreement, not only the one that offers objections, but no less the ecclesiastical gatherings have to judge, and that in such a case, *within the church connection*, the final decision has to remain with the general synod, which according to Article 36 has jurisdiction.

"C. That the deciding judgment whether the execution of a decision of an ecclesiastical gathering may, pending the appeal, against it, temporarily be suspended, must in each particular case rest with the ecclesiastical gathering concerned, and that it cannot be considered correct to decide on a general rule for specific cases, a rule which would imply

that a decision of an ecclesiastical gathering can temporarily be declared not settled and binding.

"VIII. That to conform one Self to a declaration concerning doctrine can imply:

"A. That one does not consider his objection of so serious a nature that he considers himself called to give testimony of his objection to the ecclesiastical gatherings;

"B. That one gives notice of his objection in the ecclesiastical way, but in the meantime accepts *de facto* the decisions that were taken;

"C. That one acquiesce in the decisions taken after having vainly attempted to deliver to the ecclesiastical gatherings convincing proof of the incorrectness of the disputed decision."

And that, Mr. Tubbs, I may say is my conviction, too. My conviction is that if anything is contrary to the Word of God, I cannot be bound by it in the meantime. If the synod should decide anything contrary to the Word of God, I would consider it my calling to give proof to the ecclesiastical gathering of the incorrectness. In the meantime, they could decide whether I would have to abide by it or not. That is up to the gatherings. If I could not abide by it, and they decided that I would have to abide by it, I would simply submit or be out of office.

Q. Now is there a Professor Rutgers in the denomination?

Mr. Linsey: You are talking about the denomination. You are not talking about the Protestant Reformed Churches?

Q. (By Mr. Tubbs): Is there a Professor Rutgers who writes on Reformed Church Polity?

A. Yes; that is an authority in the Netherlands, Mr. Tubbs.

Q. Do you have some authority from him which bears on this subject?

A. I think I have. I don't know whether I can find it. So much has been written on this. (Referring to papers). Yes, I have it here.

Q. We haven't the original book?

A. Don't you have the book here?

Q. No, I am sorry. Let's get on with Dr. L. Oranje.

A. Yes; there are quite a few quotations here.

Q. Is he a recognized authority on Reformed Church Polity?

A. In a way; not as strong as Dr. Rutgers.

Q. Does he publish books? Are his books published on the subject?

A. Especially in connection with the controversy in the Netherlands in recent years.

Q. What Article; what page?

A. Article 31.

Q. Article 31? Do you have translations from quotations from the little book I hold in my hand? (indicating)

A. I have.

Q. And are they found on pages 17, 36 and 37 of the little book?

A. That is right. On page 17, first of all, Mr. Tubbs, I think it is on page 17, isn't it?

Q. Proceed. (Mr. Tubbs hands booklet to opposing parties). What is the name of the book, first?

A. In English it would be "Authority in the Church of Christ."

Q. You are quoting now from page 17 and translating?

A. I will, as translated, yes.

Q. All right.

A. Page 17. (Reading.) "Synthesizing the foregoing, we can, therefore, determine that according to the Reformed conception there is a triple possibility in the case of a conflict with those who bear authority in the Church of Christ about a principal decision, wherein always the question arises concerning the matter of agreement or disagreement with the Word of God:

"1. One must conform himself in all those cases wherein derived principles are concerned, as long as view stands over against view, no overwhelming proof can be delivered, and one, therefore, with a good and free conscience, can place himself behind the majority.

"2. One must walk in the ecclesiastical way of gravamen and or appeal in all those cases in which it apparently concerns derived principles but then such principles that one not only dares accept the burden of disproving the opinion of the majority, but also sees it as his obligation in view of the great interests which are at stake for the Kingdom of God.

"3. One comes to stand before the ultimate necessity of the 'obligatory disobedience' when one would be obligated unto words or deeds which directly conflict with the express Word of God, or when one comes to stand over against men who have dethroned Christ the King, in order to themselves exercise dominion over the Lord's inheritance, by, in a reformatory manner, not forsaking the Church, but maintaining his position until he is expelled when one, through a change in his convictions or through a conflict of conscience, may not submit and cannot reform, through freely going away." Either expelled or freely going away.

In answer to the question about Article 31, may I quote from page 36. (Reading): "Also in that regard we need not hesitate a moment, provided we do not lose from sight the relation of the present Church Order and its forbears. Prof. Rutgers speaks concerning this in 'The Validity Of The Old Church Order' pages 10 and 40. He explains there why the so-called ecclesiastical handbooks continue to give the old editions next to the church order. He conceives of that so, because the new, in order to please the government and obtain political approval, brought all kinds of changes which, considered by themselves, were no improvement.

"Well, now, thus it went also with Article 31. In the Church Order of 1578 one finds back the present Art. 31 as Art. 23. There it reads, in the present spelling: (that is in

present Dutch spelling, of course), 'In all cases (those always excepted concerning which we have an express declaration of the Word of God), if the vote is diligently weighed, and one shall abide by the advice of the most votes, in order after that to decide which decision every one is obligated to follow!

That is the quotation from 1578. Now I continue: "From this the intention, therefore, of this article is very plain. The decisions taken by a majority vote are always binding, unless they are in conflict with a Scripture passage which is not capable of two explanations.

"In every other instance one is therefore bound to submit first until that the time and occasion when the concerned ecclesiastical gathering is brought to another view in the ecclesiastical way of gravaman or appeal.

"The exception in Art. 31 means therefore exclusively the instances of extreme necessity as described on p. 17. The rule apart from these is always: submit one's self to the binding authority of the decisions of the major gatherings.

"Also historically therefore it stands immovably fast which of the two mentioned conceptions is that of the churches . . ." I think that's probably enough. I have also Dr. Ridderbos who is also an authority.

Q. What is the name of his pamphlet?

A. I don't know whether it is translated. I doubt it very much. But I can translate it very well, though. It is "Church Schism."

Mr. VanderWal: I think that is already in evidence, an article in the Standard Bearer by Dr. Ridderbos on Art. 31.

Mr. Linsey: I don't think so.

Q. Do you have a quotation from Dr. Ridderbos from p. 21 of his book?

A. I have. The trouble is I don't have the page.

Q. Page 21 I believe.

A. I think so.

Q. At that point, he is discussing Art. 31 of the Church Order?

A. (Reading): "As far as Art. 31 is concerned, we know that the protestants appeal to the fact that, according to that article, that which is approved by a majority must be held to be settled and binding, but that to this is added: unless it be proved to be in conflict with the Word of God or with the Church Order. The question is now: To whom must one prove this?

"We say, of course, to the ecclesiastical gathering which must pass judgment on this. Whoever has an objection against a decision taken, must walk in the ecclesiastical gathering. This gathering is obligated to hear him, and to give him opportunity to present his proof that the decision is in conflict with Scripture or the Church Order; and in case the gathering cannot refute the proof then they must recall the decision or declare it void. But as long as this does not take place, one must, if he would remain in the church connection, adjust himself to the decision.

"On that contrary, the protestants say: No, it is satisfactory if I have proved it to myself. Thus every one who for himself is convinced that an ecclesiastical decision is in conflict with the Word of God or the Church Order could lay this decision aside and peacefully remain in the church, in the full possession of the rights which he as a church member or officebearer has.

"It is plain that this cannot be the intention of this article, The binding character of the ecclesiastical decisions would be completely imaginary; every one who says: I can prove that it is in conflict with the Word of God and with the Church Order, would go scot free and there are people who are quickly ready with such speech as soon as a decision does not fit in with their view or wishes.

"Of course, it is true that one (whether as person or as consistory). May not submit to a decision of which he has a clear conviction that it is in conflict with the Word of God. But that is another matter. Then one speaks about that to which a person or consistory in last instance is obligated before God; and that can carry with it that he must lay down his office or even break the communion with the church. But here that is not concerned. After all, it is added: or never submit to anything which he considers in conflict therewith ;

Q. I thing you left out a whole line.

A. Yes, (Reading): "After all it is added: or with the Church Order. And of the Church Order it does not hold that one may never submit to anything which he considers in conflict therewith. From this it appears that this article speaks of something else, namely about that which shall be valid in the church. In the church communion a decision is of force, unless earlier or later it is proved by someone to be in conflict with the Word of God or with the Church Order. So long as this last does not take place according to the judgment of the ecclesiastical gathering, that gathering must demand obedience; for it must act according to its own conviction, not that of another. If one lets go of this stand, he makes void all ecclesiastical authority."

Q. You have also heard the testimony of the different witnesses with regard to Art. 79?

A. I have.

Q. And the words: 'Elders and deacons shall immediately by preceding sentence of the consistory thereof and of the nearest church be suspended or expelled from their office'?

A. That is right.

Q. Have you had occasion during your forty years in connection with the Reformed denomination and the Protestant Reformed, read and discussed this section and its interpretation?

A. Of course. We discussed that especially in 1924 Mr. Tubbs. We certainly did. In 1924, the history was entirely different, but I am afraid I will offend Mr. Linsey by going into that. So I won't.

(Continued on page 443)

AS TO BOOKS

The Holy Spirit—His gifts and Powers, by Dr. John Owen. Published by Kregel, Grand Rapids, Mich. Price \$3.95.

This well known work by Dr. Owen, a production of the seventeenth century, was published again by the Kregel Book Store, in an abridged form for the convenience of the modern reader. George Burder who abridged the book has, indeed, been eminently successful in doing so. He presents the work to the modern reader in this abridged form without omitting anything essential either to the thought or to the argument. In fact, after comparing the original with the present form, I could conceive of abridging it still further.

In four chapters, Dr. Owen in this work treats of the names, attributes, person, and divinity of the Holy Spirit, of His power and work, more particularly of the work of regeneration and sanctification of the elect. He makes a sharp distinction between mere natural morality and sanctification and its fruit. In this respect the book could easily have been written in our modern times.

The style is very clear so that it is easily accessible to the general reader, to whom, by the way, I gladly recommend the book. And the arguments are cogent because they are, generally speaking, scriptural.

I have one remark. In his discourse on progressive sanctification, the author, to my mind, forgets too much that the very holiest have but a small beginning of the new obedience, and that, therefore, regeneration does not essentially develop as long as we are in this life and in the present body of this death.

But I wish to congratulate Kregel for publishing books of this nature, and I wholeheartily recommend it to our readers.

H.H.

A Theology of Grace, by Dr. James Daane, published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. Price \$3.00.

This book purports to be a criticism of Van Til's conception of grace with several sideglances at the undersigned.

Frnakly, I do not like this book. And my chief reasons are the following:

1. The book is entirely negative. There is nothing positive or constructive in the whole book. Dr. Daane ought to remember that it is comparatively easy to criticise someone else's work. And I have noticed more than once that Dr. Daane is rather a strong critic but weak when it comes to deliver something positive and constructive of himself. Yet, it is much more difficult to deliver something constructive and positive, especially on the subject of grace. This is also much more to the benefit of the Church of Christ in the world. Criticism and apologetics are certainly necessary, and even polemics. But without a positive development of

the truth all this is empty. And Dr. Daane offers nothing positive.

2. The book is not Reformed, especially not with regard to the fundamental truth of predestination, including election and reprobation. Of this I could quote several passages of the book in proof. But I will refrain from this, unless I am challenged by Dr. Daane. I have the passages of the book, to which I refer, marked. To say the least, I do not believe that Dr. Daane has a truly Reformed conception of predestination.

3. I could, of course, easily criticize Dr. Daane's criticism of Van Til and me. But I will not do this in this book review. Only, I would advise Dr. Daane to be true and matter of fact in his criticism, rather than philosophical in the bad sense of that term.

However, I ask all our discerning readers to read the book for themselves.

H.H.

The Well-Meant Gospel Offer, by Dr. A. C. De Jong, published by T. Wever, Franeker, The Netherlands. Distributed here by Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich.

In this book, the views of Hoeksema and Schilder, particularly in regard to so-called "common grace" and, more particularly still, to the well meaning offer of grace and salvation to all men, are set forth and criticised.

On the whole, Dr. De Jong presents (not criticises) my views rather fairly and honestly. This is not true of my conception of the relation between election and reprobation. Dr. De Jong ought to know, is in a position to know, that the way he presents it is not my view.

The book is not entirely negative, as is that of Dr. Daane. The author also defends his own view of the "well-meant" offer. Nevertheless, in this he develops nothing new.

That I cannot agree with the views expressed in this book is so well known that I would but have to fall into endless repetition if I should criticise the book in this respect. Dr. De Jong's view is not Reformed, anymore than that of Heyns and of the "Three Points." Fundamentally, he must have nothing of the Reformed truth of reprobation. This, to my mind, is very serious.

In this conviction I am rather unexpectedly supported by J. Kamphuis in the *Reformatie*, number 38, 1954, a liberated theologian. May I refer Dr. De Jong to what he writes on this subject in connection with his book?

Dr. De Jong's exegesis of Rom. 9 is clearly a distortion, not an explanation of the text.

Finally, I would ask Dr. De Jong to give an answer to the question which we, in 1924, sent all over the Reformed church world, and to several Reformed theologians: What grace do the reprobate receive in and through the preaching of the gospel?

H.H.

OUR DOCTRINE

THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE

AN EXPOSITION OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM
PART III — OF THANKFULNESS

LORD'S DAY 41

Chapter 3

Chastity (cont.)

And again, in answer to Question 109, whether in the seventh commandment God forbids only adultery, and such like gross sins, the Catechism teaches: "Since both our body and soul are temples of the Holy Ghost, he commands us to preserve them pure and holy; therefore he forbids all unchaste actions, gestures, words, thoughts, desires, and whatever can entice men thereto." All the emphasis of this Lord's Day, therefore, falls on the Christian virtue of chastity, rather than on marriage and adultery.

Ursinus in his "Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism" emphasizes the same thing. Writes he: "God in this commandment enjoins and sanctions the preservation of chastity and marriage, and hence authorizes marriage itself; for whenever God forbids anything, he at the same time commands and authorizes the observance of that which is opposite thereto. God, now, in this commandment forbids *adultery*, which is a violation of conjugal fidelity. When God singles out adultery as the most shocking and debasing vice of all the sins which are repugnant to chastity, he at the same time prohibits and condemns all wandering and wanton lusts, whether they be found in married or unmarried persons, and prohibits all other sins and vices contrary to chastity, together with their causes, occasions, effects antecedents, consequents etc. And on the other hand, he enjoins all those virtues which contribute to chastity. The reasons of this are these: 1. When one thing is specified, all those are understood which are closely allied or connected with it. Therefore, when adultery is prohibited, as the most shocking and debasing form of lust, we are to understand all other forms of lust as forbidden at the same time. 2. Where the cause is condemned, there the effect is also condemned; and where the effect is condemned, there the cause is condemned. Hence the antecedent as well as the consequents of adultery are here forbidden and condemned. 3. The design of this commandment is the preservation of chastity amongst men, and the guarding of marriage, or keeping it holy. Whatever, therefore, tends to the preservation of chastity, and the protection of marriage, is enjoined by this commandment, whilst that which is opposed thereto is forbidden."

In the same commentary Ursinus also defines or describes chastity as follows: "Chastity, in general, is a virtue contributing to the purity of body and soul, agreeing with the will of God, and shunning all lusts prohibited by God, all

unlawful intercourse and inordinate copulation in connection with all the desires, causes, effects, suspicions, occasions, etc., which may lead thereto, whether in holy wedlock or in single life. The term chastity comes, according to some, from the Greek *kazoo*, which means to adorn, because it is an ornament, both of the whole man, and also of all the other graces or virtues. The name has, therefore, been given to this virtue by way of pre-eminence, inasmuch as it is one of the principal virtues which constitute the image of God, according as it is said, God is chaste, and will be called upon by those who are of a chaste mind, and has regard to such prayers."

Ursinus then distinguishes between two kinds of chastity, one of single life and the other of holy wedlock. And as the cause of chastity he mentions first the command of God; secondly, the preservation of the image of God; thirdly, the desire to avoid marring the image of God, and the union between Christ and the church; and finally, rewards and punishments.

I would define chastity as that Christian virtue according to which, through the grace of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, we preserve our soul and body pure, that is, free from any form of fornication or sexual lusts, whether in holy wedlock or in single life, and that too, from the principle of the law of God written in our hearts, to love the Lord our God with all our heart and mind and soul and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves.

This is the teaching of the Heidelberg Catechism in Lord's Day 41 concerning the seventh commandment. All uncleanness, all that is not chaste, is accursed of God. With all our heart we must detest this uncleanness, and live chastely, whether in holy wedlock or in single life. Our body and soul are temples of the Holy Ghost. We must preserve them pure and holy. Everything that is not chaste is condemned by this seventh commandment, whether unchaste actions, gestures, words, thoughts, desires, or whatever can entice man thereto.

And what shall we say as Christians, as people of God, concerning these things? And what shall be our attitude over against the seventh commandment? Shall we exalt ourselves, boasting that we are delivered by grace from all this corruption, and that to listen to the prohibition of the seventh commandment is beneath our Christian dignity? That would indeed be very foolish. To assume such an attitude would manifest that the Christian, or he that calls himself a Christian, does not know himself. O, it is true, grace delivered him in principle from all sin, also from the corruption of adultery and of all uncleanness. Yet the Christian knows that after all he has but a small beginning of the new obedience. He is indeed delivered in principle, but the motions of sin, — also of this sin against the seventh commandment, — are still in his flesh. He hears the Word of the Lord that he who but looks on a woman to lust after her, has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

H.H.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

The Prophecy of Isaiah

Hezekiah's prayer of thanksgiving. Chapter XXXVII:9-20

The writing of Hezekiah, king of Judah, when he had been sick and was recovered from his sickness (vs. 9).

As an expression of his gratitude Hezekiah wrote this prayer for the instruction and edification of all God's believing people. The first section leads us into his great anguish of soul that he experienced at receiving the tidings that he must die (vss. 10-15).

I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the rest of my years (vs. 10).

Meaning: "When of a sudden I became dreadfully ill and I was told of the prophet that the sickness was unto death and that I must die, then I said, thought, I shall go down . . ." The form of the verb in the Hebrew (cohortative) expresses the direction of the will, so that there is this in the statement, "God declared that I must die. So be it. His will be done." Though bewailing his lot, the king was submissive. His attitude was that of a saint, for a saint he was. And therefore also the consideration of his lot caused him unutterable grief. Why this was so we learn from the next few lines of his prayer.

I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living (vs. 11a).

He shall not see the Lord — His glories — anymore as reflected by the shadows of the temple. As of all of them Christ is the body, the underlying meaning of this line is: I shall not see the Lord any more in the face of Christ.

In the land of the living, i.e., in the land of the spiritually living. The reference is to Canaan. As was said, it was to the saints of that day "Heaven." For here was the church. Here was the temple. Here was God's throne. Here burnt the fire of God's altars. Here the saints shouted for joy. I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world (vs. 2b). *Inhabitants of the world* — better translated: *inhabitants of frailty*. The reference is to the realm he should have to do without the companionship of men, i.e., of God's believing people.

This lamentation of Hezekiah raises the question whether in his distress he was not believing in the resurrection of the saints unto life everlasting. Said David in one of his moments of spiritual elation, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hades (the realm of the dead); neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life . . ." (Ps. 16:10, 11). That too was Hezekiah's faith which he had in common with all the saints of that day. Only, for the moment he could derive no comfort from it, seeing that, in cutting off his years, the Lord, so it seemed to him, was dealing with him as though he were wicked. Although his faith was not gone, though he still

claved to God as trusting in His mercy, as was evidenced by his tears, yet at the same time he was being tortured by the thought that he was about to perish forever with the wicked and that his prospects of again seeing God in His holy temple were gone forever. This explains his grief. His imperfect knowledge of the state of the believers after this life does not explain it. All the saints of that day were as ignorant as he in this respect. Yet they could say with the dying Jacob, "I have waited for thy salvation Lord (Gen. 49:17). But that is what Hezekiah was not saying in that moment in full assurance of faith.

He goes on to compare the body and the life lived in it to a shepherd's tent, that after a while is pulled up, so his life he regarded as broken up and removed (vs. 12a).

The imagery changes. He next compares his life to the web or carpet that the weaver cuts off from the thrums or threads that bind it to the beam. He contemplates both himself and the Lord as doing the cutting. It amounts to a confession that it is on account of his sins that he was smitten. From day to night and from then on till morning he was troubled in his heart by the thought that at any moment the Lord might make an end of him, as a lion, crush all his bones. His voice came in weak and slight sounds that resembled the peeping of cranes and swallows and the mourning of doves. His eyes languished upward: O Lord I am oppressed, he sighed. Be thou my surety (vss. 12b-14).

Thus he prayed and sighed in the moment of his great despondency. However perplexed and confused, he could not let go of God but continued to trust Him. Though God's hand was upon him, his only hope was still God.

His gratitude and joy at hearing that the Lord had mercy on him (15-20).

What now shall he say? For the Lord has spoken unto him, and He hath done it, i.e., kept Him to His promise and healed him. He vows that he shall walk softly, submissively, all the rest of his years for the bitterness of his soul (vs. 15).

Some regard these words as forming a part of Hezekiah's lamentation by which he let it be known that he regarded his tears as fruitless, and his prayer for healing vain. God had pronounced the death sentence over him, and who can hinder Him? Who will say to him, What doest thou? (See Job 9:12, 32).

But it is plain, that the lamentation of the king ends with verse 14. This is proved by his saying that he will go softly all the rest of his days. It implies the promise of healing.

For the bitterness of his soul, that is, for the bitter experience through which he had passed on account of his sins, he will go softly, walk humbly before the face of his God henceforth.

He goes on to declare that by these men live — by these, i.e., by the power of God's gracious promises. Men live, i.e., God's believing people. In all these is the life of his spirit — true life that consists in knowing the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. So will the Lord recover him and make him to live (vs. 16).

He recalls how that instead of peace he had great bitterness, but he simultaneously rejoices in the knowledge that the Lord in love to his soul delivered it from the pit of destruction,—Hebrew: “For thou didst cleave to my soul and didst deliver it from the consumption of corruption. For thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back” (vs. 17).

It is lines such as these that show how the saints of old lived by the promise of the immortality of the elect. What comfort and joy could the king have derived from the promise of the prolongation of his natural life, had he not been aware that in the final analysis it was a promise to the effect that though after his skin worms destroy his body, he in his flesh should yet see God (Job 19:26)? The king knew by revelation that such must necessarily be the thrust of the promise. The grave, he knew, cannot thank God, death cannot praise Him. They that go down into the pit cannot hope for His truth (vs. 19).

This can have reference only to such whose years God in His anger shortens and for whom, accordingly, the grave is the corridor to eternal perdition. The word “pit” is a correct translation of the original. The pit must be identified with perdition. Only the wicked go down into it. According to the king, the token of God’s favor is to be delivered from it.

The living, now exclaims the king, the living, he shall praise God, as he, himself, was doing that day (vs. 19a).

“The living” does not comprehend all men indiscriminately but such who have life in Christ. That the king had understanding of this is plain from the final lines of his prayer.

The father to the children shall make known God’s truth (vs. 19b). The father, the godfearing father, to be sure, and not the others. What it means is that the words “living” and “father” signify the same people.

The Lord was ready to save him (vs. 20a).

Identifying himself with all the “living,” the king concludes his prayer with this vow, “Songs we shall play all the days of our life in the house of the Lord (vs. 20).

Certainly the king was looking forward to some thing more than the privilege of praising God in His house for the remaining fifteen years of his natural life. His exclaiming, “the living shall praise God,” was his way of saying that “we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (II Cor. 5:1). That he did not present the idea in this language is because the land of Canaan was the only heaven whereof he knew.

Hezekiah’s preparation for the defence of Jerusalem. II Chron. XXXII:1-8.

In the mean time Sennacherib, who had invaded Judah, was laying siege to all the fortified cities of the southern kingdom. Soon he would be fighting against Jerusalem. But Hezekiah had nothing to fear from the Assyrians. For in reply to his tears the Lord had promised to defend the city. But this assurance did not result in the king’s sitting still. On the contrary, he did all that was humanly possible

to defend the city and to make the siege difficult.

He counseled with his princes and his mighty men, laying before them his plan to stop the waters of the fountains that were without the city. All were for it, of course, and promised to co-operate (vs. 3). Word went out to the people. They saw the wisdom of the plan. They said, “Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?” And so they responded as one man, and soon the task was completed (vs. 4).

The king did more. He built up the wall that was broken, and built up the towers on it. Still another wall he repaired perhaps the one enclosing the lower city. Third, he repaired Milo, a strong tower or castle, situated probably on the north-west corner of Zion. Fourth, he made spears and many shields (vs. 5). Fifth, he set captains of war over the people (vs. 6a).

The king did one more thing. As commander-in-chief of God’s army, as captain of the Lord’s host, he gathered the people together in the broad open space of the gate of the city and spake according to their hearts, i.e., as God’s believing people had need of hearing in order that their hearts might not be troubled in the present crisis. He addressed to them this word, “Be strong and courage, be not afraid nor terrified for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for more there be with us than with him. With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles” (6b-8a).

Just how the Lord was to fight Israel’s battles at this time, whether through the agency of Hezekiah’s forces that were present in Jerusalem, or wholly apart from this agency, the king did not know. But fight their battles, that the Lord would. For it was His battles, His warfare, that they were fighting. And He will war His own warfare for His name’s sake. And therefore the victory will also be solely His as His gift to them His people. Of this the king was certain. In that faith he stood. Hence, he must not be accused of making flesh his arm because he made preparations for the coming battle. It might be that in defending the city, the Lord might want to make use of spears and shields as He had often done in the past.

And the people leaned upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah (vs. 8b).

Jerusalem besieged by the Assyrians. II Kings XVIII:17-19:37; II Chron. XXXII:9-22; Isa. XXXVI:1-XXXVII:38.

As Sennacherib was at the time occupied with the siege of Lachish (II Chron. XXXII:9), he did not advance in person to Jerusalem. The task of destroying the Holy City he assigned to this general Rab-shakeh, with two other high officers. They came with a great host. When they were come up, they made the channel of the upper pool, which was outside of the city, on the west side, their headquarters (II Kings 18:17; Isa. 36:2).

Rabshakeh, the spokesman of the three, called to the king, i.e., sent a message that he should come out to transact

with him. Not wishing to appear in person, the king sent three representatives, Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, Shebna the secretary, and Joash the son of Asaph the recorder (Isa. 36:3).

Rabshakeh, who perhaps could converse in the Hebrew language better than either of the others, said unto them, Say now unto Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest (vs. 4).

Rabshakeh calls his king "the great king," because of the extent of his empire. He had kings for his vassals. It astonished this heathen that anyone could be so foolish as to imagine that he could defend himself against a monarch thus powerful. Humanly speaking, his astonishment was justified. For from a human standpoint Hezekiah's plight was hopeless.

Thou sayest, But words of lips, counsel and strength for war (vs. 5a). Meaning doubtless: Thou sayest, but they are vain words, I have counsel and strength for war.

Others but not so likely: Thou sayest, I have the words of my lips to cry for help to my God and to encourage my people, and besides counsel and might for war. I have all that is needful for my defense.

Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me (vs. 5b)?

This refers to Hezekiah's original rebellion (II Kings 18:7) and second to his refusal to surrender the city in addition to his paying the ransom (II Kings 18:14sq.).

Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this bruised reed, on Egypt, whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him (vs. 6).

The meaning of this imagery is that Egypt is the undoing of all that lean upon him. The characterization is true. Isaiah himself says the same 30:3, 5, 7 in his own words. But Rabshakeh fails to make it general as the prophets do. What is true of Egypt is just as true of any other world powers. The price they asked for their favors was just as ruinous as defeat in war. Besides, they failed to live up to their agreements, once they had their victims in their power. This, as experience had taught, was eminently true of Assyria.

But, the Assyrian continues, if Hezekiah and his people say to him that they trust in the Lord their God, they should consider that it is the Lord whose high places and altars Hezekiah took away in order that Judah and Jerusalem might worship at this altar (vs. 7).

He refers to the altar of burnt offering that stood in the outer court of the temple. As is well known, Zedekiah had taken away all the high places in Judah and had said to his people that they must worship at "this altar" (II Kings 18:4). He had thus carried out the will of God that there be the one and only sanctuary (Deut. 12:11-14). But to Rabshakeh, who was ignorant of Israel's law, this conduct appeared as a curtailment of the Lord's service. This was

proof that He could not be expected to help.

Next Rabshakeh holds up for ridicule Hezekiah's military might by proposing that they make an agreement with his master the king of Assyria by which he will give them two thousand horses, if they on their part can set horsemen thereon, a thing that they are unable to do, he means to be telling them. Doubtless he was right. For Hezekiah had no horsemen and war chariots. How then, the Assyrian asks, will they turn away the face of one captain of the least of his master's servants as relying on treacherous Egypt to supply the horsemen and the chariots (vss. 8, 9).

Doubtless this is the point that Rabshakeh here argues, namely the abundance of Assyria's horsemen and chariots and the poverty of Hezekiah in this respect. He has no such war equipment of his own, and he must not imagine that the Egyptians are going to come to his aid with theirs. So in every point of view Hezekiah's case is hopeless. He should surrender without delay and allow Assyria's great king to take over the city. Such is the Assyrian's reasoning. Heathen that he was, he was putting all his confidence in chariots and horses.

To clinch his argument he asks whether they suppose that Sennacherib came up against Jehovah's land to destroy it without Jehovah going with him. If so, they are wrong. Jehovah said to him, Go against the land to destroy it (vs. 10).

Doubtless the king of Assyria was acquainted with Isaiah's prophecy that Assyria was to be in the hand of the Lord the scourge of Judah (see 7:17 sq., 10:5 sq.). But it is not true that he had received from the Lord the command, Scourge my people. And even if he had, he still would have been walking in great sin, seeing that he was activated solely by personal ambition (see Chapter 10).

G.M.O.

AUTONOMY

(Continued from page 438)

Mr. Linsey: What are you afraid I won't?

A. I won't offend you by . . .

Mr. Linsey: You won't offend me. I know what you did then.

The Court: Are you almost through?

Mr. Tubbs: Not quite. Almost, but not quite.

The Court: We will take a recess then.

This was virtually the end of my positive examination in court. Of course, the cross examination still followed. And that, too, was very interesting. Perhaps, I shall still quote it.

But the above I quoted because it counteracted the caricature of Reformed Church Polity which was presented by the opposition, especially by Kok and that, too, by partial quotations from the Standard Bearer.

At the same time, now anyone can ascertain whether the evil whisperers who already slander that I lied in court are not guilty of foul slander.

H.H.

FROM HOLY WRIT

Exposition of John 14:15-19

The Word of God to which we will call your attention in this essay reads as follows: *"If ye love me ye shall keep my Commandments. 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; for He dwelleth with you and shall be in you."*

In this beautiful and comforting passage Jesus is speaking to His eleven disciples in the night in which He was betrayed. Their hearts were no little troubled; they needed greatly to be strengthened. And the Lord Jesus confers the grace of comfort and peace upon His disciples by means of admonitions. He works faith in their hearts through the preaching of the Word even as He had strengthened their faith by the use of the Sacraments, which He had just instituted in His Church.

In this passage Jesus makes the spiritual-psychological approach to the disciples. He does not appeal to what they ought to make of themselves, but He appeals to them as to what they are and have in Christ as the living branches in the True Vine of the heavenly Husbandman.

Christ appeals here to their love for Him; He appeals to the love which is the energizing power of their faith!

Says He: "If ye love Me ye will keep my commandments." We should notice that we have here a conditional sentence. The conditional sentence is one that expresses, from the viewpoint of Jesus' speaking, objective possibility. Of course, Jesus could have used a conditional sentence of *fact*. The point that Jesus wishes to make is, that what he here says, is true of all cases without exception. Where there is love for Christ — there you have the keeping of the Commandments.

It is an axiom in the Kingdom of God and of His Christ.

The keeping of the Commandments is a sure indication and manifestation of our abiding and growing love for Christ. Only, where this love is, is there a keeping of the Commandments of Christ. And only where there is such a keeping of the Commandments is there the joy unspeakable and full of glory, which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter in our hearts.

Love is the fulfillment of the law. He who loves Christ loves the Fulfiller of the Law, the Son of God in our flesh and blood. He has come under the law which says: the man that doeth the same shall live thereby! And now He comes with a *New* commandment, which is really the Commandment which we had for the beginning! Jesus tells us that the infallible standard by which all shall know that we are His disciples is that we have love one for the other. John 13:35. Once more Jesus emphasizes this truth here of the love that reveals itself in the keeping, *defending* (Tereoo)

of His Commandments. It means that nothing will stand between us and our love for Christ, our wonderful Savior-God! In the text Jesus speaks emphatically of *His* commandments. Literally the greek reads: the Commandments, the mine! He has in mind His commandments. But, then, all of these commandments. Not one of these is to be excluded. We are not only to delight in some of His commandments, but in all of them. We are here reminded of that beautiful and succinct answer of the Heidelberg Catechism, "No: but even the holiest men, while in this life, have only a small beginning of this obedience: yet so, that with a sincere resolution they begin to live, *not only according to some but all of God's Commandments.*"

Thus sanctification is perfected in a full-orbed Christian life.

What Jesus here underscores is the same that is stated in the Third Commandment, where we read of the mercy of God, which is in thousands of generations upon those "those loving and keeping My Commandments" (leohabhaw ulesheree mitswothau). We have here the active participle, telling us not only what these lovers of God *do*, but telling us who these people *are* in their deepest being, and what God shows to such, namely, His great mercy. He is merciful to whom He *is* merciful. And the rest are hardened. Such is the plain teaching of Scripture both in the Decalogue and here in this Comforting address in the New Covenant in Christ's blood. The Comfort of the Spirit of Pentecost, the Firstfruits of the full harvest, is simply God showing mercy to whom He is merciful!

That is the sense of Jesus' Word: If ye love me ye shall keep my commandments when *read in connection with* what follows in verses 16, 17, where we read: and I will ask the Father . . . The Mediator of the better Covenant, which is enacted upon better promises, is here speaking! Here is not the speech of the law that kills, the law minus the glory of grace and truth, but it is the Mediator in whom grace and truth come to us by the Spirit of Christ, Who giveth life, joy, peace and boundless mercy. To those He giveth more. Mercy upon those to whom He is merciful.

The whole question of whether *man* must fulfil "conditions" to receive this Comforter is out of order; it is a misstatement to speak of "man" when in the text is spoken of "those loving and keeping my Commandments." This is not simply man, but the redeemed "new Man" in Christ. It is exactly this *misstatement* that confuses the simple. When once the matter is thus misstated, then one can go on infinite dreaming and prattling of the preaching-promise to all upon "condition of faith!" Of course, thus misstated one can then prattle about not being able to address a "promise to all," and breaking a lance for a "promise to all who hear the Gospel."

But Jesus is addressing very concretely the indwelt Church in distinction from the "world that neither knoweth nor understandeth" the things of the Holy Spirit, and who are "not able" to receive the Comforter. Jesus is here

preaching a very good applicatory sermon to the Church of all ages, as she is the indwelt spouse around the table of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world! To this Church and to these disciples he gives a Word of assurance, a word of promise, which is nothing else than the administration of the Testament, the oath-bound Testament (Covenant) of God to Abraham and all his believing children.

Such believing children will be very greatly in need of the merciful face of God in their position in the world!

For as believers, as such who do not have a dead faith, but have a living faith, they will suffer for righteousness' sake. Always they look for the City which has foundations. In this world they cannot find it. They are out of their element. They are like little children from whom the parents have been taken in death. They are really in the position of orphans when left to themselves. In the world they suffer tribulation, anguish and distress. They are hated without a cause. Hated they are even as Cain hated Abel. And why did he hate his brother? Was it not because his own works were evil and those of his brother were righteous. Thus also it is with the disciples. They would, in this very night, be separated from Jesus, their Lord and Master. The cruel winds of the hatred of the foe would blow upon their little bark. The storm and tempest would be high. But they need not fear. They can say: Lord, Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that we love Thee. We have believed and confessed that Thou art the Christ, the Son of living God, that should come into the world. Our faith is not dead. We keep Thy Commandments and we cherish them in our hearts as being more precious than rubies and the choicest gold of Ophir! Ah, it is Jesus Himself, Who thus tells the disciples who they are. Did He not know their sanctified hearts and the great potential of the Holy Spirit in them? He dwells in you, namely, the Spirit of truth, and, therefore, you are FUNDAMENTALLY different from the unbelieving "world."

These are in need of the Comforter.

And here is also the wisdom of God in the Cross. Jesus' leaving His disciples in this night is to their eternal advantage; yea, it is to their advantage even in this life in the entire New Testament dispensation. The wisdom is that they will be given another Comforter, another Paraclete!

First of all it will be a Comforter, a Paraclete. The english translation "Comforter" is a beautiful term. It is derived from the Latin: *Comfortis*. *Com* means: with and "*fortis*" means to be brave, have courage. Compare our english word: fortitude! It means to have courage with God. To be of good cheer. It reminds us of the wonderful words of the Angel of the Lord of the Hosts of Israel: only be strong and be of good courage. Joshua 1:5-8. That is the fruit of the Comforter in our hearts. Fundamentally this is the fruit of faith by the Spirit in our hearts, while we consider that Christ went to heaven to prepare a place for us, and that He is the way the truth and the life.

For Jesus went to heaven and He ever lives to pray for us. He is our Advocate, our Intercessor before the Throne

of God, so that the Throne is for us the Throne of mercy. Mercy upon mercy is our portion. If we sin as saints, as those who love His commandments, confessing our sins, Mercy of the Mercy-seat is our portion!

And what Christ does for us in heaven he also assures us of through His Spirit. And when Jesus pleads our cause for us in our heart assuring us of His work for us in the inner Sanctuary of God, in the Holy of Holies, then He takes us aside and talks according to our heart! And then we receive by the Holy Spirit from the fulness of God. Then we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, even as he elected us from before the foundations of the world. The mercy is given to those upon whom He is merciful.

Now, two things should be noticed in this connection:

The first is, that Jesus does not say that he will ask the Father for the Holy Spirit of Comfort *because* we keep the commandments. He does not say (*dioti because that*, nor does he say (*oti because* but simply: and I will ask of the Father. It is simply His word of assurance to His indwelt church. Those in whom the evidence of mercy and grace is present, who respond to the admonition of the Gospel, are assured of God's comfort of the Spirit. It is only for those in whom this "condition" is. As long as we walk in sin we are such that cannot receive nor do we need this comfort of the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of truth. Hence, it is not because we love in the sense of ground, but it is for those *who keep God's commandments* in the sense that mercy is for those to whom God is merciful and who by virtue of mercy received keep God's Commandments, the new Testament Covenant in their hearts.

Secondly, we should notice that it is "another" comforter. This does not mean a wholly different comforter. But it is another Comforter, who gives the same Comfort as Jesus gave them, only He gives it to them in a different way. He will take it out of the glorified Christ and give it to the saints in whom He dwells perpetually.

This cannot be said of the world.

Sometimes it is contended that there is a *point of contact* in the wicked to the Gospel. Strictly speaking that is not true. For the glad-tidings of the Gospel is surely: for unto us a son is born, for unto us a child is given. And, again, unto you is born this day a Savior which is Christ, the Lord. And this is good news "unto all *the* people" of God's good-pleasure. Says Jesus: this is a comfort which *the world cannot receive*. It is a secret of the Lord which is for them that fear God, that is, upon whom God is merciful. Upon such the Lord had more and abundant mercy.

The disciples were such beloved of God. They had not chosen God, but God had chosen them. Wherefore their hearts should not be troubled. They should lift up their heads in this hour and rejoice. For the Kingdom of heaven is come upon them. Goodness and mercy will follow them all their lives and they shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

G.L.

IN HIS FEAR

Walking in Error

(9)

Although we have always been accused of overestimating the evil that those who engineered the Schism of '53 have perpetrated, the court trial revealed that we underestimated rather than overestimated this evil.

So we wrote last time.

So it actually is.

We will show you a little more of that evil at this writing. We have things to write which four or five years ago, in fact even four or five weeks before the court trial began, we never dreamed we would have to write about those who were formerly one with us. And we can only hope and pray that when they reflect on what we write here that they will repent of their evil and confess it before God.

Would to God that these things had never happened!

But they are now things of history, and they were publicly performed. We publish them for only *one* reason. If at all possible we would still have those who have been deceived by their leaders and have been advised not to read the Standard Bearer (which only reveals the fear of these leaders of the truth) we would have these learn the truth and understand what kind of men they are following and what kind of things we have had to contend with all these years in Classis and in Synod.

In these classical and synodical sessions no authorized records were kept of the arguments and defense these men made of their stand. They objected to tape recordings of the discussions. But now it took a court trial with its official records to expose them. The truth cannot long be hid!

It is our intention in this writing to show you how Rev. Kok made himself guilty of perjury by not speaking the truth under oath in the Superior Court of the city of Grand Rapids, Michigan. And at the same time we will consider his evil deed of last October when in a schismatic way he left our churches. For it was his testimony about this matter wherewith we will now deal.

We will first give you the court records wherein his false testimony is preserved through all time to be. Then we will show you from the minutes of the Classis of last October how impossible it is for him to defend this testimony and that what he said is not the truth at all!

Rev. Kok had been examined by Mr. Linsey, the attorney for De Wolf's faction, for direct testimony. Mr. Tubbs then conducted the cross examination. Then Mr. Linsey once again questioned Rev. Kok in redirect examination to try to counteract the evidence which Mr. Tubbs' cross examination had produced. It was in this redirect examination that we find the following:

Q. As a delegate, did you have the right to vote upon the questions that were before Classis?

A. Yes.

Q. And you did vote upon this matter, did you not?

A. Of the suspension, of the refusal to unseat Rev. De Wolf? (This must undoubtedly be "of the refusal to seat Rev. De Wolf." But we give you the court records as we received them. J.A.H.)

Q. Yes.

A. I certainly did. I registered my negative vote, which was my perfect right.

Q. And by reason of that fact, you were not accepted as a delegate?

A. By reason of that fact, they kicked me out of the meeting.

Q. That is just what happened?

A. *Just because I voted negative against that decision, without giving me any opportunity to appeal to the next meeting at all.*

Q. That is what they did? You could only vote one way then according —

A. Yes.

Q. And by reason of that fact neither you nor your delegate — did your delegate vote with you?

A. Yes.

Q. Were you permitted to serve in that adjourned meeting in October?

A. In October when they had — no, they refused to give me a voice.

The italics are ours. And yet they were also Rev. Kok's for he raised his voice very noticeably when he gave the answer which we put in italics.

With that kind of testimony he can move his followers to more bitterness and so further the "Hate Hoeksema" campaign that has been waged for so very, very long both in the West and here in the East. Some of you readers in the West as well as some here in the East know only too well that you formerly resented it whenever you came in contact with the slander and backbiting of this "Hate Hoeksema" campaign. You have expressed it even to others. And now you have so completely succumbed to the crafty deception of that campaign that you now carry it on yourself.

Stop and think once!

Look back into your soul!

And then compare all the evil accusations you have so slanderously heard concerning Rev. Hoeksema with all that this court trial revealed. Compare it with what these engineers of the Schism of '53 have done, these men who condemned his leadership. Look ahead and see where it is unto which they are now leading you! Be sure they will not turn soon on some of their own men!

As we began to say, Rev. Kok can kindle more brightly the flame of hatred against the Rev. Hoeksema and against all who defend the truth with him with such a testimony. But the facts in the case clearly brand this testimony as

perjury, the lie and nothing less! And God in heaven heard it all and is not deceived by it.

Let us turn to the records of the Classis as it was in session last October and see how far from the truth this statement of Rev. Kok is. Having walked so long in error that he could do a thing like this, let him now reflect calmly and prayerfully upon it and confess it.

Art. 301 of the minutes of Classis show that it was on Wednesday morning that a motion was made to unseat Rev. De Wolf and Mr. Sikkema.

Art. 309, which records an action of the afternoon session, declares that the motion of art. 301, namely to unseat these former delegates, carries.

Then art. 310 tells us that Rev. Kok handed in that document from his consistory of which we wrote before. And article 312 tells us that a committee was appointed to study the matter and to give us advice in regard to this action of Rev. Kok.

Art. 313 tells us that Rev. Blankespoor and Rev. Knott also registered their negative votes. And art. 314 tells us that this action of these two men is given into the hands of this same committee to study and to give advice to the Classis. That ended the work for that day. AND REV. KOK WAS NOT YET UNSEATED, NOR, AS HE SAYS, KICKED OUT!

We met Thursday morning again. Art. 319 tells us that Rev. Vanden Berg opened with prayer. Art. 323 informs us that the committee appointed in articles 312-314 gives its report. That report was discussed until dinner time. REV. KOK IS STILL THERE AS A DELEGATE FROM HOLLAND.

Article 331 is very interesting in the light of Rev. Kok's testimony and subsequent answer to the three questions presented him. It tells us that Elder G. Bylsma opened the meeting with prayer. If you please, Elder Bylsma was one of the delegates from First Church whom Rev. Kok would not recognize.

In court Rev. Kok testified that we would not give him an opportunity to appeal to the next meeting. Why did he not at this session of Classis protest that the meeting was not opened and that we could conduct no business yet because one who is no delegate (in his judgment) had opened with prayer?

But articles 333 and 337 give the lie to Rev. Kok's testimony under oath. Article 333 tells us that instead of the advice of the committee appointed according to articles 312-314 Rev. Kok was placed before the following three questions:

1. That we ask the Rev. Kok to declare that the action of Classis East whereby they seated the Rev. C. Hanko and Elder G. Bylsma as the legal delegates from the consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan was not schismatic.

2. That he will consider the above mentioned action of Classis settled and binding, and, therefore, will consider the

above mentioned delegates from the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan the legal delegates, so that he can work with them at the sessions of Classis, until he, at the next meeting of Classis, has proved from the Word of God and the Church Order that they are not the legal delegates.

3. That in case he refuses thus to declare himself he has violated the Church Order, forfeited by his own action, the right to be seated as delegate from the Consistory of the Church of Holland, Michigan, to Classis East.

Art. 337 reveals that Rev. Kok gave a negative answer to these questions.

Now is it not plain to everyone from point 3, that he is unseated by this action and not because he registered his negative vote against the unseating of Rev. De Wolf and Mr. Sikkema? And, if you please, Rev. Blankespoor and Rev. Knott, who also registered their negative votes, were allowed to vote on the presenting of these questions to Rev. Kok.

We challenge Rev. Kok to produce the stenographic notes which — as the court trial revealed — Rev. De Wolf hired some young ladies to take of that October session of Classis East. Let him publish ALL of it on this matter and not as is his habit, quotations that distort the truth. It will become plain to all that several of the delegates to the Classis advised him to appeal to Synod and not to go the way he plainly was intent on going. We challenge him to put these notes along side of his court testimony and see once whether "just because" he registered his negative vote we unseated him. WE NEVER DENIED HIM THE RIGHT TO REGISTER HIS NEGATIVE VOTE!

Besides is it not plain from the second question put to him that *officially as a body*, by our adoption of this question, we ASKED HIM TO APPEAL TO THE NEXT CLASSIS?

But please take note of this: Here is the answer of Rev. Kok to those three questions, "My answer to numbers 1 and 2 is 'No' on the grounds I have submitted (in that letter) and art. 31 of the Church Order. Hence I disagree with the conclusion expressed in the 3rd point and reserve the right to appeal this action of Classis to the Synod of our Protestant Reformed Churches."

No motion was made to deny him this right, and Rev. Kok knows that! Such an appeal would have to be submitted to the next Classis, and since we did not deny him the right to appeal to Synod, how can he say that we denied him the right to appeal to the next Classis? It is unbelievable yet true that his testimony in court is utterly false.

He must not try to hide behind article 31 of the Church Order as he did so corruptly on the witness stand in court. He must not try to hide behind that "unless" of the article to refuse the "until" of the second question. Let him look up article 53 once. He will find two things that SHOW his whole defense in court to be absolutely worthless. Article 53 says that Ministers of the Word shall de facto be sus-

pended by the Consistory OR THE CLASSIS from his office UNTIL they shall give a full statement, when they refuse to subscribe to the Three Formulas of Unity.

The Church Order does speak of CLASSIS having the right to suspend. And it also speaks of submitting UNTIL further action can be taken.

Besides, in that second question we asked him to work along with us at the "sessions of Classis." We asked him to remain with us and — even as he had already done by recognizing the prayer of Elder Bylsma — asked him to stay in order to appeal to the next Classis. How could he ever under oath before God DARE TO SAY THAT JUST BECAUSE HE REGISTERED HIS NEGATIVE VOTE AGAINST THE UNSEATING OF REV. DE WOLF, AND THAT WITHOUT GIVING HIM AN OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAL TO THE NEXT MEETING, WE KICKED HIM OUT!!!

It is unbelievable that one who was formerly with us could do a thing like that!

And is it not plain that he was unseated as a delegate because he refused to submit to our decision and therefore to work with us any longer? Registering your negative vote and refusing to abide by the decisions of the majority are two widely different things.

But let him and Rev. Blankespoor and Rev. Knott give us the alternative then. They objected to the decision of the overwhelming majority and would not submit to that decision until the next Classis. What does article 31 mean in their judgment? Does it mean that what has been decided by majority vote must be made null and void for the whole body that took the decision just because a very small minority has proved to its own conscience that the decision is contrary to the Word of God and the Church Order? Does this minority then decide for the majority. Is that the meaning of article 31? Let them explain and tell us what Classis should have done to those who will not submit? What did they intend to do while we conducted the rest of the business on our agenda?

Then, too, after discussing his case for a whole day we adjourned to give Rev. Kok an hour to come to his decision about these three questions put to him. Where does he get that "just because I registered my negative vote" business from?

We have more of his falsifications under oath which will have to wait till next time. We attach his name to this evil witness because we have no alternative. If we could, we would gladly also hide the identity from the four corners of the earth of the author of these things. But in this case it cannot be done.

Rev. Kok, we plead with you. Reconsider all these things prayerfully before the face of the God whose name you took in oath. For God's sake cease to walk in your error any longer.

J.A.H.

AS THE HART, ABOUT TO FALTER

As the hart, about to falter,
In its trembling agony,
Panteth for the brooks of water,
So my soul doth pant for Thee.
Yes, athirst for Thee I cry;
God of life, O when shall I
Come again to stand before Thee
In Thy temple, and adore Thee?

Bitter tears of lamentation
Are my food by night and day;
In my deep humiliation
Where is now thy God? they say.
Yea, my soul doth melt in me,
When I bring to memory,
How of yore I did assemble
With the joyful in Thy temple.

O my soul, why art thou grieving,
Why disquieted in me?
Hope in God, thy faith retrieving;
Let Him still thy refuge be.
I shall yet extol His grace
For the comfort of His face;
He has ever turned my sorrow
Into gladness on the morrow.

From the land beyond the Jordan
I bewail my misery;
From the foothills of Mount Hermon,
O my God, I think of Thee.
As the waters plunge and leap,
Deep re-echoes unto deep;
All Thy waves and billows roaring
O'er my troubled soul are pouring.

But the Lord will send salvation,
And by day His love provide;
He shall be my exultation,
And my song at eventide.
On His praise e'en in the night
I will ponder with delight,
And in prayer, transcending distance,
Seek the God of my existence.

I will say of God, my fortress:
Why hast Thou forsaken me?
Why go I about in sadness
For my foes' dread tyranny?
Their rebukes and scoffing words
Pierce my bones as pointed swords,
As they say with proud defiance:
Where is God, thy soul's reliance?

Psalm 42:1-6

Contending For The Faith

The Church and the Sacraments

EARLY VIEWS ON THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

(Continued)

These views in the early Church (continued).

In our preceding article we noted that the early Church Fathers attached a profound significance to the Lord's Supper. In that article we quoted at length from the renowned Church Father, Cyprian.

Moreover, it may also be remarked that by various writers of that early period of the New Testament Church the seeds were sown for the development of all the various views of the Lord's Supper that were to be developed in a later period. Concerning this there cannot possibly be any doubt. It is certainly of great interest to call attention to this in detail. Men like Ignatius, Martyr, Irenaeus, Origin, Clement, Tertullian, and Cyprian have left writings which clearly substantiate this observation.

More specifically we may make the following observations. In the first place, the present Roman Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation was entirely unknown during this early period. This doctrine, we understand, propounds the theory that the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper are actually changed into the real and actual body and blood of the Lord. This doctrine, we say, was completely unknown in the early period of the Church. We are informed that Pope Gelasius I (he was pope from 492 to 496), although declaring that the elements of the bread and wine are perfected by the Holy Spirit and pass over into a Divine substance as was the case with Christ Himself, also taught that "the substance or nature of the bread and wine does not cease to exist." This Roman Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation will be discussed, the Lord willing, when we discuss the historical development of the doctrine concerning the sacraments in later history.

Ignatius teaches that flesh and blood are present in the Lord's Supper, but he does not teach how they came to be there, nor in what relation they stand to the bread and the wine. It is true that this Apostolic Father speaks in a certain place of the bread of God, and of the bread of life as being the flesh of Jesus Christ, but he evidently in these words is not referring to the elements of the holy Supper. He writes this in an epistle to the Romans in which he, a prisoner, is speaking of his great longing and eagerness to die for the sake of Christ, and we quote him: "I have no delight in corruptible food, nor in the pleasures of this life. I desire the bread of God, the heavenly bread, the bread of life, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who became afterwards of the seed of David and Abraham; and I desire the drink, namely His blood, which is incorruptible love and

eternal life." It is evident that in these words Ignatius does not refer to the Lord's Supper, but to the internal and vital union with Christ, after which the martyr longed. However, in an epistle to the Smyrneans he does refer to the Lord's Supper, and we quote: "They abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they confess not the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins, and which the Father, of His goodness, raised up again. Those, therefore, who speak against this gift of God, incur death in the midst of their disputes. But it were better for them to treat it with respect, that they also might rise again. It is fitting, therefore, that you should keep aloof from such persons, and not to speak of them either in private or in public, but to give heed to the prophets, and above all, to the Gospel, in which the passion (of Christ) has been revealed to us, and the resurrection has been fully proved. But avoid all divisions, as the beginning of evils." Ignatius speaks here of the Eucharist as the flesh of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Hence, since the Church generally held that somehow the flesh and blood of Christ were received at the Lord's Supper and the question as to how these were present is not always answered clearly, it may surely be said that tendencies can be found in this period that would point in the direction of the Roman Catholic doctrine.

In the second place, besides observing that the present Roman Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation was entirely unknown in that early period, we may observe that the views of Ignatius, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus remind us of the present Lutheran doctrine. We have already remarked that the Lutheran doctrine is known as Consubstantiation, which advocates the theory that the sign and the thing signified, although not identified, are nevertheless objectively connected. The body of the Lord is really present in, with, and under the bread and wine. We have already quoted Ignatius to the effect that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour, the Son of God. In an epistle to the Philadelphians this Apostolic Father writes as follows: "I have confidence of you in the Lord, that ye will be of no other mind. Wherefore I write boldly to your love, which is worthy of God, and exhort you to have but one faith, and one (kind of) preaching, and one Eucharist. For there is one flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ; and His blood which was shed for us is one; one loaf also is broken to all (the communicants), and one cup is distributed among them all: there is but one altar for the whole Church, and one bishop with the presbytery and deacons, my fellow-servants." Also in this quotation Ignatius declares that the flesh or body and the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is present at the Eucharist; he speaks of the one loaf broken for all and the one cup distributed among them all.

The same manner of speaking occurs in the writing of Justin Martyr. Writing on the Eucharist, he expresses himself as follows: "And this food is called among us Eucharistia (the Eucharist), of which no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true,

and who has been washed with the washing that is for the remission of sins, and unto regeneration, and who is so living as Christ has enjoined. For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ, our Saviour, having been made flesh by the Word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His Word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus, who was made flesh." Following upon this the learned Church Father calls attention to those Scriptures which hold before us the words of Christ: "This is My body," and: "This is My blood." In this quotation Justin Martyr declares that the bread and wine in the Eucharist are not common bread and drink, but the flesh and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who was made flesh.

Irenaeus, who suffered martyrdom either toward the close of the second century or in the early years of the third century, expresses himself similarly on the Eucharist. He writes as follows: "But vain in every respect are they who despise the entire dispensation of God, and disallow the salvation of the flesh, and treat with contempt its regeneration, maintaining that it is not capable of incorruption. But if this cannot attain unto salvation, then neither did the Lord redeem us with His blood, nor is the cup of the Eucharist the communion of His blood, nor the bread which we break the communion of His body . . . He has acknowledged the cup (which is a part of the creation) as His own blood, from which He bedews our blood; and the bread (also a part of the creation) He has established as His own body, from which He gives increase to our bodies. When, therefore, the mingled cup and the manufactured bread receives the Word of God, and the Eucharist of the blood and the body of Christ is made, from which things the substance of our flesh is increased and supported, how can they affirm that the flesh is incapable of receiving the gift of God, which is life eternal, which (flesh) is nourished from the body and blood of the Lord, and is a member of Him? He does not speak these words of some spiritual and invisible man, for a spirit has not bones nor flesh, but (he refers to) that dispensation (by which the Lord came) an actual man consisting of flesh, and nerves, and bones—that (flesh) which is His body. And just as a cutting from the vine planted in the ground fructifies in its season, or as a corn of wheat falling into the earth—becoming decomposed, rises with manifold increase by the Spirit of God, who contains all things, and then, through the wisdom of God, serves for the use of men, and having received the Word of God, becomes the Eucharist, which is the body and blood of Christ."—end of quotation from Irenaeus.

We may certainly conclude from these passages that Ignatius, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus emphasized the real presence of the body and blood of the Lord. We have already observed that the Roman Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation was entirely unknown during this early period. Nothing

in their writings indicates that the bread and wine were changed into the actual body and blood of the Lord, and that therefore there was no bread or wine at the Lord's Supper after the change into Christ's actual body and blood had been effected. However, they did emphasize the real presence of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. This explains why the writings of these men remind us of the Lutheran doctrine of Consubstantiation. It must be remembered, however, that also these fathers did not clearly define the manner in which the body and blood of Christ were present in the sacrament.

In the third place, in addition to the observations already made, namely, that the Roman Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation was unknown in the early period of the Church, and that the Church Fathers mentioned in the foregoing remind us of the Lutheran doctrine of Consubstantiation, we may remark that the North African Church revealed rather clear tendencies toward what is called the Reformed view. Origin, one of the most brilliant of the Church Fathers, inclined toward the Zwinglian view whereas, Clement, Tertullian, and Cyprian inclined toward the Calvinistic idea. Zwingli, we will recall, inclined toward the merely symbolical view, speaking of the holy Supper as merely a remembrance feast. The bread and wine remain bread and wine. They are merely symbols. In the celebration of the Lord's Supper we merely "remember His death until His coming." The Calvinistic conception is the sacramental conception. It, too, emphasizes that the bread and wine do not undergo any change, are merely symbolic in character. However, this conception emphasizes the sacramental operation of the Lord's Supper. We do not merely gather around the table of the Lord as if we merely remember the death of a departed Friend. In the Lord's Supper there is a very real contact of the child of God with the crucified and glorified Christ. Christ, although He is in heaven, is very really present. Not merely physically, we understand, but spiritually, as our crucified and glorified Saviour. And the Church of God has contact with Him, spiritually, through the signs of the bread and wine, and by faith, in a very real sense of the word.

H.V.

UNTO GOD, OUR KING

Unto God, our King,
Joy and strength of Israel,
Lofty anthems sing;
Glorious are His ways,
To His Name give praise
With the harp and timbrel.

"Hear, my children, hear,"
Saith the Lord who bore thee;
"Never serve no fear
Gods of wood or stone;
I am God alone,
Worship and adore Me."

Psalm 81:1, 3

The Voice of Our Fathers

The Canons of Dordrecht

PART TWO

EXPOSITION OF THE CANONS

FIRST HEAD OF DOCTRINE OF DIVINE PREDESTINATION

Article 10. The good pleasure of God is the sole cause of this gracious election; which doth not consist herein, that out of all possible qualities and actions of men God has chosen some as a condition of salvation; but that he was pleased out of the common mass of sinners to adopt some certain persons as a peculiar people to himself, as it is written, "For the children being not yet born neither having done any good or evil," etc., it was said (namely to Rebecca): "the elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Rom. 9:11, 12, 13. "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts 13:48.

The above translation is substantially correct. The only difference between it and the original Latin is that the latter is made just a little more emphatic by the use of the term *vero*, "in truth," in the opening clause.

What we have noted in regard to the preceding articles is also true of Article 10, namely, that there is no new thought presented here, but simply an apologetic development of the definition of election given in Article 7.

The present article emphasizes, first of all, the truth that "the good pleasure of God is the sole cause of this gracious election."

It is not necessary again to go into the meaning of the term "good pleasure of God." The expression occurred in Article 7, and we simply refer the reader to what we wrote concerning God's good pleasure in that connection. We emphasized there that God's good pleasure is the end of any questions we may and can ask as to the why and wherefore of the divine decrees. The answer is briefly: God pleased to do it. Here we may briefly emphasize in addition that this divine good pleasure we may neither criticize nor attempt to defend. The former is the height of presumption, to be sure. But the latter is equally so. For God is GOD! If we would criticize Him, the Scriptures strike us down with the question: "Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?" And if we attempt to defend Him (For only an *attempt* is possible; actually to defend Him to Whom belongs all might and dominion, Who is sovereign, and Who needs no defense, is impossible), we are simply reminded that God is the Self-sufficient One, Who has no need of any creature. He can and surely will maintain His own good pleasure.

Now the article stresses that this divine good pleasure is the *sole cause* of God's gracious election. It is just exactly here that the difference between the Reformed and the

Arminian views of election appears. All Arminians pretend to believe in divine election. They must do so for the simple reason that the Scriptures literally speak of it. However, the Arminian conception claimed, as we have noted before, that this election rested in something in man, in his faith, in his works, in his perseverance, or whatever other conditions they invented. In other words, they destroyed the Scriptural notion of election, though they employed the Scriptural term election, by maintaining after all that the cause of election lay in man. Over against this the fathers teach here emphatically that the cause of election is not in man, but alone in God. His good pleasure, sovereign and free because it is the *divine* good pleasure, is the cause and source of the whole elective decree. In this connection let us note particularly the employment of the term *sole*. It is very easy to fall into other terminology. We may ask, for example, "what is the *deepest* cause?" Or we may employ the term *ultimate* in connection with the question as to the cause of election. One may upon occasion notice in Reformed circles that such terminology becomes a shield behind which is hidden some incipient Arminianism, so that when you inquire as to the cause of election it becomes necessary to quiz and quiz a person as to a whole chain of causes, until finally he admits, "Well, yes, ultimately the cause is God's good pleasure." According to this article, however, there is no chain of causes; there is not even a plurality of causes. The fathers recognize but one cause of election, the sole cause, a unique cause: the good pleasure of God. It is well that we abide by this language.

The second element of this article is concerned with the contents of God's good pleasure. The term *good pleasure of God* is, of course, also a Scriptural term, and therefore it too was a term which the Arminians could not avoid. And so they were forced to preserve the term and to change the content of the term, in order to maintain their heresy. Otherwise they could not deceive the simple. Hence, they maintained that the good pleasure of God consisted in this, that out of all possible qualities and actions of men God has chosen some as a condition of salvation. A very clever device this is, indeed. How pious and Biblical it sounds when an Arminian maintains that election is according to the good pleasure of God! Who could ever find fault with such a doctrine? But how corrupt and idolatrous and man-exalting this doctrine becomes when it is discovered that God did not choose men at all. He posited some conditions. He decreed that faith (which is undeserving in its very nature), and the obedience of faith (though an incomplete obedience), would be the conditions of salvation. He might have insisted on other conditions, such as the works of the law and complete obedience; but that was not His good pleasure. And now with this whole scheme of conditions set up from eternity by God, it was up to man to fit into the scheme. If he met the condition, well: he would be saved. If he failed to meet the condition, too bad: he would go lost. Thus it is that the Arminian exalted the good pleasure of sinful man to the

position of sovereignty, and made the divine good pleasure dependent thereon.

Notice, by the way, that here once more the idea of a conditional salvation is attributed to the Arminians by the fathers. Let no one maintain the sophistry that the fathers were anxious about a conditional election in the Arminian controversy, but not about a conditional salvation. This, as we pointed out previously, would be the height of inconsistency. For seeing that the good pleasure of God is the sole cause of election unto salvation, and seeing that election is the fountain of every saving good, and seeing that the fathers deny that the contents of God's good pleasure is a conditional salvation, it becomes impossible to maintain the tenet of a conditional salvation while conditional election is denied.

Over against this the *Canons* emphasize the simple truth that God's good pleasure consisted herein, that He was pleased to adopt a certain definite number of persons as a peculiar possession unto Himself. In this expression the organic whole of the church as the object of election is left out of view, it is true. This does not mean, however, that the fathers taught that God chose an arbitrary number of men. Here the point is that election is definite and personal. According to His eternal good pleasure God knows His elect by name. This is so simple and entirely understandable that it needs no further explanation. Let the Arminian not boast, then, that his gospel is simple in comparison with an allegedly deep and involved Reformed system. It is the Reformed view that is so simple a child can understand it, while the Arminian view is a tangled maze of deceitful intricacies.

Once more we may note in passing that the language of this article is infralapsarian: God was pleased to adopt some certain persons *out of the common mass of sinners*. Supralapsarians would substitute the term *men* for the term *sinners*, and then insist further that these men were even in the decree *creabile*, still to be created.

Finally, the fathers once more quote the Scriptures in support of their view.

The first passage quoted may perhaps be called the classic passage on sovereign predestination. It proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that election is personal: it concerns Jacob and Esau. It is sometimes claimed that the election of which the apostle speaks here is not personal, but national. However, nothing could be farther from the truth. For, in the first place, even if it be granted that the apostle has in mind the nations of Edom and Israel, this would not change matters essentially. Is it not true that a nation is made up of a number of individuals? If the nation of the Edomites, then, is reprobate, is it not true that the persons of the individual Edomites are also the object of God's sovereign displeasure? And is not this sovereign displeasure and pleasure also valid as far as the persons of Esau and Jacob are concerned, from whom the two nations sprang? But, in the second place, this view of a national predestination is contrary to the entire context. For the apostle is not writing of nations at all, but

of persons, of the individual children of Abraham, and of the truth that not all the natural seed of Abraham were included in the promise. And the example of Jacob and Esau is adduced in proof of *personal* election.

Secondly, in these verses is evident proof that there is no reason or cause for election and reprobation in the persons who are the object of God's predestination. For the Word of God states explicitly that the children were not yet born, neither had done any good or evil. Hence, the purpose of election stands not of works. This fact is emphasized too by the peculiar example which the apostle cites here. For, first of all, Jacob and Esau were not only children of the same mother, but they were twins: there was no natural difference between them as far as their origin was concerned. And in the second place, this is the more striking when we consider that from a natural point of view Esau certainly should have the pre-eminence over Jacob, since the former was first-born.

In the third place, this passage from Romans 9 plainly gives us to understand that the sole cause of this election (and reprobation) was the good pleasure of God. For God said, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated," according to the quotation from Malachi 1. And this quotation is cited in support of the truth that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.

If nevertheless some would deny the thrust of this passage by softening or changing the force of the term "hated," then we need but refer to the first chapter of Malachi, from which the apostle quotes. For there the meaning becomes very plain: "I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob. And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever."

And the second passage, from Acts 13:48, is equally clear proof. Paul and Barnabas had preached the word at Antioch, first to the Jews, as was their custom. And on the following sabbath they had preached to almost the whole city. The Jews were filled with envy when they saw the multitudes, at which occasion Paul and Barnabas announced that they would turn to the Gentiles. Then we read that the Gentiles were glad at the preaching of salvation, "and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." This passage, therefore, exactly contradicts the Arminian view that election is out of faith. Faith is out of election; they that were ordained unto eternal life believed, and none others.

And thus it is always. God alone bestows the gift of faith. And He bestows it according to His good pleasure upon as many as He has ordained unto eternal life.

H.C.H.

DECENCY and ORDER

Leave Of Absence

"If any minister, for the aforesaid or any other reason, is compelled to discontinue his service for a time, which shall not take place without the advice of the consistory, he shall nevertheless at all times be and remain subject to the call of the congregation." Article 14 D.K.O.

Not infrequently there are circumstances which make it compulsory for a minister to temporarily cease to perform the duties of his office and work in the congregation. This was especially true during the latter part of the sixteenth century during which time our church order was formulated. It was during this time that severe persecutions occurred which in some cases scattered the congregation and in other instances compelled the minister to flee for his life to some place of safety. In either case the work of the ministry was temporarily stayed.

It should be remembered that it was upon this background that the fourteenth article of the church order was written. On the surface this article does not seem to be very important. It appears to merely express that a minister who for sundry reasons desires to be relieved of his office for a time shall obtain such a release from his consistory. This is also the way that the article is interpreted, at least in practice, by a goodly number in our day so that the reasons why ministers are on leaves of absence from their congregations today are multifarious. And, if some of these reasons are carefully examined it will become evident that many ministers and consistories no longer grasp the principle laid down by our fathers in this article.

The fathers understood that the tie binding the minister to the congregation is of such a nature that it is not easily severed either for a time or permanently. It is established through the lawful call which consists of four things mentioned in Article 4. They are "the election, examination, approbation, and ordination." This call is for life according to Article 12. This does not mean that the minister is bound to the service of one particular church for life but it does imply that once a man enters into the ministry of the Word he may not by caprice sever himself even for a time from his office. He is a servant. He is called by and bound to the service of the church. And whereas Christ, in the Spirit, dwells in the church it is in the final analysis Christ Himself Who calls him and binds him to the office. Only He, therefore, can give release which He does through the consistory, the offices of the church.

Sometimes such release is given so that the minister may take up labor in another congregation. (Art. 10). Then there may be instances where it is necessary to dismiss the minister altogether from the service. (Arts. 11 and 12) And there are those cases where the minister is relieved of active duty and given an emeritation. (Art. 13) In each case, how-

ever, the consistory must judge the merits or demerits of the case. As office bearers they must speak the mind of Christ with respect to severing the bond.

Thus it is also with respect to those cases where it is necessary for the minister to be relieved of the duties of his office for a time only. We should notice that Article 14 speaks of reasons which "*compel*" one to discontinue his service for a time. This language is carefully chosen. A leave of absence from the ministry necessitates compelling circumstances. This is quite different than if the article read: "If any minister, for the aforesaid or any other reason, *desires* to discontinue his service for a time . . ." The mere desire to discontinue labor in the congregation for a time does not validate a leave of absence. The idea stressed here is that there are circumstances of a temporary nature which make it necessary to discontinue the work. No consistory should grant a leave of absence unless this is cogently shown. These circumstances are created by Christ and are, therefore, indications that He wills the tie between the minister and the congregation to be temporarily severed. Where such circumstances do not exist the work of the ministry in the congregation must continue unabated. When things do arise which seem to indicate that a leave of absence is in order, the consistory must judge whether they are valid enough to warrant a leave. The reasons must be weighed in all seriousness because subsequent action involves the temporary severing of a tie which Christ has bound.

There are various reasons which justify a leave of absence. To catalog them is quite impossible and also unnecessary as every case must be judged in the light of its own merits and circumstances. Article 14 speaks of "the aforesaid or any other reason." This is very broad and general. Usually the word "aforesaid" is interpreted as referring to the reasons given for emeritation in the preceeding article. Monsma and Van Dellen, i.e., write: "Doubtless the expression first of all refers back to Article 13 which speaks of 'old age, sickness, etc.'" (pg. 68) However, this is not correct. First of all it ought to be evident that old age would not serve as a reason for a temporary leave. It can very properly be a valid reason for emeritation because this means permanent retirement. If a minister becomes old and by reason of his age is compelled to discontinue his services, it stands to reason that a temporary leave of absence is not going to make him young again and able once more to become actively engaged in this work. His time of service is expired and he is entitled to permanent retirement. In the second place, according to the original redaction of the church order (Dordrecht 1578) the word "aforesaid" referred to the persecutions of that time. Because of these the flocks were sometimes scattered. Ministers had no congregation to serve or they themselves were compelled to leave the congregation temporarily. Who would deny that such circumstances necessitate a leave of absence? Permit me to state here that it seems to me that our churches would have acted more correctly in the case of our own Rev. H. Veldman

and his persecution in Hamilton, had they referred to Article 14 instead of to Article 13 and given him a temporary leave of absence with support from the churches when he was without a congregation. The fact that Hamilton deserted both him and our Denomination would justify such a provision.

Sickness may also be the occasion for the granting of a temporary leave. The duration of the leave in such cases will naturally depend upon the nature of the illness. In cases of overwork or strain due to dissension and trouble in the congregation, a couple weeks of rest may be sufficient for recuperation. In other instances the time may have to be extended to months and, perhaps, to a year or two. In cases where there is little or no indication of recovery an emeritation would be better. Where there is hope of recovery a leave of absence is proper.

In the past there have been cases where ministers have been given leaves to work on Bible translations, engage in missionary work, assist another congregation for a time, pursue some postgraduate work, travel, serve in the government, etc. In each case the consistory must determine whether **these reasons are such that they** "compel discontinuation of the work in the local church." Of course, that "compulsion" can be looked at from both an objective and a subjective point of view so that it is quite possible that a consistory that weighs these reasons objectively and the minister who considers them subjectively arrive at opposite conclusions. Then the advice of the Classis must be sought although this should be done only as a last resort and after every possible attempt has been exhausted to decide these things locally. A minister who is personally involved in the matter ought to remember that his consistory is more able to look at the matter impartially and objectively than he is. Their judgment should have considerable weight with him.

The article speaks of the "advice" of the consistory. The dutch has "advies." This does not mean that the decision rest with the minister and the consistory gives counsel which may be accepted or rejected. Dr. Bouwman cites that "advies" here has the signification of "consent" or "approval." He writes:

"Het woord 'advies' heeft hier de beteekenis van 'bewilliging', 'toestemming'. De normale weg in dezen is, dat de dienaar, die tijdelijk ontheffing van zijn ambtelijk werk vraagt, hiervoor aan den kerkeraad de reden opgeeft, dat daarna de kerkeraad deze beoordeelt en zich over het verzoek uitspreekt. In de samenspreking tusschen dienaar en kerkeraad kan nader vastgesteld worden de tijd en de wijze van het ontslag. Indien de dienaar zich niet met het *oordeel* (italics are mine, G.v.B.) des kerkerads kan vereenigen, staat hem het beroep op de classis open." (Vol. 1, pg. 480)

When a leave is granted there are two things especially that should be taken up in the "samenspreking". The first is the time or duration of the leave. This should not be left indefinite. A certain period should be designated and, in the case of sickness, if this time proves inadequate an extension

can always be added. It is better to do that than to leave things indefinite. In 1928 the Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches ruled against the granting of indefinite leaves of absence. In the second place there is the matter of support. Sometimes it lies in the very nature of the case that the minister on leave will receive support from the church. In other cases, however, this is not so. There should be a definite understanding made to avoid difficulties at a later date. The time to do that is when the leave is granted.

We would call attention yet to the meaning of the last phrase in this article which reads: "he shall nevertheless at all times be and remain subject to the call of the congregation." This, however, will have to wait until next time.

G.v.d.B.



O COME BEFORE THE LORD, OUR KING

O come and let us worship now,
Before our Maker let us bow;
We are His sheep and He our God,
He feeds our souls in pastures broad;
He safely leads us in the way;
O come and heed His voice today.

Take heed and harden not your heart
As did your fathers, nor depart
From God to follow in their ways;
For with complaints instead of praise
With doubt instead of faith confessed,
They put His mercy to the test.

Take heed that ye provoke Him not
As did your fathers, who forgot,
With erring heart, God's holy ways
And grieved him all their sinful days;
To whom in wrath Jehovah sware,
My promised rest they shall not share.

Psalms 95, 3, 4, 5

HOW GOOD IT IS TO THANK THE LORD

How good it is to thank the Lord,
And praise to Thee Most High, accord,
To show Thy love with morning light,
And tell Thy faithfulness each night;
Yea, good it is Thy praise to sing,
And all our sweetest music bring.

O Lord, with joy my heart expands
Before the wonders of Thy hands;
Great works, Jehovah, Thou hast wrought,
Exceeding deep Thy every thought;
A foolish man knows not their worth,
Nor he whose mind is of the earth.

Psalms 92:1, 2

ALL AROUND US

The Declaration of Principles Discarded.

Concordia reports in its June 17th issue some of the decisions of the schismatic Synod which met in the month of June in Grand Rapids, the Rev. J. Howerzyl being reporter. There are several items in this report on which we could comment, but we single out only one which we consider most revealing. We refer, of course, to this Synod's rejection of the Declaration of Principles.

Howerzyl reports the following concerning this matter: "Synod then took up the matter of the Declaration of Principles, the Study Committee Report and the supplement to their report. Synod decided in this whole matter the following:

1. To thank the committee for their work.

2. Synod expresses that since sufficient evidence has been given to show that the Synods of 1950 and 1951 erred in originating, treating and adopting the Declaration of Principles, that therefore the Declaration of Principles is without force as a Synodically approved expression.

3. Synod expresses that since sufficient evidence has been given to show that the Declaration of Principles may not be adopted as an expression of our Basis of Unity on certain doctrinal points. These doctrinal points are explained more fully and better in the Three Forms of Unity in the light of their Scriptural context; and we have always expressed that these are sufficient for the organization of new churches when in the Public Declaration of Agreement with the Forms of Unity we declare as follows: 'In conformity with the belief of all these congregations, we, as members of their Synod, declare that from the heart we feel and believe, that all articles and expressions of doctrine, contained in the three above named confessions, jointly called the Three Forms of Unity, in all respects agree with the Word of God, whence we reject all doctrines repugnant thereto; that we desire to conform all our actions to them, agreeably to the accepted Church Order of Dordrecht, 1618-19, and desire to receive into our church communion everyone that agrees to our confession.'"

Our readers will remember that when the Synods of the Protestant Reformed Churches in 1950-51 deemed it necessary to adopt this Declaration it did so chiefly on the grounds that it was necessary to build our denominational walls so high that the Liberated doctrine which flowed to us from the Netherlands would not seep into our churches. At that time there were especially two of our ministers who advocated the breaking down of that denominational wall to allow an influx of Liberated emigrants to join our churches. These were the ministers who had traveled to the Old Country evidently with the purpose to sell our churches to the Liber-

ated. It appears now that when they returned they also succeeded in selling the Liberated and their doctrine to several of our ministers and a large number of our people.

Those of us who have given careful scrutiny to the developments in our churches in recent years recall that when the dangers of this Liberated doctrine were brought to the attention of our Synod in 1950 there were several of our ministers and elders, who have now become schismatic, but who then declared themselves in favour of the contents of the proposed Declaration and at that time insisted that it should be adopted as a safe-guard for our churches. The assistant secretary of the above mentioned schismatic Synod of 1954 and his elder, who also was in attendance at this Synod, both strongly advised the adoption of the Declaration because they foresaw that our churches would be swallowed up by the Liberated. It is also a matter of record that the vice-president of the above mentioned Synod reporting for his consistory relative to the Declaration as it was treated in Classis East declared without any reservation of his own that his consistory had no objection to the content of the Declaration. Another minister, also in attendance of this schismatic Synod, at the February, 1951, meeting of Classis East, declared the same from his consistory. One of the elders from the West above referred to declared in 1950 that he could not understand men like the two salesmen who had visited the Netherlands who wanted to lower the ecclesiastical walls. These are facts which none of these men can deny.

Now they sit in Synod and without any pangs of conscience simply declare themselves in favour of discarding the Declaration of Principles and that, too, on doctrinal grounds. Yes, they threw the Declaration out also on Church-political grounds. But in the light of all these erring brethren have said in the past relative to the doctrinal issue, their decision now is most revealing.

That there were some ministers and laymen in 1950-51 who vehemently opposed the Declaration we know from personal experience. They boldly expressed their fear that should the Declaration be adopted it would stop all correspondence with the Liberated in the Netherlands and in Canada. One minister even went so far as to admit that here we had a wonderful opportunity to become big. For many years we were a struggling group of churches, small in number and in power. We were just getting to the point of being recognized in the church world. We had even gotten so far that we were considering of entering into foreign mission work. And here suddenly opportunity offered itself in the communion of the Liberated to have a foreign mission field laid in our laps. All we would have to do is take up the collections for it. Men who talked like this you can understand as being in wholehearted agreement of getting rid of the Declaration.

But how shall we explain those erring brethren who were out-spokenly in favour of the Declaration, and that, too, on

doctrinal grounds? And who now sit in on a Synodical discussion as to what to do with the Declaration, and who apparently voiced no objections when the decision is passed to throw it out, and that, too, for doctrinal reasons? How is it possible for men at one time to say with emphasis "we need that Declaration, because our Three Forms of Unity are not adequate to keep out the Liberated with their doctrine because they also agree with the Three Forms but give another interpretation to them," and now turn around and say with even more expression "we do not need the Declaration for doctrinal reasons?"

It seems to us that there is but one explanation. It is that they have been sold on the idea of becoming big by letting down the ecclesiastical wall. It means that at heart they have become cold to the unique and fundamental concepts of the Protestant Reformed faith. And let us understand it well, these are men who know better. They have not had the wool pulled down over their eyes as has happened to many of the laymen belonging to the schismatic group. What they did, they did deliberately and with full knowledge. That makes their sin that much more terrible. Would that they would repent and bring back with them those sheep that have been led astray not only by the speeches and writings of those who were bent on destroying the Protestant Reformed Churches for carnal reasons, but also by their apparent pious conduct in the matter. We understand there are some in the West who are beginning to see the light and are at the verge of returning to us again. May the Lord open the eyes and hearts also of their leaders and bring them to an open break with the lie which they are now living.

Believing Parents and Infant Baptism.

On this subject the Rev. Peter Y. De Jong writes in his department of the Banner of July 9th. Generally we enjoy reading his articles, though sometimes we wish he would be a little more specific. This he could have been in the article above referred to.

He is reflecting on the well-known three questions parents are required to answer in the affirmative when they present their children in baptism. Under the sub-title "A Public Profession" he makes several comments anent these questions. We are especially concerned now with what he writes relative to the second and third questions.

The second question in the form as used in our churches (and I presume is still used in the Christian Reformed Church, though they seem to be in the process of changing forms) reads literally as follows: "Secondly. Whether you acknowledge the doctrine which is contained in the Old and New Testament, and in the articles of the Christian faith, and which is taught here in this Christian church, to be the true and perfect (complete) doctrine of salvation?" De

Jong writes rather superficially, I think, when he refers to this question and says: "In the second question parents are required to express their wholehearted allegiance to the Reformed faith, as the true and complete interpretation of God's Word." He neglects to comment on: "and which is taught here in this Christian church." We are left to conclude that according to De Jong all that is required of parents seeking baptism for their children is the profession of allegiance to the Reformed faith without any particular emphasis on the point that his church has a particular understanding and expression of that faith.

The third question in the form reads literally as follows: "Thirdly. Whether you promise and intend to see these children when come to the years of discretion (whereof you are either parent or witness), instructed and brought up in the aforesaid doctrine, or help or cause them to be instructed therein, to the utmost of your power?"

Here again Rev. De Jong is not too specific when he writes: "The third question is based in a sense upon the second. Now parents are asked to promise that they will instruct their children in that doctrine. This begins, of course, in the home. Yet the phrase 'to the utmost of your power' plainly includes more. Parents obligate themselves to insure Christian training for their children in both the Church and the school. Only churches and schools where the 'aforesaid doctrine', that is, the Reformed faith, is taught and championed, can satisfy the requirements of covenantal education for our seed. When parents minimize the need of church attendance and catechetical training for their children, they are breaking their solemn vow. And how is it possible for parents who have made this promise in sincerity to be lukewarm to the necessity of distinctively christian schools in an age when godlessness and secularism like a plague have infected tens of thousands who bear the mark of the covenant? No means at our disposal may be neglected."

It appears that the reverend is satisfied so long as the school teaches a general "Reformed faith." Should he not have said "the Reformed faith as taught in the Christian Reformed Church?" That would have been specific. Or does the Rev. De Jong simply assume that the instruction given in the christian schools is predominantly Christian Reformed? It is possible that he did, but he doesn't say so.

And this leads me to write what I intended to in this article, namely this: that our understanding of this second and third question of the Baptismal form as it should be read and interpreted in our Protestant Reformed Churches necessitates that the doctrine believed and professed in the second question is strictly Protestant Reformed, not Reformed in general. And the promise in the third question necessitates Protestant Reformed Christian schools wherein we can fulfill "unto the utmost of your power" this promise to instruct our children in the aforesaid doctrine.

M.S.

**REPORT OF CLASSIS EAST MEETING HELD ON JULY 7 AND 8, 1954
at the Creston Protestant Reformed Church**

The meeting of the July Classis of Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Church is again a matter of history. What here follows is a brief report of the highlights of this Classical gathering of our Churches.

The meeting was called to order by the president of the April 7, 1954 Classis, the Rev. G. Lanting after he reads Phil. 3 and we sing Psalter No. 114:1-3, and after we have been led in prayer.

The Credential Letters are presented from 11 Consistories. All have deputed two delegates, except Randolph, which has only one delegate. After the credential letters have been read the chairman declares the Classis as being constituted. The Rev. G. Lanting takes Minutes and Rev. G. Lubbers presides according to alphabetical order. Incidentally the meeting of Classis lasted through four sessions of Classis.

The main matter of the agenda was the examination of Candidate-elect E. Emanuel, who had accepted the call for the ministry from our Randolph, Wisc. church. Upon the request of this church arrangements were made for the Classical examinations, and that as follows:

Theology and Anthropology — by Rev. G. Vos.
Christology and Soteriology — by Rev. R. Veldman.
Ecclesiology and Eschatology — by Rev. C. Hanko.
Knowledge of Holy Scriptures — by Rev. G. Vanden Berg.
Knowledge of the Confessions — by Rev. G. Lanting.
Controversy — by Rev. G. Lubbers.
Practica — by the Rev. M. Schipper.

After duly examining Candidate elect E. Emanuel Classis decides to advise Randolph that the brother has satisfactorily passed the examination, and that we advise them to proceed to ordain him into office. Classis addresses a few well-chosen words to brother Emanuel and afterwards Classis sings the "Doxology" and the chairman leads in prayer.

Other matters of importance decided by Classis or worthy of mention are the following:

It is decided by Classis that the rate to be paid for traveling of delegates is 8c per mile, provided there are at least two delegates in a car. Classis also decides that "delegates to Classis shall pay \$10.00 per day to elder delegates who need it."

The Synodical Stated Clerk's letter to Classis East in regard to Synod's decision as to the redistribution of the boundery lines of the two Classes is read. This decision would place the churches of Oak Lawn, South Holland, Illinois, and of Randolph, Wisconsin in Classis West. A motion is made that Classis East express itself as favoring this arrangement. Classis decided to table this entire matter for six months, that is, till the January 1955 Classis of Classis East.

Classis hears and treats the letter, composed by the Committee Revs. M. Schipper and G. Vanden Berg and elder W. Terpstra, and addressed to the former "Classis West." In this letter a reply is tendered to a letter sent Classis East by "Classis West" in the month of March. Classis West arguments are refuted one by one and they are admonished to return to the fold of the Protestant Reformed Churches in true repentance.

The matter of the "Protest" of Oak Lawn against the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids was also treated and decided upon. Letters

from the various Consistories were read. After due deliberation Classis expressed itself as follows:

"That whereas the greater majority of our Consistories have voiced their support to Oak Lawn's protest; and, whereas we are all agreed that there is a real danger in singing of Hymns on a program sponsored by one of our Consistories; yet, whereas Classis does not desire to legislate all ecclesiastical endeavors on the part of our Churches; Be it resolved:

That we advise First Church to elide hymns from their Radio program altogether or reduce them to a minimum, and

That it be further resolved to express that the singing of the versification of the Holy Scriptures cannot be placed in the category of objectionable hymns."

The Classical Financial Emergency Committee reports of its labors, gives a financial report, informing Classis that there is a balance of \$500.67 in the treasury, and request Classis to make a decision as to whether their work has been terminated or not. After due consideration Classis expresses the following: That Classis:

1. Expresses its appreciation to this Committee for the labor performed in the Emergency.
2. To disband this Classical Emergency Committee since the emergency is now past and the western churches are covered by a reorganized financial system.
3. To instruct the treasurer of the committee to send the balance of this fund to our Synodical Treasurer with our instruction to place this balance in the Synodical expense fund, since the funds were collected from the churches of both Classes.
4. To instruct the Stated Clerk to advise this Committee and the Synod relative to this action.
5. To advise the Synodical Treasurer that in case certain emergencies arise between the present date and the Synod of 1955, he defray the requests from the balance remitted.

A consistory is given advice to proceed with the "Second Step" of censure in regard to various members of the congregation.

Holland and Second Church request Classical appointments for the three months of July, August and September. Classis decides as follows:

Holland: July 25—E. Emanuel; August 8—G. Lubbers; August 22—G. Vanden Berg; August 29—R. Veldman; September 5—G. Lanting; September 12—H. Hoeksema; September 19—J. Heys; September 26—M. Schipper; October 3—G. Vos; October 10—C. Hanko.

Second Church: July 18—G. Lanting; August 1—J. Heys; August 22—E. Emanuel; August 29—M. Schipper; September 5—C. Hanko; September 12—G. Vos; September 29—G. Vanden Berg; September 26—R. Veldman; October 3—H. Hoeksema.

The voting for Classical Committee members results in the choosing of J. Heys and C. Hanko. Members of the present Committee are as follows: C. Hanko, J. Heys, G. Lubbers and G. Vos.

The next meeting of Classis will be held D.V. on the first Wednesday in October, 1954 in Fourth Church.

The Chairman, G. Lubbers, closes these sessions of Classis with a few remarks, expressing gratitude to God and confidence for the future, after which the Rev. C. Hanko leads Classis in closing prayer.

G. Lubbers,

Stated Clerk of Classis East.