

# THE STANDARD

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## MEDITATION

### The Chief

"... of whom I am chief." I Tim. 1:15b

The Apostle Paul had spoken of sinners who were saved by our Lord Jesus Christ.

And grouping them altogether into one band, he places himself at their head and says: I am the chief of sinners!

Amazing confession!

Almost everyone will confess that he belongs to the race of sinners. That is, if you do not press them overmuch as to the nature of sin. And also if you do not include them with the worst of sinners, such as gangsters, murderers or harlots.

Expressed or in the thoughts of the heart, we often say: I'm glad I am not as he or she . . .

But Paul says: I am the chief of sinners!

Amazing confession!

"... of whom I am chief!"

And Paul knew what he was talking about.

Read the verses 9 and 10 of this same chapter. He gives us a catalog of various kinds of sinners. He speaks of the lawless and disobedient, the ungodly and sinners, the unholy and profane, murderers of fathers and mothers, manslayers, whoremongers, them that defile themselves with mankind, menstealers, liars, perjured persons . . .

Yes, Paul knew what constitutes a sinner before God.

Yet, he calls himself their chief.

Notice also that he does not speak of sin as a deed, an act, but he judges himself, his person. *He, Paul*, is the sinner.

Many will say: I have done evil, I have sinned! But Paul says: I *am* evil. And: I am the worst of all.

And at the same time we know that he said: "For in nothing am I behind the chiefest Apostles." But even there he returns to this theme in Timothy, for he adds: "though I am nothing."

Attend unto this that Paul was taken up into the third heaven in order to see unspeakable things, things which he could not divulge because of their unearthly beauty and

splendour, things which it would be unseemly to speak about while we are on this sorry globe, and in this terrible dispensation. And this man, so exalted, so pre-eminently holy and good, calls himself the worst of sinners.

We should hesitate to make this confession weaker, so explain it that after all Paul was not such a great sinner as he makes himself in this text. I am afraid of all such attempts. Paul spoke through the Holy Spirit, and he knew what constitutes a sinner. Look at the context: it is not possible to make his confession say anything else but that Paul is the chief of all the sinners that are saved. He says: Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

Well, let us single out one of the worst: the murderer on the cross. He is in heaven and was saved by Jesus Christ. But Paul says: I am worse than that murderer who was saved at the eleventh hour! I am the chief of all the saved sinners!

Is it not amazing?

How must this be explained?

For you have all felt more or less, that we cannot leave the matter at this juncture.

We all have placed Paul far above ourselves and have said: No, Paul, you are not the chief of sinners. I am.

Attend to this truth: Paul knew only one heart, and that was his own.

He knew a lot of sinners, and knew them to be sinners because of what he saw of them and heard of them. He saw deeds and heard words that were sinful. But he never heard the thoughts and the motives of the hearts of his fellow men.

But he did know his own heart.

And that makes all the difference in the world.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? Jeremiah 17:9.

For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies . . . Matt. 15:19.

O we can behave before men!

We are able to bridle our tongue when men are near.

We watch over our hands and feet in the midst of our fellows.

But listen to your heart my brother.  
And shudder.

Paul knew his heart, and that was the only heart he knew.

Comparing himself with the entire church of Jesus Christ, he saw in the one camp a lot of sinners. He saw all their wicked deeds and wicked words, but he saw not one heart among them.

And then he looked into the other camp: he saw himself as he lived his life from out of the heart.

Listen to Paul: O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

Yes, he had talked of his heart for he spoke of the things *he hated*, and also of *his inner man*. And only the spirit of man knoweth the deep things of man.

And so, when Paul stood in his own camp, all alone with his heart and its depths of sin, and when he then looked at that other camp with all the sinners that Jesus saved, he came to the conclusion that he was the worst of the lot, the chief of sinners.

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Of whom I am chief!

Yes, there are other reasons why Paul placed himself at their head.

The closer you are to the light the blacker your shadow.

And Paul was very close to the light. He walked with God much more than his fellows. And when you walk very close to God you see your sins much more than those who walk from afar with God. Theirs is the grey, the twilight. Again: Paul was taken up into heaven. That happened once to Isaiah. And you will remember how strangely he acted. While everyone sang and rejoiced in the heavenly heights, Isaiah began to cry: woe is me! For I am a man of unclean lips and I live in the midst of a people of unclean lips. For mine eyes have seen the Lord of glory.

The closer to God the more you see the blackness of your sins.

The further away from God the more you are inclined to say: I am glad I am not as bad as he and he and he.

Let God be near unto you when you are ready to go to sleep. I mean those moments when we are alone with Him, and when we have set Him before our face. It does not take long and we bow our heads, we dare not raise our eyes. Shame floods us and makes our hearts hot within us.

At such moments you must compare yourselves once with your fellows, and see the outcome.

Listen: O God! I am not worthy to walk with Thee! And, Lord, I am not worthy to walk with Thy saints. They are much better than I.

I am black of sin and guilt!

Have mercy on me, O Jesus of Nazareth!

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The chief of sinners?

There is more.

In our day the people like to speak of the responsibility of man.

Well, I will at this juncture also speak of our responsibility.

Two men commit the same sinful deed.

But the one has floods of spiritual light of God's grace together with an exhaustive knowledge of God's Word.

And the other is one who is esteemed the least in the congregation.

Both committed the same sin. But who is the greatest sinner?

The first one, of course.

And so I could go on. There is also the element of temptation. Some commit sin without a cause. Out of pure deviltry. Others were sorely tempted.

I think you see the point. And if you do, you have already said in your heart: with your permission (or without), Paul: I am the chief of sinners!

Yes, all, every last one of the saints of God say in their heart: Jesus came on earth to save sinners, of whom I am chief!

For we know our hearts, it is the only heart we know of.

And in comparison our neighbor received the higher place in sainthood.

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Of whom I am chief!

O what wonderful fruit it bears.

Attend to the following phrase: Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy.

First of all, it will cause you to cry for mercy, it will make you cling to your Father in heaven. It will make a man of you mighty in prayer. And I mean in the silence of your hour with God. He will hear your voice, even if others do not hear you. Your voice will go to Him in the most unlikely places.

Sometimes your voice will no longer be a voice.

It will be a groaning that cannot be uttered.

But you will have the fruit of cleaving to God.

But there is more.

Having received mercy, you will be very merciful to your fellows.

Having seen the blackness of your own sins which were much worse than those committed by your brother, you esteem him more excellent than yourself.

No, you do not have to tell him that. Words are cheap.

You will show it in your demeanor. Your very breath will be humility in the midst of your fellows. Born from the conviction, the wonder that they allow you in their midst. That they have not cast you out of their midst long ago.

You will be very humble walking with God.

And it will have the wonderful fruit of being humble in the midst of the manifestation of His children who are the image bearers of Christ.

Now we can understand how this same Paul could caution the millions of God's children: Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Philipp. 2:3.

He had walked that lowly way himself.

He pressed the footsteps of Him who was God and became Man; who was the great Innocent One and became guilty; who belonged in heaven, but went to hell, who ought to be worshipped but who became a curse.

And, O, my brethren, His heart was white with the whiteness of beauty and purity and glory! The Chief of those are saints of God.

No, there's not one like the lowly Jesus!

No, not one; no, not one!

G.V.

### Announcement

Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Churches will gather in regular fall session on Wednesday, October 6, 1954, in the edifice of the Fourth Protestant Reformed Church.

Special item on the agenda of this Classis is the Examination of Candidate-elect James McCollam, who has accepted the call to the Holland Protestant Reformed Church.

The Classical Committee has arranged the following Schedule of examination:

Sermon on either Ephesians 5:1, 2 or Revelation 3:20. Time for sermon 30 minutes. Critici: Revs. C. Hanko and G. Lanting.

Theology and Anthropology — G. Lubbers.

Christology and Soteriology — M. Schipper.

Ecclesiology and Eschatology — G. Vanden Berg.

Knowledge of the Confessions — G. Vos.

Knowledge of Holy Writ — R. Veldman.

Controversy — J. Heys.

Practica — C. Hanko.

It is decided that for each Loci in Dogmatics 10 minutes will be allotted while for the other subjects 15 minutes will be given.

Will the delegates kindly regard this notification as a personal reminder?

G. Lubbers,

Stated Clerk of Classis East.

### IN MEMORIAM

The Consistory of the Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church herewith expresses its sympathy with our brother, elder Harry Zwak, in the loss of his

#### FATHER

May the God of all comfort give His wondrous consolation to the bereaved, and may they and we wait for that blessed day of Jesus Christ when He shall make our mortal bodies like unto His glorious body to the praises of our God.

The Consistory of the Hudsonville  
Protestant Reformed Church:

Rev. Gerrit Vos, Pres.

Mr. Peter Lubbers, Clerk.

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## EDITORIALS

### A Protest and its Reply

The position of the former consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Kalamazoo, according to its answer to the protest of brother Meninga, is that any aggrieved party, aggrieved, that is, by a consistory, classis, or even synod, cannot be bound by such a decision "until" it is proved to be in conflict with the Word of God or the Church Order. In other words, when a decision is made by any ecclesiastical assembly, and someone feels convinced in his own heart that such a decision is contrary to the Word of God and the Church Order, he can remain in the church without being bound by such a decision "until" he shall have proved (or shall not have proved) to the assemblies that the decision is in error.

This position, however, is in direct conflict with the Church Order.

It may be true that in cases of minor importance the ecclesiastical assembly concerned can decide to allow this freedom, but certainly not in cases in which the Confessions are involved. And this was the case with the decision of Classis East in October 1953 with which the delegates of Kalamazoo disagreed and to which they refused to submit.

That this position is in direct conflict with the Church Order is clear from the Formula of Subscription.

This Formula is considered to be of fundamental significance in the Reformed Churches.

That this is true is evident from the fact that, according to the Church Order, this Formula of Subscription must be signed by all candidates for the ministry, by ministers, elders and deacons, as well as by professors of theology. Cf. Arts. 4, 53, 54, and the decisions under those articles.

Now, in this Formula of Subscription we read:

"And further, the consistory, classis or synod, upon sufficient grounds of suspicion and to preserve the uniformity and purity of doctrine, may deem it proper to require of us a further explanation of our sentiments respecting any particular article of the Confession of Faith, the Catechism, or the explanation of the National Synod, we do hereby promise to be always willing and ready to comply with such requisition, under penalty above mentioned (suspension from office, H.H.), reserving for ourselves, however, the right of an appeal, whenever we shall believe ourselves aggrieved by the sentence of the consistory, the classis or the synod, *and until a decision is made upon such an appeal, we will acquiesce in the determination and judgment already passed.*" (Italics is mine, H.H.).

Knott c.s. will probably object that this concerns only a decision in which the confessions are involved.

But to this I reply, in the first place, that the former consistory of Kalamazoo left no exception to its position that

one is not bound by a decision of the ecclesiastical assemblies "until" it is proved that it is in error.

It is very evident from the language of the reply to the protest of brother Meninga that they will brook no exception to their position. No matter what consistory, classis or synod may decide, no one has to submit to its decisions "until" it is proved that it is in conflict with the Word of God or the Church Order.

But, in the second place, the decision of Classis East in Oct. 1953 certainly concerned the Confessions!

What was the situation?

The preceding classis had decided that certain heretical statements made by De Wolf and supported by some of his elders were contrary to the Word of God and to the Confessions, the Three Forms of Unity.

At the same time classis had decided that the guilty parties had to apologize or be deposed from office.

The consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Mich., adopted these decisions of classis and carried them out in its meeting of June 1-23, 1953. It did this in the presence of the committee that was appointed by classis.

At the October session of Classis East two sets of delegates presented themselves, one sent by the legal consistory, the other by the deposed minister and elders, who claimed that they were not legally deposed.

The classis, after hearing all the parties involved, and after listening to the report of its committee, decided that the legal delegates were those sent by the consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Mich., and that, accordingly, the delegates sent by the deposed and suspended group had no right to be seated.

Knott and his elder refused to submit, even for the time being and pending a possible appeal to synod, to this decision.

In other words they held and insisted that officebearers who had been found guilty by Classis East and the Consistory of the First Church of heresy and conflict with the Confessions, should be seated as legal delegates to classis.

The Confessions, therefore, were most certainly concerned with the decision of classis, and with the refusal on the part of Knott and his elder to acquiesce in this decision even "until" a decision should be made upon a possible appeal to synod.

Hence, the position of Knott and the former consistory of Kalamazoo, maintained in its reply to the protest and brother Meninga, is in direct conflict with Art. 31 and other articles of the Church Order, considered in the light of the Formula of Subscription.

The conclusion of this part of the reply to the protest of brother Meninga is a foolish as it is bold.

It reads as follows: "That when the delegates of the consistory disagreed with the classis in seating schismatic and improper delegates they did not leave the truth and the Church Order, but were exercising the right given them by

the Church Order as it was their conviction that the Classis was doing the wrong thing as stated in their motivated negative vote."

The Rev. Knott still reads the Standard Bearer and I hope he also reads this article. And I challenge him to prove, and offer him space in our paper for the purpose, that this statement is not "as foolish as it is bold." Let him prove the following:

1. That the classis actually seated "schismatic and improper delegates" when they seated the Rev. C. Hanko and elder G. Bylsma.
2. That the Church Order gave him the right to follow his own "conviction that the classis was doing the wrong thing" instead of properly appealing to synod and, in the meantime acquiescing in the decision already made.
3. That by following his own sweet way he himself did not become guilty of schism.

We now proceed to the second part of the protest of brother Meninga and its reply by the former consistory of Kalamazoo.

Brother Meninga protested as follows:

"In the case of the doctrinal dispute about the statements by the Rev. De Wolf, I remind you that the Declaration of Principles which our consistory adopted some time ago is based on the Word of God and our Confessions as the truth." (I took the liberty to correct and complete the wording of the protest without altering its sense, H.H.)

This part of the protest the former consistory answered as follows:

"B. In answer to your further statement: "the truth which was adopted some time ago by our consistory, namely, the Declaration of Principles," the consistory would make the following observations:

"1. The consistory made a statement of agreement with the doctrine contained in the Declaration of Principles, but advised against their adoption.

a. However, in view of their adoption by the synod of 1951 they are a settled and binding decision on the consistory.

b. It must also be borne in mind:

1) That the Declaration of Principles do not constitute an expression of all possible truth

2) That they are: "A brief exposition of the confessions regarding certain points of doctrine as maintained by the Protestant Reformed Churches." (From the official copy of the Declaration printed by the Mission Committee, authorized by Synod)

a) They are "A brief exposition of the confessions . . ."

b) Also "regarding certain points of doctrine . . ."

c) And therefore may be "true", but certainly not "THE TRUTH."

"2. That the Declaration of Principles has no bearing on the case in question as is evident from the Preamble of the Declaration which reads as follows: "Declaration of Prin-

ciples, to be used only by the Mission Committee and the Missionaries for the organization of prospective Churches on the basis of Scripture and the Confessions as these have always been maintained in the Protestant Reformed Churches and as these are now further explained in regard to certain principles." (From official copy of the Declaration; Acts of Synod, 1951, article 285, page 196)"

Comment:

I am certainly glad that the consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Kalamazoo, has a decision on their books stating that they agree with the Declaration of Principles, and that, after 1951 they considered this decision settled and binding.

That proves, indeed, that, at that time, the consistory was Protestant Reformed.

It proves, moreover, that, at that time, they could not possibly have agreed with the statement made by De Wolf in April 1951, that "God promises to every one of you, that if you believe, you shall be saved."

It also proves that the consistory of Kalamazoo has utterly departed from the truth they once embraced, that they never took the truth seriously, that, in fact, they can change like the wind.

For, when the schismatic synod, from which those that now call themselves the consistory of Kalamazoo now take their order as to what is to be considered settled and binding, repudiated the Declaration of Principles they also repudiated it, just as easily as one wipes his mouth after lunch. First they express that the Declaration is the truth, now they declare just easily that it is not the truth; first they consider that the Declaration is settled and binding, now they just as readily declare that it settled and binding no more!

O tempora! O mores! Cicero would exclaim.

I will refrain from characterizing the attitude of such a consistory.

But let us examine the contents of this reply of the former consistory of Kalamazoo a little more closely.

The former consistory replies to the protest of brother Meninga "that the Declaration of Principles do not constitute an expression of all possible truth."

I would say, to use a Dutch expression, „dat is een waarheid als een koe," a truth as big as a cow. The Declaration does not express the truth that two times two are four, that the square of the hypotenuse is the sum of the squares on the two sides of a rectangular triangle, that the month of August has thirty-one days, that God is triune, that the sinner is totally depraved, that the church is the gathering of believers and their children, that the dead shall rise, etc. etc. No, the consistory that used to be Protestant Reformed did not need to remind us that the Declaration is not an expression of all possible truth. It pretends nothing of the kind.

But what it did, chiefly, intend to emphasize, and what it actually did emphasize very clearly and definitely, is the

(Continued on page 494)

## AS TO BOOKS

*De Humor van de Bijbel* (The Humor of the Bible) by Okke Jager. Published by J. H. Kok, N. V., Kampen, the Netherlands, Price f 4.90.

The author of this book is not known to me. In many ways the book reminds me of the writings of Thys Booy.

The first chapter, it seems to me, is intended to serve as the keynote of the whole book. In it the author gives what I regard as a caricature description and application of the wedding feast and those that were invited to attend it. It is evident that the author intends to apply this description of the parable as he interprets or applies it to the church of today, particularly to the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands and to Reformed Christians. He is evidently of the opinion that a hearty laugh and a little humor could go far in solving the problems and difficulties of those churches. He seems to agree with Billy Sunday when he said that many Christians walk about with faces so long that "they could eat oatmeal out of the end of a gaspipe."

The author is, no doubt, an able writer. The book affords easy and pleasant reading. Moreover, he offers many good remarks about humor and irony.

But I cannot agree with the chief contents of the book. Some passages, if they were to be taken seriously, I would have to criticise severely. This is true, for instance, about the passage on p. 64, where the writer finds humor in the invitation of the angel in the open grave of the risen Lord: "Come, see the place where the Lord lay." Humor he finds in the same passage in the sacrament of baptism. To me this means that he neither understands the importance of the place where the Lord lay, nor the sacrament of baptism.

The author, to my mind, confuses too much "humor" with what the Bible calls "joy in the Lord."

H.H.

*De Sacramenten* (The Sacraments) by Dr. G. C. Berkouwer. Published by J. H. Kok, N.V., Kampen, the Netherlands. Price f 9.75.

Dr. Berkouwer as an author is, by this time, quite well known among us. His latest contribution to Reformed literature, under the general heading "Doctrinal studies" is a discussion of the sacraments. The book is worthy of a more thorough and elaborate discussion than is possible within the scope of a mere book review. But this must wait till a later date, the Lord willing. In the meantime I shall briefly offer my evaluation of the book in the following remarks.

1. The book is divided into three main parts. The first part deals with the sacraments in general; the second discusses the sacrament of Holy Baptism; the third treats of the sacrament of Holy Communion.

2. The chief merit of the book, in my opinion, is not that it offers anything new or gives a fuller and richer development of the doctrine of the sacraments (this could hardly

be expected), but rather that it moves on the plane of a comparative dogmen-historical study. Dr. Berkouwer is a student. From the present work, too, it is evident that he studied several works on the sacraments. In this particular treatise he compares the views of the Reformed writers and confessions with others of an earlier or a more recent date, defending the former. This I consider especially the value of the present book on the sacraments.

3. I found the book to be somewhat heavy to read and, at times, tedious. This is not due to the style of Dr. Berkouwer, which usually is clear, not to the subject material, but rather to too frequent repetition of the same material. When Dr. Berkouwer discusses different views of various aspects of the sacraments by different authors and then defends the Reformed view over against them, he frequently repeats himself. Much of this repetition could, to my mind, have been avoided.

4. My chief objection to the book is that Dr. Berkouwer hardly ever mentions the doctrine of election. He does not give this doctrine a central and fundamental place. In fact, as I now recall, election is mentioned only once, i.e. in connection with the sacrament of baptism. I do not understand how one can explain Rom. 6:3-6, that believers are baptized into the death of Christ, buried and raised with Him, so that their old man is crucified with Him, without referring to the truth of election.

5. If I would write a more elaborate criticism of the book I would certainly ask Dr. Berkouwer to define clearly his conception of the promise of God and, at the same time, I would criticize his view of the conditionality of that promise.

6. Logically the entire passage on the necessity of baptism and of the sacraments in general does not belong where it occurs.

I heartily recommend the study of this book to all students of dogmatics.

H.H.

*Levende Woorden van Augustinus* (Living Words of Augustine) by Dr. A. Sizoo; published by J. H. Kok, N.V., Kampen, the Netherlands.

This book is written in commemoration of the well known church-father Augustine whose birth will be exactly sixteen centuries ago on Nov. 13, 1954. Seeing that Augustine was not only the author of several theological works but also a preacher of the gospel for thirty nine years, Dr. Sizoo conceived of the plan to select and translate from the Latin several passages from his sermons, many of which are left to us, and present them to the modern reader.

Though these sermons are centuries old, the passages from them presented by Dr. Sizoo are still very readable and may be read, not only with interest, but also with spiritual benefit.

I gladly recommend this book to the Holland reader.

H.H.



## OUR DOCTRINE

### THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE

AN EXPOSITION OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

PART III — OF THANKFULNESS

LORD'S DAY 42

Chapter 1

Christian Stewardship (cont.)

Nor does God bestow the goods that He gives to everyone according to His sovereign dispensation upon man in His common grace. For, to be sure, "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust," but this cannot be quoted as proof that God loves the righteous and the wicked alike, or that His favor is upon the elect and reprobate. For in that case it would mean that the Lord loves the rich capitalist, that has an abundance of goods, more than the poor laborer that works for starvation wages in his factory, and the rich landowner, that reaps his abundant harvest, more than the laborer whose hire is kept back by fraud. For even as the preaching of the gospel, that is general and promiscuous to all that hear, does not mean that God loves all the hearers and is favorable to them, elect and reprobate, but that His favor rests only upon the elect; so the general rain and sunshine from heaven that falls upon the just and the unjust alike by no means is a proof of the fact that God loves all the just and the unjust promiscuously, and that the bestowal of earthly goods may be regarded as a common favor of God upon all. The rest of the Scriptures teach us the very opposite. For "the curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked," no matter whether that house is a veritable palace, and in it the wicked dwells in luxury. But, on the contrary, "he blesseth the habitation of the just," no matter how humble and poor that habitation may be. Prov. 3:33. Psalm 73 speaks of the prosperity of the wicked: "There are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth." And the psalmist for a time indeed looks upon this prosperity of the wicked as a sign of the favor of God upon them, and even in distinction from the poor people of God that suffered in the world. But in the end

of the psalm he teaches us that he went into the sanctuary, and that in the sanctuary he saw all this prosperity of the wicked in a different light. For he saw their end. And in the light of that end he beheld that prosperity of the wicked as slippery places, on which God set them, and on which He sent them into everlasting destruction. The same is true of Psalm 92. There the psalmist speaks of the deep thoughts of God and the greatness of His works: "O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep. A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this. When the wicked spring as the grass, and all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed forever." Psalm 93:4-7. Although, therefore, God in His sovereign dispensation bestows the material goods of this world upon the wicked and the righteous alike, and usually bestows upon the former more than upon the latter, this by no means signifies that He is gracious to the wicked. His grace rests upon His people, His elect, the righteous, the believers in Christ Jesus alone.

Only the Christian, the believer in Christ Jesus, therefore, is again the true steward of God, also with regard to the things of this present world. For, in the first place, Christ Himself is the principal steward over the whole house of God, over all things in heaven and on earth, both in respect to the things of the present world and of the world to come. For He is Lord. To Him is given all power in heaven and on earth. And every knee must bow and every tongue must confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father. In Him we have become true stewards of God, also with regard to our present material and earthly possessions. In Him we have again received the right to receive all things from God. In Him we have received the power to acknowledge the God of our salvation and to serve Him also with our material possessions. And in Him we have received the will to serve Him and principally to glorify Him in the midst of the world, whether we are rich or poor. For we are called out of darkness into His marvellous light even as we are redeemed by the blood of the cross from the dominion of sin and death. Principally we are no more thieves, thieves with respect to God and with respect to one another. But it is our joy to consecrate ourselves and all things to the service of the Most High. And even as we acknowledge the Lord our God in Christ Jesus our Savior for all our material possessions and for all that we receive in the present life, whether it be riches or poverty, health or sickness, prosperity or adversity; and even as we are called to and principally endeavor to manage all things in the name of God and to His glory; so we expect the reward of faithful servants from Him, and from Him alone, through Jesus Christ our Lord. For as the apostle writes in I Cor. 3:21-23: "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all things are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

## Chapter 2

## The Grace of Contentment

Christian stewardship, we said, implies that God is the proprietor of all things through Jesus Christ our Lord, and that therefore He distributes all our material possessions to each one according to His will. We receive all things from Him, and acknowledge Him as the Lord. Secondly, it implies that we manage all our earthly possessions in the name of God and according to His precepts. The Christian is simply God's manager in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And thirdly, we said that as God's managers in Jesus Christ our Savior we expect the reward, both in time and eternity, from Him alone.

This implies, of course, that the Christian does not and cannot believe in communism as a system of society, or in community of goods. It has been objected that nevertheless this community of goods is a Scriptural idea, and that a certain system of communism existed in the early church. For we read in Acts 2:44, 45: "And all that believed were together, and had all things in common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." And in Acts 4:33-37 we read: "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The Son of Consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet." But as Ursinus remarks in his "Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism;" "1. The examples are not the same: for a community of goods in the time of the apostles was easy and necessary. It was easy, because the disciples were few in number. It was necessary because there was great danger, that if they did not sell them, they would be wrested from them by violence. It is different, however, as it respects the church at the present time; for such a community of goods would now be neither easy nor necessary. The apostles were, therefore, led, for just and sufficient reasons, to have such a community of goods, which causes are now no more in existence. 2. They did it freely, and not by any law constraining them to adopt such measures. Each one did it of his own accord. Hence Peter said to Ananias, 'While it remained was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?' (Acts 5:4). It was, therefore, voluntary. 3. It was a particular custom not having respect to the whole church: for it was not observed in the churches. Alms were collected in Macedonia and Achaia, and sent to Jerusalem. 4. It was temporary; for it was afterwards abolished when the causes which first gave rise to it passed away." To this we may add, in the

first place, that evidently it was not a community of goods in the stricter sense of the word, as if, for instance, no one had any private homes in which they dwelled, as if in their homes they did not have their own furniture, and as if they did not have their own clothes. They evidently sold so much of their possessions as was necessary to provide for them that had need, and laid it at the apostles' feet. And secondly, we may well remark that this community of goods in the church was an impossible situation, and that in a sinful world it could not possibly be maintained. The example of Ananias and Sapphira is sufficient proof of this. And the situation came to an early end, as is shown by the fact that in chapter 6 of Acts we already read of the appointment of deacons, occasioned by the fact that "In those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration."

The Christian therefore believes in what is called private property, and what we rather call the private stewardship of the Christian. Communism is in conflict with the organic existence and development of the human race, according to which God distributes to every man his own material possessions. This distribution is accomplished through all kinds of ways and means, such as buying and selling, labor and wages, contracts and partnerships, lending and borrowing, inheritance, and other ways and means. But it is always God that is the proprietor of all things, that must be acknowledged as such in Christ Jesus our Lord, and in Whose name and for Whose sake the Christian manages his earthly possessions.

According to Ursinus, there are various Christian virtues presupposed in the keeping of this eighth commandment, such as commutative justice, contentment, fidelity, liberality, hospitality, parsimony, and frugality. All these virtues may very well be subsumed under the head of the one principal virtue of contentment, which is the very opposite of covetousness, which is the root of all evil. According to Ursinus again: "Contentment is a virtue, by which we are satisfied and contented with our present possessions, which we have honestly acquired, and by which we quietly endure poverty and other inconveniences, not desiring what does not belong to us, or what is unnecessary."

The grace of contentment is beautifully described by the apostle Paul in Philippians 4:11: "For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." It is therefore a grace by which we are conscious of being victorious over all external things, conditions, states, circumstances. For it is evident from the passage in its context that it deals with external things, with things that are earthy, with material possessions and earthy states. To these external things our earthly life is related, in a measure, we may say, that we are dependent on them. We are in need of earthly possessions.

H.H.



## FROM HOLY WRIT

### Exposition of Romans 1:14-17

(Continued)

The Gospel is indeed a power of God unto salvation for every one that believeth, first the Jew and also the Greek. Thus we noticed in the former article on this passage from Holy Writ.

We now must notice what the Word of God tells us here concerning the reason why the Gospel is such a power of God unto salvation. We must not try to give the answer to this question from our own human reasoning, but we must listen to the Word of God itself. We must also, in this Matter, be swift to hear, slow to speak and slow to wrath, and not be wise in our own conceits.

What is this reason?

It is simply that in this Gospel of Christ a *righteousness of God is revealed out of faith unto faith, as it is written, the just shall live by faith!*

Let us try to understand this *reason* why the Gospel is such a power unto salvation for every one believing.

This Gospel is a power of God unto salvation, because it *reveals a righteousness of God*. And it is such a power unto salvation for every one that believeth because the *manner of the revelation* of this righteousness in the Gospel is *out of faith unto faith!*

Two very salient points in the text.

The first of these two points we will discuss here. The Gospel is power of God unto salvation — since it reveals a *righteousness of God*.

What does this imply?

First of all, let us notice that “righteousness” here does not simply refer to the punitive justice of God. It is not that virtue, perfection of God whereby He rewards the good and punishes the evil doers. That is God’s punitive justice. Now the Apostle does not refer to this in the text. He is speaking of a righteousness that is “Gospel,” glad-tidings of good things for poor sinners. This the punitive justice of God is not. It is simply a reason for terror for the sinner apart from the glad-tidings here spoken of. It is this justice of God that causes the wicked to cry mountains cover us because the eye of Him that sitteth on the Throne, and the wrath of the Lamb. That is a righteousness that causes every mouth to be stopped and the whole world to be guilty before God. It is the righteousness of the law. And before this law no flesh is justified. Hence, the righteousness here spoken of is not the punitive justice of God.

On the contrary, the righteousness here spoken of, is the righteousness of God, which He has prepared for us in Christ, when He made Christ for us to be wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and complete redemption. I Cor. 1:30, 31. And in this righteousness no one can boast in the flesh and in works of law that we perform, but all our glorying is in

the Lord our righteousness. Wherefore Paul says in Romans 3:21, but now, without law, a righteousness of God has been manifested, having been witnessed of by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is through the faith of Christ Jesus. It is a righteousness which is ours simply because God hath set forth His Son a propitiation for our sins.

A righteousness of God it is. The original does not say: *the* righteousness of God is revealed in the same. He does not here wish to emphasize the distinction of this righteousness from any other righteousness, but he describes the nature of this righteousness. A righteousness of God it is. This means that God has thought it out in His counsel, where no one taught Him knowledge. (Isaiah 40:33; Romans 11:34-36.) It is wholly out of God’s Counsel, and is prepared by God Himself. For God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing unto us our sins and has given the Gospel, the Ministry of reconciliation. Such is this righteousness of God, spoken of here in Romans 1:17.

Now we should notice that Paul does not simply state here in the text that this righteousness of God is *preached* to believers. He is not speaking of the preaching, but he is telling us why he is not *ashamed of the Gospel* as a preacher! Hence, he tells us the inner nature of the Gospel and why it is a power of God unto salvation. The power of the Gospel and the preaching of the Gospel are by no means indetical in nature according to Scripture and the Confessions. And we may not for the correct understanding of the sense of the Holy Spirit confuse these two! And, therefore, we must not read the text as if Paul tells us what is *preached to believers!* For our text says something quite different!

Nor does the text say: a righteousness of God is revealed in the Gospel *to believers*. The text speaks of such a revelation of the righteousness of God in the Gospel which demonstrates the power of God unto salvation in the Gospel. Verse 17 gives the reason (*gar*) for verse 16. And, therefore, we must not read here: the righteousness of God is *revealed* in the Gospel *to believers*. For we should notice that this righteousness was indeed *manifested*, openly set forth on the Cross. But Paul here does not simply speak of manifestation (*Phanerow*) but of revelation (*apokaluptein*), which includes inner illumination. Compare Matthew 11:25, 26. The apostle Paul here tells us the *mode of the revelation* of the righteousness of God in the hearts of believers, of this righteousness spoken of in the Gospel.

It is important to notice, that Paul does not say: It is revealed in the Gospel, that righteousness is *out of faith unto faith*, but he says: in the Gospel a righteousness is *revealed out of faith unto faith*. “Revealed” must be taken with “out of faith” and not with “in the same” (Gospel). Thus we see why the Gospel is only a power of God in those believing, a power unto salvation. And thus, to be sure, we also see why the Gospel is indeed a power unto salvation in every one

that believeth. Not one case can ever be cited where there was a believer and where this power was absent.

According to the text there is *no revelation* of this righteousness where faith is absent. Where this faith is absent a covering is on the heart, there is blindness. Surely the righteousness is clearly *attested* to in the preaching to all who hear the Gospel *proclaimed*, but there is no revelation of this righteousness, that spells forgiveness, except in believers. Therefore this Gospel is power of God unto salvation *for every one believing*. And, therefore, the *proclamation* of the Gospel is indeed promiscuous, together with the command to believe and repent, but the *revelation* of this righteousness of God in its quickening power, its peace, joy and blessedness is only for believers.

Why is it only for believers?

This is due to the revealed reality that this revelation is *out of faith unto faith!* That is the *manner*, the mode in which the just *live*.

About this too we must make a few expository remarks.

When the text says "live" it does not merely mean existence. It means the three-score and ten years that the believers must live in this present world before God; it is the "living" the eternal life in the midst of this present world which is nothing but a continual death. It means to be saved from the wrath of God which is *revealed*, so as to be experienced by all the ungodly, who keep the truth of God down in unrighteousness. In the midst of those who are without excuse the just are the "living ones." We live! We have eternal life, joy and peace in our hearts.

How do we thus live, have joy and peace in our hearts? We have this by the power of the Gospel, as we lay hold by faith on this glad-tidings of God things. For thus Paul teaches us the righteousness of God is revealed, it is revealed, *out of faith unto faith*. (ek pisteos eis pistin) Only out of that faith, which is a certain knowledge and joyful confidence, that Christ died for us, do we live. Apart from this faith the preaching affords us nothing. Unto Salvation! Such is the reality evidenced by unbelieving Israel, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness. Hebrews 3:12-19. For notice that it is revealed *out of faith*. Only where such faith is present in the heart is the Gospel that is proclaimed a power of God *into salvation*. Only where is this hearty confidence and certain knowledge is there a power of God present to bring from confidence to new and renewed confidence, and an ever richer blessedness in the God of our salvation. For this righteousness of God is revealed out of faith, but then also *into faith*. This power of the Gospel also affords growth in faith. And it always works on the principle that he who hath shall receive more and have abundance, and that they who have not from them shall be taken even what they think to have. For the revelation of the righteousness is out of faith unto faith.

Just in passing we would here remark that in our humble opinion it is not necessary to say that only the believers *hear the Word of God*, to be specific in our terminology. And it may be confusing also to do so. One thus easily lays himself

open to the charge of not speaking the language of the Confessions which speak of the Bible as the Word of God. All hear the Bible when the Gospel is proclaimed. But all do not *perceive* spiritually what they "hear" *naturally!* Romans 10:18-21. Since the term "hear" can refer to both the natural hearing as well as the spiritual hearing of faith, it is, in our opinion, better to speak, as does the text, of the difference between the preaching of the Gospel and the revelation of the righteousness of God out of faith unto faith. In the unbeliever the "sound" indeed was heard, but he does not hear Jesus say to Him: peace be unto you, because I am thy righteousness! The righteousness of the Cross is hid from him as a wise and prudent one and it is revealed unto babes. These latter hear Jesus say with a spiritual hearing: Come unto Me all ye that are laboring, being heavy laden, and I will give you rest — out of faith unto faith!

Thus it was ever. And it shall be as it is written in Habakkuk 2:4: "the just shall live by faith." This is a remarkable passage. It was spoken by the prophet Habakkuk in the time when the Chaldean world-power, under Nebuchadnezzar, would carry Judah away to captivity. The reason for their being carried away was that the curses of the law, as spoken by Moses, had come upon them. No flesh was justified by the works of the law. As far as Israel was concerned — the earthly and typical glory had departed. Never would it again return. And, as far as the flesh could see, there was no hope for Israel. But now there must come a Word of God, a Word of the Promise. Habakkuk must write the vision of God, and make it plain upon tablets, that he that runneth may read it. The Promise hastens to its fulfilment, right through the captivity. And what is the Word in this dark hour? Is it a word simply for exceptional times? It, indeed, fits the exceptional time of Habakkuk, but it fits all times. The word is the *manner* of the life of the just is *out of faith!*

Thus is the rule for the Jew first.

It is the rule also for the Gentile as he is a fellow-heir with the Jew of the righteousness which is by faith.

Ashamed of such a Gospel? Was Habakkuk? Was Paul? Shall we be Anno 1954? Nay, we shall be ready to preach this even before the kings of the earth! G.L.

#### IN MEMORIAM

We express our heartfelt sympathy with Jake King and with Joe King, a fellow-office bearer, in the death of their mother, MAGDALENA KING nee' Heitema on July 23, 1954 at the ripe age of 81 years, and their father,

#### FREDERICK KING

on August 25, 1954 at the age of 93 years.

Believing that He, who hath begun a good work in His believing saints, will finish it even until the day of Jesus Christ, and that our living Redeemer shall bring again from the dead those, who have fallen asleep in Him, we commit the sorrowing King family to His keeping.

Consistory of the Creston Protestant Reformed Church  
G. Lubbers, President  
P. Vanden Engel, Clerk

## IN HIS FEAR

### Walking in Error

(11)

Of late a whispering campaign is being conducted in these parts (and no doubt, also elsewhere) concerning the undersigned's presentation of the court case.

These whispered accusations, which claim that the undersigned distorted the facts and that there is another side which denies his writings, are wrong on two counts.

The whispering campaign is wrong on the first count because we presented the court case exactly as it actually occurred. We put nothing in the mouth of anyone. We gave the court records themselves. Let those who whisper that the undersigned distorted facts produce *other* court records if they can which they dare to publish as court records. Let them produce the evidence or keep silent.

They are wrong on the second count in that they never confronted the undersigned with these accusations but whispered them to others whom they wanted to deceive into believing they were not true. Let them come to the undersigned and then with evidence and not merely with words. Let them speak up and not whisper words not intended for his ears because they know that he has the facts to put their whispers to nought. They know that we have either the official records or witnesses to everything that we wrote about the court case.

And yet there is a ray of hope which they unwittingly and unintentionally emit. For by trying to cast the whole thing in a different light, they admit that what actually took place, as recorded in these columns, is to their shame, that they and theirs should never have done such things and that what was done is indeed wrong. If they will now only confess this willingly and intentionally, then there is indeed hope yet even at this late hour.

The conviction grows upon us that it is needful to get the court records of the entire trial from the first word to the last. Then many amazing and, to some, unbelieving things will be revealed. The cost is one main barrier to obtaining them. But if enough individuals can be found who are willing to help finance it and will write either the undersigned or the Rev. James Mc Collam that they are willing to do this, we, together with the Rev. Gerald Vanden Berg will investigate the possibility of making such a complete record available to those who have "signed up" for it. If the case is appealed to the Supreme Court of the State of Michigan, the cost will be far less, and we would wait till that is determined before trying to secure the complete record. However, we would have to know before that time how many desire a copy. We urge also those who left us to get a copy and study it. These things were not done in a corner. They were done in a public hearing in court.

There are many things in that record that could with profit be studied. There are things which on the surface are so glaringly untrue. There are accusations hurled which came as a boomerang to plague those who uttered them.

One accusation, however, which was sworn to in the cross bill and repeated on the stand by a witness did not get its proper answer because of the evasive answering to which the witnesses resorted. Or shall we be charitable and say that it was due to the fact that frequently they had a lapse of memory so that on certain fine points they could say that they did not remember? One amazing thing the complete court record will show is that witnesses appeared to state literally and swear to it that they spoke the exact words which the Rev. Hoeksema spoke thirty years ago when the articles of incorporation of First Church were drawn up, but they could not remember what happened just last year and would not commit themselves.

But the accusation we have reference to which ought to be answered is the one made during the testimony of Rev. De Jonge. He repeated the accusation of the cross bill that the Rev. Hoeksema came out to Hull to wreck his church. After preaching for two Sundays in Hull the undersigned can understand, as far as his flesh is concerned, this complaint of Rev. De Jonge. He was amazed to see how many left him and refused to walk with him in his way of error. But his accusation hurled at the Rev. Hoeksema is unjust and false. And he knows it too.

When, under cross examination it was pointed out to him that Rev. De Wolf also made a trip out to Sioux County in Iowa to plead his cause, Rev. De Jonge stated that if the Rev. Hoeksema had not first come, Rev. De Wolf would not have come either. He left the impression that the Rev. Hoeksema came to do his "evil work" and that it was necessary for Rev. De Wolf to come and to counteract it.

Now that all sounds so awful!

And we are not even going to stress the point that the Rev. Hoeksema made to Mr. Linsey when he brought up this matter, namely, that the split in Hull had already taken place before he came and that he came *ONLY* because he was invited by the faithful group to come to Hull. That evidence is in the records and puts the lie to this whole accusation that he went to wreck the churches in Iowa and Minnesota.

But there is another element that ought to be known and receive its proper emphasis.

The Rev. Hoeksema was not the first one to visit Iowa in regard to the two statements of Rev. De Wolf and in regard to his suspension.

Of all men it was Rev. Kok who saw the need of attending that September session of what was still up to that time Classis West.

Rev. Kok, a man equally involved in the Liberated Conditional Theology with Rev. De Wolf, a man against whom protests were lodged because he, too, was guilty of introducing into our churches heretical statements and whose case

was pending with the same Classis, he saw fit and the need to go to Classis West last September.

And no doubt he was given advisory vote!

You see, we called these men engineers of the schism of '53 and not in malice and sarcasm but because we are firmly convinced upon factual evidence that these men were working together for years as a unit in that which we call the "Hate Hoeksema" campaign. Remember but one instance related on the pages of a former Standard Bearer how the Rev. Hoeksema was DENIED advisory vote at a session of Classis West and the president declared that they did not need him there to give advice.

In September Rev. Kok, also from Classis East, did not get such a reception you may be sure, even though his teachings were being questioned and examined by Classis East and a committee had been appointed to give the Classis advice both in regard to his teachings and refusal to abide by the decision of the Synod which had adopted the Declaration of Principles.

Whether he used his advisory vote or not, we are not in a position to state. But you may be sure that he spoke to the delegates outside of the sessions of Classis and about the statements of Rev. De Wolf and his suspension. The picture was surely colored by his speech. Anyone who knows Rev. Kok is well aware that he is not a man of few words. And would a man travel all alone some five hundred miles to this Classical session just to see the rolling hills of Iowa and the faces of the delegates that came from far and wide?

Rev. Kok felt the need of being at that Classis.

Was he perhaps invited or urged to come?

At any rate, Rev. De Jonge, he was there long before the Rev. Hoeksema ever thought of taking such a trip. He spread propaganda for the cause of Rev. De Wolf and for the Liberated. And though Rev. De Wolf was not there personally before the Rev. Hoeksema came, yet, Rev. De Jonge, you know that he was represented by Rev. Kok. And your testimony that Rev. De Wolf would never have come if the Rev. Hoeksema had not first come is camouflage and distortion of the truth.

And Rev. Kok is your authority on Church Polity. Is he not? It looked that way in court.

Was it upon his advice that you took your decision?

Several witnesses for Rev. De Wolf stated that since the suspension of Rev. De Wolf involved churches in Classis West, they had to decide for themselves whether they would recognize the suspension and allow him on their pulpits or not.

Will anyone, please, quote *one* authority who maintains that?

The church that suspends is in duty bound to notify all the churches in the denomination so that they do not invite him to their pulpit. This First Church did, but significantly enough, it did not send notice to the Classis, for Classis can take no action in the matter being treated in a sister Classis.

But let us have one authority who maintains that when a consistory receives notification of suspension that it must take a stand as to whether it will recognize it or not.

Instead of rushing such a tremendously important thing through in one day they should have adjourned till they had found at least one authority whose learned opinion is that this was the right way to go. But they did not. According to the school of engineering which they had attended, they could do such a thing and build a bridge over article 84 that "No church shall in any way lord it over other Churches, no Minister over other Ministers, no Elder or Deacon over other Elders and Deacons."

Who taught you that engineering feat?

You produced no authority for its legality.

Or did Rev. Kok, your authority in Church Polity, take that trip to Iowa in September of '53 in order so to advise you?

Is he the authority for such a schismatic act?

And we dare to predict that all these engineering feats of yours are going to be your downfall in the future. You cannot build a bridge like that which will stand the test of the stress and storms of this life nor surely of God's Word. Soon you may find yourselves in a position where all these illegal decisions and actions of yours will backfire and you will be helpless because you have thrown away the truth in order to get your way in this schism.

Let us, therefore, in the mercy of Christ plead with you to reconsider all that you have done. Do not hide it. Expose it to the light of God's Word and the Church Order. You cannot hide it from Him anyway.

But doctrine and walk of life go hand in hand.

You will have to cast your doctrinal errors away first.

For it *is* a doctrinal issue. We can prove that. YOU have proven it.

We promised, last time, to give you the details of what we consider to be the biggest blunder of the whole court case. We do so now as briefly as possible.

It must be borne in mind that our churches subscribe to the Presbyterian form of church government according to which we believe in the autonomy of the local church and in a federation of these autonomous churches that meet in Classis and Synod to decide things which are for the well-being of these churches in common.

On the afternoon of June 3 Rev. Kok was on the stand and Mr. Tubbs questioned him to show that his church political view was Congregational rather than Presbyterian. For the Congregational churches also believe in the autonomy of the local church but have no Classis and Synod. They simply meet in a conference where no decisions are made, the problems are simply discussed without a decision being made for the churches. At one time Rev. Kok even admitted to Mr. Tubbs that afternoon that though his view was Presbyterian, it was closer to Congregational. (It is all in the record). Is it any wonder that Mr. Linsey, Rev. De Wolf's

(Continued on page 500)

## Contending For The Faith

### The Church and the Sacraments

#### EARLY VIEWS ON THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

(Continued)

##### *The idea of sacrifice.*

The sacrifice constitutes an essential element today in the Roman Catholic doctrine of the mass. The Romish Church distinguishes between the Mass and the Eucharist. The Mass precedes the Eucharist and is, of course, necessary for it. There can be no Eucharist, no partaking of the body and blood of Christ and of thanksgiving to God without the Mass. In the Mass the bread and wine are actually changed into the body and blood of the Lord through the intercession of the priest, and the body and blood of the Lord are really offered by the Church. This may be a bloodless sacrifice, but it is just as real a sacrifice as that which occurred upon the cross of Calvary. This is the Roman Catholic conception of the sacrifice in connection with the Lord's Supper.

It is and should be a most interesting question whether this idea of the sacrifice in connection with the celebration of the Lord's Supper was also present in the days of the early Church. We know that the term, sacrifice, was used in connection with the celebration of the sacrament. We also know, however, that the term, as used by the early Church, had a meaning altogether different from the Roman Catholic view. And we can say this with great certainty because not a little concerning this matter can be found in the writings of the early Church Fathers.

Ascertaining the meaning of the term as used in those early days, let us first of all, turn our attention to the Apostolic Fathers, the Church Fathers immediately following upon the apostles. Concerning these sacrifices or oblations (sacrifices or offerings — H.V.), Ignatius, one of the Apostolic Fathers, writes as follows, and I quote: "For if I in this brief space of time, have enjoyed such fellowship with your bishops — I mean not a mere human, but of a spiritual nature — how much more do I reckon you happy who are so joined to him as the Church is to Jesus Christ, and as Jesus Christ is to the Father, that so all things may agree in unity! Let no man deceive himself: if any one be not within the altar, he is deprived of the bread of God. For if the prayer of one or two possesses such power, how much more that of the bishops and the whole Church! He, therefore, that does not assemble with the Church has even by this manifested his pride and condemned himself. For it is written "God resisteth the proud." Let us be careful, then, not to set ourselves in opposition to the bishop, in order that we may be subject to God." — end of quote. It is true that Ignatius in this quotation does not even use the word "sacri-

fice" or "oblation." Neither does he speak here of the Eucharist. However, when he writes, "that so all things may agree in unity," he is referring to the idea of "sacrifice" as it appears in the early Christian Church. The same thought is expressed by this early Church leader in the following quotation: "As therefore the Lord did nothing without the Father, being united to Him, neither by Himself nor by the apostles, so neither do ye anything without the bishop and presbyters. Neither endeavour that anything appear reasonable and proper to yourselves apart; but being come together into the same place, let there be one prayer, one supplication, one mind, one hope, in love and in joy undefiled. There is one Jesus Christ, than whom nothing is more excellent. Do ye all run together as unto one temple of God, as to one altar, as to one Jesus Christ, who came forth from one Father, and is with and has gone to one." — end of quote. In this quotation Ignatius has reference to the Lord's Supper undoubtedly when he speaks of "one altar." And, although he does not mention "sacrifice" or "oblation" in this quotation, he does mention the various Christian graces which should characterize the Church of the living God. We should therefore note that this early Church leader speaks of the various Christian graces (one prayer, one supplication, one mind, one hope, in love and joy undefiled) in connection with the altar or sacrament of the Lord's Supper. There are evidently the sacrifices which must be brought by the child and church of God.

Justine Martyr, the great Christian apologist in the days of the Church Fathers, commenting on the sacrifices of the Christians (and, by the way, when we speak of our thanksgiving, prayers, etc., as sacrifices we certainly use Scriptural language — does not the Word of God speak of the sacrifices of a broken heart? — H.V.) writes as follows: "Accordingly, God, anticipating all the sacrifices which we offer through this name, and which Jesus Christ enjoined us to offer, i.e., in the Eucharist of the bread and the cup, and which are presented by Christians in all places throughout the world, bears witness that they are well-pleasing to Him. But He utterly rejects those presented by you and by those priests of yours, saying, "And I will not accept your sacrifices at your hands; for from the rising sun to its setting my name is glorified among the Gentiles (He says); but ye profane it. (Mal. 1:10-12)" (we should bear in mind that Justin is addressing these words to a wicked Jewish philosopher, H.V.). Yet (continuing with this quotation of Justin — H.V.) even now, in your love of contention, you assert that God does not accept the sacrifices of those who dwelt then in Jerusalem, and were called Israelites; but says that He is pleased with the prayers of the individuals of that nation then dispersed, and calls their prayers sacrifices. How, that prayers and giving of thanks, when offered by worthy men, are the only perfect and well-pleasing sacrifices to God, I also admit. For such alone Christians have undertaken to offer, and in the remembrance effected by their solid and liquid food, whereby the suffering of the Son of God which He endured is brought

to mind, whose name the highpriests of your nation and your teachers have caused to be profaned and blasphemed over all the earth" — end of quote. In this quotation the famous Christian apologist speaks of the sacrifices of the Christians, and he, speaking of them in connection with the Lord's Supper identifies them with the prayers of the people of God. This we understand is surely a far cry from the view of "sacrifice" as entertained by the Roman Catholic Church today in connection with the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. That Church explains the "sacrifice" as referring to the daily dying of the Lord Jesus Christ as real as His death upon the cross of Calvary.

Irenaeus another of the early Church Fathers also has something to say about these sacrifices and it is also evident from his writings that what he writes concerning these sacrifices has nothing in common with the conception as entertained by the Roman Catholic Church. We quote him as follows: "The oblations of the Church, therefore, which the Lord gave instructions to be offered throughout all the world, is accounted with God a pure sacrifice, and is acceptable to Him; not that He stands in need of a sacrifice from us, but that he who offers is himself glorified in what he does offer, if his gift be accepted. For by the gift both honour and affection are shown forth towards the King; and the Lord, wishing us to offer it in all simplicity and innocence, did express Himself thus: "therefore, when thou offerest thy gift upon the altar, and shalt remember that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then return and offer thy gift." We are bound, therefore to offer to God the first-fruits of His creation as Moses also says "Thou shalt not appear in the presence of the Lord thy God empty;" so that man being accounted as grateful by those things in which he has shown his gratitude may receive that honour which flows from Him." — end of quote. We may notice that Irenaeus in this quotation speaking of the oblation of the Church does not refer to a sacrifice by Christ of Himself but to an oblation or sacrifice which is brought by the Church and is acceptable to God. We again call the attention of our readers to the fact that this had nothing in common with the view of the Roman Catholic Church which interprets the "sacrifice" of the Lord's Supper as referring to the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In a quotation which follows immediately upon the foregoing Irenaeus comments that the class of oblations in general has not been set aside and we again quote from this Church Father: "And the class of oblations in general has not been set aside; for there were both oblations there (among the Jews) and there are oblations here (among the Christians). Sacrifices there were among the people; sacrifices there are, too, in the Church: but the species alone has been changed, inasmuch as the offering is now made, not by slaves, but by freemen. For the Lord is (ever) one and the same; but the character of a servile oblation is peculiar (to itself), as is also

that of freemen, in order that, by the very oblations, the indication of liberty may be set forth. For with Him there is nothing purposeless, nor without signification, nor without design. And for this reason they (the Jews) had indeed the tithes of their goods consecrated to Him, but those who have received liberty set aside all their possessions for the Lord's purposes, bestowing joyfully and freely not the less valuable portions of their property, since they have the hope of better things (hereafter); as that poor widow acted who cast all her living into the treasury of God." — end of quote. Also in this quotation speaking of the sacrifices which continued to be in effect among the Christians, there is surely nothing which resembles the Roman Catholic doctrine of the sacrifice of Christ at the Mass and which is so repugnant to the heart and soul of the Reformed child of God.

Or, how utterly in conflict with the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Mass, and, of course, with the absolute necessity of the daily sacrifice of the Christ, is the following from the same Church Father, and we again quote: "Sacrifices, therefore, do not sanctify a man, for God stands in no need of a sacrifice; but it is the conscience of the offerer that sanctifies the sacrifice when it is pure, and thus moves God to accept (the offering) as from a friend." But the sinner, declares Irenaeus, who kills a calf (in sacrifice) to Me, is as if he slew a dog." The Church Father, in these last words, quotes Isaiah 66:3: "He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations." In these words the Church Father, when speaking of the sacrifice, refers to the sacrifice as brought by the child of God and which is pleasing to the Lord only when brought to Him as with a pure conscience. The Roman Catholic Church can derive no comfort from this quotation from Irenaeus.

H.V.

### A PROTEST AND ITS REPLY

(Continued from page 485)

truth that the Promise of God is unconditional and for the elect only.

In this respect it is, indeed, "a brief exposition of the confessions regarding certain points of doctrine as maintained by the Protestant Reformed Churches." In this regard it is a "brief exposition of the Confessions regarding certain points of doctrine."

And with regard to those certain points of doctrine, it is not only true, but it is "THE TRUTH." This the former consistory of Kalamazoo now denies.

And in regard to this fundamental truth, the Declaration of Principles has indeed "bearing on the case in question."

But about this next time, D.V.

H.H.



## The Voice of Our Fathers

### The Canons of Dordrecht

#### PART TWO

#### EXPOSITION OF THE CANONS

#### FIRST HEAD OF DOCTRINE OF DIVINE PREDESTINATION

Article 12. The elect in due time, though in various degrees and in different measures, attain the assurance of this their eternal and unchangeable election, not by inquisitively prying into the secret and deep things of God, but by observing in themselves with a spiritual joy and holy pleasure, the infallible fruits of election pointed out in the Word of God — such as a true faith in Christ, filial fear, a godly sorrow for sin, a hungering and thirsting after righteousness, etc.

The above translation is correct, and differs from the Dutch version only in that the latter adds a reference to Scripture, II Corinthians 13:5, something which is not found in the original Latin quoted by Schaff.

This article deals with a matter of doctrine, to be sure, but with a matter of doctrine which is of extreme practical importance: for what could be more vitally practical than the subject of the assurance of our eternal and unchangeable election? Essentially, of course, doctrine is always practical. It is a matter of the truth, — the truth concerning God, concerning ourselves, concerning our salvation, concerning all things in relation thereto, — the truth which we believe, which is the object of faith. But doctrine as it concerns so great and unspeakable a blessing as the assurance of our election is especially practical. And when you consider that that election is eternal and unchangeable, the matter becomes still more vital. To know and to be assured that God has eternally and unchangeably chosen me to be His very own child, loved me, set His divine affection upon me, — what could be more wonderful, but also more practical than that? That is everything. That is all that ever could be of any account in life or in death, for time and eternity. Being assured of that election, I need no other assurance whatever.

In this twelfth article the fathers make a doctrinal statement of this very practical truth. And we must also not overlook the apologetic element in this statement. It is again because there were those who denied the truth that the elect can and do become assured of their eternal and unchangeable election, who taught instead that election could be interrupted and changed, recalled and annulled, and that the saints to the very moment of their death could attain no firm assurance because their election was conditioned by their perseverance, that the fathers found it necessary to state in concise form and language that this assurance of election is not only possible but actual for the saints, and to state how

and along what way it is obtained. Let us remember, therefore, that not only from the point of view of the objective maintenance of the true doctrine, but also from the point of view of our own spiritual life and spiritual health, the fathers did us a favor when they laid down this proposition of Article 12.

The first element of truth maintained in this article is that this assurance of our eternal and unchangeable election is both possible and actual for the elect: "The elect . . . attain the assurance of this their eternal and unchangeable election." That the *elect* attain this assurance, and they only, is, of course, self-evident. Assurance must be based on and rooted in reality, in objective fact. Any other assurance is false, is self-deception, is a lie. If a man is not elect, if God has not eternally and unchangeably chosen him in Christ Jesus, then he cannot possibly have the assurance of being elect. For God does not lie. He does not assure a man of something which is not true. One may, of course, be a hypocrite. And as such he may leave the impression in the church and with men that he has this assurance. But in his heart and before God also the hypocrite knows better. And he certainly will not die with the assurance of being elect, and open his eyes presently in the hell of the reprobate. Only the elect attain the assurance of their eternal and unchangeable election.

But it is important to note that the elect *do* attain assurance. The *Canons* not only proceed from the positive thought that this assurance of our election is *possible*, leaving room for the idea that some, or perhaps many, of the elect never attain to this possible assurance. But they positively maintain that the elect (infants are, of course, excluded from assurance from the very nature of the case), — but the elect *do* obtain the assurance of their election. And there is no exception to this rule, we may be sure. Furthermore, it is *normal*, not exceptional and abnormal, to have this assurance. It is not correct to imagine that this blessed assurance of election is for an elite group of saints, and that the vast majority would really be impious if they claimed the same assurance. It is not correct to teach that it is normal for the Christian to doubt his election, and to foster such doubt. It is not correct to say: "It is an unspeakable privilege that we are elect; but oh, if we may only *know* that too," as if the latter belonged to the almost unattainable. Reformed, confessionally Reformed, it is to say: "The elect . . . obtain the assurance of this their eternal and unchangeable election."

And this is thoroughly Scriptural. The fathers do not here adduce Scripture references. Presently, in the Rejection of Errors they will quote Scripture on this subject. But how numerous in Holy Writ are the instances of the saints breaking forth into expressions of thanksgiving and praise exactly in the consciousness and assurance of their election. And how often they are addressed as "elect." To mention only one passage at this time, think of that beautiful expression of joy and thanksgiving in Ephesians 1:3, ff.: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in

Christ: *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world*, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children* by Jesus Christ to himself, *according to the good pleasure of his will*, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." Such is always the tone of Holy Writ. And how utterly foolish and unreasonable is any contrary notion. How foolish and useless would be that unspeakable blessing of eternal and unchangeable election, how wasted it would be, if the Lord God chose people and would never cause them to know that they were His chosen and precious ones. Nay, but His purpose is exactly that they, the elect, shall be to the praise of the glory of His grace. And that grace is revealed in its highest perfection as grace in that He sovereignly chose us from before the foundation of the world according to an unchangeable decree. How utterly inconceivable that God would ever hide that most wonderful manifestation of electing grace from His people! And if we remember that our eternal and unchangeable election in Christ Jesus is the most comforting element in the Christian's comfort, how cruel it is to teach that the God of His people denies them that comfort!

Concerning this assurance of election the *Canons* further instruct us: 1) That it is obtained *in God's own time*. This is the idea of the expression "in due time." Due time is, of course, always God's time, not our time. It is time determined by Him, according to His good pleasure. It is literally in the Latin original of this article "His own time." Hence the idea is that also the assurance of our election takes place according to God's good pleasure. The one,—as for example, the thief on the cross,—may not obtain it till his dying moments. That is God's time for him. The other may attain it at a very young age, and may early be assured of the fact, and clearly confess it, that he is an elect child of God. And that is God's good pleasure. But the elect attain this assurance *in due time*. 2) That this assurance may indeed vary in degree and measure. This is true, first of all, when we compare Christian and Christian. All do not have the same measure of assurance. There are some who are very firm and clear in that assurance, who seldom know a moment of doubt, and who very genuinely and sincerely will affirm that they are assured of their election. But there are also those (not who *never* attain it) who seldom have the courage to say without hesitation that they are of God's chosen ones, who frequently despair, and who are plagued with doubts and fears and questionings. And there are various degrees in between. But brightly or dimly, the elect obtain this assurance. And assurance is normal, not abnormal. Doubt is sin. And the doubting and fearful and weak Christian is to be pitied and helped and borne along by the saints. But his doubt may not be fostered. However, we may also discover this variation in degree and measure of assurance in the same Christian. Assurance may waver from time to time. Assurance may also be fostered through the proper means, and

may be nurtured, and grow. And we may also say, especially with regard to the children of believers who are elect, that it is normal for this assurance to differ in degree as the child grows up,—to differ in the sense that it increases as he grows up and as he becomes founded in the truth of the gospel. But apart from this, what Christian does not know from experience those times when his assurance is dim and those times when he is on the mountain-tops of faith? Yea, at times,—dark times they are for the child of God, usually times of gross sin and walking in sin,—at times he may lose this consciousness, even though that election itself remains unchangeable. Indeed, this assurance is attained in various degrees and measures.

All the above is not to be conceived of in separation from the further instruction of this article concerning the manner of this assurance. It is important that we remember this. For in the first place, if we understand this connection, we will be on our guard against any rash and hasty assertions of confidence of our election. It is indeed true that election and the assurance of election are wonderful blessings of salvation. But it is also true that the relation between the two is a very delicate relation, and that the relation between assurance and the Christian virtues mentioned in this article is equally delicate and intimate. The way of assurance is a clearly defined and exclusive way. Secondly, an understanding of the connection between our personal assurance of election and the manner of attaining this assurance will serve undoubtedly to foster a greater assurance and to answer for the child of God the question as to why that assurance may often be weak and wavering. And therefore again, both doctrinally and practically we do well to give heed to the instruction of the fathers on this subject.

(to be continued)

H.C.H.



#### IN MEMORIAM

The Consistory of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan herewith extends its sincere sympathy to one of our fellow labourers in God's Kingdom, Deacon A. Langerak in the death of his mother,

MRS. ANTONIA LANGERAK

May He Who orders our steps and guides us by His counsel comfort the bereaved with the words of eternal life which, as our Heavenly Father, come from Him alone.

Rev. John A. Heys, President  
John Lanning, Clerk

#### IN MEMORIAM

The Men's Society of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, hereby wishes to express its heartfelt sympathy with one of its members, Mr. A. Langerak, in the death of his mother,

MRS. ANTONIA LANGERAK

May the bereaved experience the comfort of our covenant God in His promise of eternal life.

Rev. John A. Heys, President  
J. Korhorn, Secretary

## DECENCY and ORDER

### Indiscriminate Preaching

#### Article 15 (con't.)

"No one shall be permitted, neglecting the ministry of his church or being without a fixed charge, to preach indiscriminately without the consent and authority of Synod or Classis. Likewise, no one shall be permitted to preach or administer the sacraments in another church without the consent of the consistory of that church." — Art. 15.

The important matter brought into consideration here is that of the right to preach the Word and administer the sacraments. This right, according to the Reformed position, does not inhere in any individual. It makes no difference how talented, how gifted, how popular or important an individual may be. These things do not permit him to preach the Word. The right to do so is given unto the church by Christ and only when the church properly commissions men to perform the work of the ministry are they vested with authority to do so.

Of this authority Article 15 speaks. Although the article itself was originally formulated with a view to certain wrong practices by wandering preachers, and, therefore, was designed to combat an evil that was more prevalent in the sixteenth century than it is now, yet, the principles of truth set forth here are of most fundamental importance and also very applicable to present day circumstances.

The article itself may be divided into two parts. In the first part the principle is maintained that no one may go about preaching here and there on his own. No one has the right to do so. Christ does not commission individuals apart from His church to preach. He commissions and authorizes **the church, and the church sends men forth.** (Acts 13:2, Romans 10) There is here a reference to church extension or missionary work which properly belongs to the churches and, consequently, can be performed only upon their authority. The fact that there is general ignorance of this principle of truth today is evident from many alleged missionary practices. We should remember that those who proclaim a false gospel quite expectantly do not care to have their methods ruled by Scriptural principles but rather always follow the practices of expediency.

The second part of the article, however, is concerned with the matter of preaching the word within the established church and in connection therewith the sound rule or principle is expressed that this shall be controlled and regulated exclusively by the consistory. The local consistory exercises sole jurisdiction over its own pulpit and over the administration of the sacraments in its communion. The gist of the whole matter comes down to this. Without the authorization of the church, calling men to perform the work of the ministry, official proclamation of the Word and administration of the holy sacraments is impossible.

This principle follows from the Reformed conception of the church institute which, needless to add, is also the Scriptural conception. The Reformers have always militated against the Romish conception of the church. Also, they have stood adverse to the loose, modernistic views that are so prevalent today and which are making mighty inroads into allegedly Reformed circles. The church, the Reformers insist, is the gathering of believers and their children by the Son of God into a living communion which reflects the body of Christ. It is not just a gathering of individuals or a mass of people, the more the merrier. In this spiritual communion the holy offices are instituted and through these Christ Himself dispenses the gifts of His Spirit and grace unto His people. It is through the offices that Christ speaks unto His Church the effacious word of life. Through them He imparts Himself and all His fulness in the Holy Sacraments. And so the word and sacraments, the means of grace, are not and cannot be administered except through the offices and these are not fixed to any person or persons but are inseparably attached to the institute of the church.

When one, therefore, is not bound to the church, he has no right to perform the labor that belongs unto the church. Of these two kinds are mentioned in the first part of article fifteen. There are those who "neglect the ministry of the church." It was not uncommon in former years that a man, growing tired of the ministry in a certain church, would simply forsake the congregation to which he was joined as minister and seek another field on his own. This neglect was very sinful although many tried to justify it by comparing their actions to those of the apostles and evangelists in early times. The Synod of Dordt in 1578, however, refuted their claim by pointing to the fact that the office of the apostles had long ceased. Beside, were not the apostles sent out directly by the church? (Acts 13:1-3) Those that neglected their ministry lost, by that neglect, their office and therein lost the right to preach. To do so indiscriminately and without authority was to conduct themselves contrary to the ordinances of Christ. Such conduct our church order does not countenance.

There were also those "without a fixed charge" who went about at random and preached where they willed. Although this, too, was wrong it should be noted that there is a difference between these and the ones who neglected their office. Those without fixed charges were not necessarily guilty of neglect. They may have lost their charge through no fault of theirs whatsoever. Perhaps persecution disintegrated the flock leaving them without a charge. Perhaps economic conditions forced the membership into other localities. Yet, being without a church, they were also without an office and without an office they had no authority to minister the word.

The article further expresses that those who were personally but not officially qualified to preach could engage in missionary labor or church extension work only with "the consent and authority of synod or classis." An interesting ques-

tion may be raised in this connection. In view of the last part of Article 15 which ascribes the authority to minister the word to the consistory, why is the synod and classis mentioned in the first part? There are, it seems to me, several reasons for this in light of which we can see that there is no conflict in this article as might otherwise appear to be the case. First of all, let us bear in mind that when one is admitted to the ministry of the word, this concerns not only one church but all the churches in the denomination. For this reason it is the Synod that declares candidates to the ministry. (See Arts. 8 and 9, D.K.O.) In the second place we should note that Article 15 refers to the performance of church extension or missionary work. This work, too, is generally speaking, the concern of more than one church. It involves all the churches and is, therefore, "regulated by the Synod." (Art. 51, D.K.O.) This, of course, does not exclude the right of an individual church to send a missionary out if it chooses to do so and has the means to carry out such a plan. Nor does it annul the fact that the Synod regulates the work of missions through a particular congregation and consistory. It only establishes this principle that no one may engage in mission work without the authorization of the church or churches in general. Although it was incorrect, it has happened in the past that Classes and Synods have called men directly and sent them to do mission work. It is better that Synod instruct one of the churches to call as the right to call is not in the Synod but in the congregation. Hence, preachers that have no fixed charge may be authorized by the church or churches in general to engage in church extension labor.

The last part of Article 15 speaks of the right to preach the Word or administer the sacraments in the various individual churches. The right to do so does not lie in the minister. He may not go and preach where and when he pleases. The consistory of each church has the sole jurisdiction over its own pulpit.

Some hold that this does not refer to preaching or administering the sacraments in certain church buildings but rather has reference to the practice of Reformed Churches in the Netherlands according to which certain geographical boundary lines were established for each church. One's membership was then not a matter of choice but was determined by where one lived. Those living within certain marked boundaries belonged to the church of that district. The article then means that no one might enter into that district to preach or conduct services without the consent of the consistory of the church residing in that district. Van Dellen and Keegstra write: „Eindelijk spreekt het artikel uit, dat geen Dienaar in eene andere Kerk mag optreden, zonder be-willing van den Kerkeraad van die Kerk. Niet slechts niet in het kerkgebouw van die Kerk, maar ook niet in haar kring, want zulk optreden leidt tot verwarring, en een indringen in eens anders dienst.”

With this matter we are not so much concerned as we have not adopted the policy of geographical boundaries and it is not likely that we will. We do, however, maintain the principle that the consistory of each church has jurisdiction over her own pulpit. This is a vital part of her autonomy.

Another question which occasionally arises is whether a minister may preach the word in a church of another denomination. I do not believe that our churches have ever expressed themselves on this but Dr. H. Bouwman writes on page 84 of his *Kerkrecht*:

„Hieruit volgt ook, dat een dienaar ook niet in een ambtelijken dienst mag optreden in een andere kerk b.v. eene Hervormde of Luthersche kerk, zonder overleg met of goedkeuring van den kerkeraad der Gereformeerde kerk. Men zou hiertegen kunnen aanvoeren, dat hiertegen geen overwegend bezwaar is, indien het woord, dat hij brengt, maar goed is. Doch indien de betrokken leeraar behoefte gevoelt om in eene andere kerk te spreken, dan zal het hem ook niet teveel moeten zijn hiervoor toestemming te vragen aan den Gereformeerden kerkeraad, en zijn optreden van dezen kerkeraad, die op dit terrein opzicht en tucht oefent, te laten afhangen. Stoort hij zich aan dezen kerkeraad niet, dan handelt hij willekeurig en onordelijk, en maakt hij zich schuldig aan scheurmakerij.”

The principles set forth in this article deal with the preaching of the Word and, sadly enough, are becoming more and more obsolete. The trend is toward individualism and liberty in the evil sense of the word. Rules stipulating good order are undesired. Especially is this evident with regard to the ministry. Pulpits are opened to all. Elders exercise no authority and rule. Guarding against such abuses of the sacred ministry we must adhere strictly to the principles of Dordrecht that good order and decency may be maintained in the church of Jesus Christ our Lord.

G.v.d.B.

#### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On Monday, September 20, 1954, our parents,

REV. RICHARD VELDMAN

and

ELLA VELDMAN—VANDER VENNEN

hope to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary.

We, their children, are sincerely thankful to God for having spared them and for the blessings He has given us as a family. Our prayer is, that He may continue to keep them for each other and us for years to come.

Eleanor Ruth  
James Richard  
Delores Mae  
Everett Allyn  
Daniel Lee  
Richard Dale

## CONTRIBUTIONS

### DeRoster Receives a Visitor

Last time, we noted that Ds. Van Ooster called on our farmer friend, Jake De Roster. About a week later, we find that he receives as a visitor an old acquaintance, John Vander Baum. Let's listen to their conversation.

"Good evening, Jake, you were expecting me?"

"I don't know, John, maybe yes, maybe no."

"What do you mean? I 'phoned your wife this afternoon and asked if you'd be home tonight. Didn't she tell you?"

"Vel, ja, Nellie said dat someone called up en dat it was your voice en dat you said it was John VanderBaum, but, dat don't proof nuthin."

"Come, come, Jake, we've known each other for over twenty years and you talk this way? What's come over you?"

"I tell you John. In de first place, I 'spose you heard dat dominee is by me geweest about an week ago? And I 'spose you think dat aldough you haffent come to call on me in an long time, you maybe have to set me straight in my church thinkin?"

"Yes, Jake, that's true. Dominee told me about what you said and the idea he had was that it might help if I talked with you once — sort of man to man rather than dominee to parishoner. But, that doesn't explain about this 'phoning business."

"Vel, John, I tell you. Dat iss an little yoke dat Nellie en me have. You see, ven dey hat dis court-business about de church, one day while Nellie was down town in de Sears Roebuck store, she thought, I'm close by de court house — guess I stop in for awhile en lissen. And you know, John, I wouldn't have believed it if anyone except my Nellie had tole me vat happint. Dey hat an dominee on de stand en dat lawyer guy says to him sometin like dis: 'Dit you hit en long-distance call from dominee so an so?' En de dominee answered dat, 'somebuddy who claim to be dominee so en so called to ask for sum business about de synod.' You see, John, maybe I can't figger dem tings so good but, as I see it, tekknicky de dominee's right. He didn't see de dominee but he did rekkonize de voice 'cuz later on I hear he even asked about de dominee's wife — her health en so on."

"Vat you tink of dat, John? En so mine Nellie en me have a laugh every time dat phone rings en ven I ask, 'Who call?', she say, 'I don't know. A guy who claim he is John Smith, our neighbor, asked if you wanted help mit your hog-butcherin, but I don't know if it was him or not — sounded like him and acted like he knew you, but, I didn't see him!'"

"You know, de first time she did dis, I got hoppin' mat at Nellie but den she couldn't keep en strait face no more an busted out laffin en tole me she learnt dat in court. I laffed too, but you know John, I got to tinkin it over en it made me kinda mad too yet."

"You know, we hat dat recording ting to bring to people

what couldn't git to church. We hat it here too already ven Nellie en I hat de flu so bat last vinter en even dat medicine from de Watkins man didn't help. En, vat's me en Nellie sposed to say? Did we hear an sermon by Ds. Van Ooster on dat thing? It sounded like him an later ven we got an bulletin I see it was de same text but, how do we know? Maybe somebuddy fake de whole bizness en even fooled de deacons who took it over?"

"En dis morning I lissen to de weather reports on de radio en de man said it was raining in Chicago. How do I know? It was dry here. Was dat just somebuddy tryin to fool us farmers es if we didn't haf enough trouble with pairity, incum texas en so on?"

"En John, do you spose it happen in dat dominee's house if de phone ring en somebuddy say, yust to use en name now, 'Dis is Mrs. Blauwenbeck, mine hussband is awful, awful sick, can you come right away?' Does he ven de juffvrouw ask say, 'Neffar mind, let's go on mit supper. Somebody who claimed to be Mrs. Blauwenbeck called en wants me to come right over. But, I don't know.'"

"But, excuse me for taking up all de time, John. Vat was it you wanted to see me about? Church, wasn't it?"

"No, not tonight, Jake. I just remembered that I should get home right away. The boy is quite sick and I 'phoned the doctor before I came and he said he'd be all right but, how do I know it was the doctor I talked to? Maybe it was just someone who "claimed" he was Dr. Healemquik. I'd better get home. I don't trust the business. Goodnight."

George Ten Elshof

## CHURCH NEWS

### NEWS FROM THE SECOND PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH OF GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.

Sunday, September 5, was certainly a day of joy and gladness for us.

For eleven months we have been without a shepherd because of the unfaithful desertion of him who was formerly with us but now having severed himself with 4 elders and 2 deacons from the communion of our church and churches by taking a stand with the schismatics in October 1953. So that, we were compelled to replace those men (elders and deacons) in October 1953. And now, the Lord has answered our prayer by sending unto us another shepherd (in the place of the Rev. Blankespoor) who heeded the call extended to him, and will again go in and out with us.

On the evening of September 2, the Rev. Marinus Schipper was installed as minister of the Second Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Rev. J. Heys had charge of the installation assisted by Rev. G. Lubbers. Rev. Heys preached from John 10:9, and Rev. Lubbers read the form of installation. The service was closed with Rev. M. Schipper pronouncing the benediction.

On September 3, a congregational welcome was given

in honor of Rev. M. Schipper and family in the Hope Protestant Reformed Church. A short program was arranged and after which refreshments were served by some of the "Marthas" of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church. New and renewed acquaintances were made and we indeed had a very enjoyable and edifying evening of Christian fellowship.

On Sunday, September 5, Rev. Schipper preached his inaugural sermon, from I Peter 2:4-5, and in the evening, Philippians 1:9, 10. The evening service was a preparatory sermon.

For many of us Rev. Schipper is no stranger having been our Pastor previously. On September 3 it was exactly 15 years ago he preached his first sermon in our midst as our minister. Much has come to pass in those years and especially in the last few years in which we were led through a purifying process.

We have had times wherein we were put to the test, but how wonderful, the Lord provided for our needs, first a suitable place to worship, secondly, regular preaching, and even catechetical instruction by the Rev. Heys. And now He has given us a Pastor who will faithfully bring us the Gospel. We trust He will make it well also in the future in spite of all the evil predictions.

We wish to express our sincere thanks and deep appreciation for all the faithful help we received in these past months of all our ministers and students who preached for us and served us with advise, especially Rev. Heys for his time and sound advise having been our moderator. Also, we thank the Consistory of Hope Protestant Reformed Church for the use of their church and basement for our monthly meetings. Also, the school board of Hope Protestant Reformed School for the use of the school on different occasions. Our prayer is that the Lord may send soon again one of His servants to South Holland, Illinois to fill the vacant place left there by Rev. Schipper. That we in all things in the future may put our complete confidence in Him who will never forsake us as He has promised.

Consistory of Second Protestant Reformed Church  
N. Klaver, Clerk.

#### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On September 25, 1954, our dear parents,

MR. AND MRS. JOHN TRIEZENBERG

hope to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary, D.V.

We are thankful to our covenant God who has graciously seen fit to give them to us and we pray that they may continue to guide and instruct us as they have in the past. May they be blessed in the way that lies ahead and experience that there is no peace apart from God.

Their Grateful Children:

Nellie  
Eleanor  
Lois Ann  
John, Jr.  
Harold  
Franklin  
Elaine Ruth  
Patricia Kay

913 Gull Street, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

#### WALKING IN ERROR

(Continued from page 492)

lawyer, was confused by Rev. Kok? Rev. Kok has only himself to blame for what happened when Rev. De Jonge was on the stand the next day.

Mr. Tubbs asked him the innocent question as to whether he, Rev. De Jonge, had been taught the Presbyterian form of church government when he attended our Seminary. Rev. De Jonge answered very correctly, "Yes Sir." Then Mr. Linsey interrupted with apparent disgust, even though Mr. Tubbs was doing the examining, and asked why these witnesses did not listen carefully to the questions being put to them. He asked Rev. De Jonge whether he knew what he was saying, for the Presbyterian form of church government "has the Synod at the top" and the local autonomous congregation on the bottom. He made the observation that Rev. De Jonge must have meant that he was taught the Congregational form of church government in our Seminary. Rev. De Jonge replied, "Maybe I do."

Then it was that Rev. Kok quickly arose and hurried across the whole court room to stop Mr. Linsey and whispered something in his ear.

You cannot blame Mr. Linsey who never studied Reformed Church Polity and was dependent upon Rev. Kok to be briefed upon it. Rev. Kok is the one who caused Mr. Linsey to tell Rev. De Jonge to say *exactly what Mr. Tubbs had tried to get Rev. Kok to admit*, namely, that his view is Congregational and not Presbyterian. They no longer subscribe to the Church Order of Dordt.

In that light you can explain all the schismatic action Rev. Kok and those with him perpetrated. For with the Congregational form of church government it is not schism. But it surely is when you have the Presbyterian form such as we still maintain and defend; and the engineers of the Schism of '53 only say that they subscribe to it. Theirs is Independentism with the emphasis upon the fact that even their own do not know anymore upon what they can *depend* in their own movement. As we wrote before, they change to meet each new emergency.

And that, in itself, ought to reveal that there is something wrong.

J.A.H.

#### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On Sunday, September 19, our dear parents

REV. AND MRS. C. HANKO

hope to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary.

We join them in this celebration in giving thanks to our covenant God Who in His mercy has led us together in the path of His truth.

May God richly bless them in the time in which He has ordained that we should remain together, and may His benediction rest upon them all the days of their life.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Hanko  
Frederick A.  
Elaine J.  
Alyce M.

Grand Rapids, Michigan.



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### MY HEART DOTH OVERFLOW

My hearth doth overflow,  
A goodly theme is mine;  
My eager tongue with joyful song  
Doth praise the King divine.  
Supremely fair Thou art,  
Thy lips with grace o'erflow;  
His richest blessings evermore  
Doth God on Thee bestow.

Psalm 45:1

### GOD SAVED HIS PEOPLE FROM DISTRESS

God saved His people from distress  
And led them through the wilderness;  
Then mountains trembled in their place  
The heavens were bowed before His face.  
With copious showers Thou didst assuage  
The thirsting of Thy heritage;  
Thy congregation dwelt secure;  
Thou God, art gracious to the poor.

The Lord sent forth His mighty word,  
And shouts of victory were heard;  
The women came, a mighty throng,  
To join the glad triumphant song.  
When God His chosen people led,  
The kings and armies turned and fled;  
The hosts of God victorious fought,  
And home their spoils and trophies brought.

God's people rested, free from care,  
In glorious peace and beauty fair;  
Their mighty King did overthrow  
The hostile kings like driven snow.  
All mountains unto God belong,  
But Zion's holy mountains strong  
Above them all the Lord loves well,  
And there He will forever dwell.

Great hosts to holy wars have trod,  
The armies of the living God;  
Among them He reveals His face,  
The God of justice and of grace.  
Thou hast ascended up on high  
And captive led captivity;  
They come with gifts who did rebel,  
That with them God the Lord might dwell.

Blest be the Lord! for us He cares  
And daily all our burden bears;  
Our God is mighty, strong to save;  
Jehovah frees us from the grave.  
God's unrelenting enemies  
No peace shall find in earth or seas;  
His people shall triumphant go,  
Victorious over every foe.

With glorious pomp our King and God  
Has entered into His abode  
With sacred minstrelsy and song,  
While maidens with their timbrels throng.  
Assemble ye before His face,  
All ye that spring from Israel's race;  
Ye chosen tribes, with one accord  
Come ye, and bless your God, the Lord.

Psalm 68