

# THE STANDARD

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## MEDITATION

### Passer-By

"And they that passed by reviled Him." Matt. 27:39a

Ages ago a certain saint suffered deeply from the indifference of his fellows. He was afflicted, steeped in a sorrow which had no equal. Naturally he longed for compassion, for loving mercy, sympathy. But they passed him by.

That hurts.

Listen to him: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of His fierce anger?"

That hurts. We can all speak of this hurt. Somehow, somewhere, to some degree we have tasted of this *indifference* of our fellows.

It is so unnatural. Lack of interest in the sorrow of our fellows smells of sulphur. Its origin is hell and the devil.

You see, dear reader, when we come with the age-old, Biblical doctrine and confess that man, all men, are haters of God and haters of their neighbour, made in the similitude of God, it is so extremely difficult to elicit agreement. Well, they will admit that man is indifferent to real Godliness, to real interest in God and man, but then the word *hate* is so strong! Are you not somewhat extreme in your views, brother? Everybody is surely no hater of God and man! Witness the thousands of churches and "some regard for virtue, good order in society, and for maintaining an orderly external deportment!" How about the thousands of hospitals and institutions of purely human and humane mercy? Eh? Is there no inclination to oneness with you and your extreme theology?

\* \* \*

Still, when all is said and done I am convinced that the passing by of man is the strongest expression of hate ever. It is indicative of utter contempt. Contempt can assume such

awful proportions that its subject is indifferent to the object. That is the bathos of hate.

And you and I know it. It is much easier to hear the utterances of hatred flung into our teeth, than to see the antagonist strutting past, not even deigning to look upon us. Say there, you, who are passing by—is it nothing to you that I hang here in utmost agony?

It is so unnatural.

God made us a race, an organism, a body, fitly joined together, every member supplying the cement of love, every member going out in harmony with the entire race so that the whole might be unutterably happy in love and friendship. And the whole body fitly joined together, would reach out to God, blessed forever!

Indifference is the expression of death!

Yes, there is regard for *external* behaviour and good conduct, but I speak of the image-bearer of God. Man, made in the similitude of God, is a creature with a heart. And from that Heart are the issues of life. Nothing short of *heart-life* is demanded by God and man. Does not the law of God speak of a love that is so sweet that you love the neighbour as you love your selves? Indifference is its extreme opposite. Unnatural monster it is.

How different is the Christ of God.

Behold Him! He is leaving Jericho on His way to the Cross. And coming events cast their shadows before. He is full of that Cross. It is revealed in utterances on that last journey to the city of God. It is revealed in His mien. The apostles are amazed as they follow. He walks on ahead.

A great multitude follows Him. The sound of many shuffling footsteps is heard on the dusty road that leads southward.

All of a sudden a piercing cry is heard: "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Thou Son of David!" We have been blind, lo, these many years! And our fellows are not only indifferent to us, but they even tell us to hold our peace, when we hear in solemn refrain the throng's reply: Jesus of Nazareth passeth by! They would even rob us of Thy wondrous compassion. We have heard so much of Thee, O Jesus! And

we have faith in Thee. We know of Thy compassion for others. At last we have heard the answer which we have waited for so dreadfully long: Jesus of Nazareth passeth by! And they will cry all the more for the shown indifference of the multitude: Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us!

\* \* \*

And Jesus?

Is He like the rest of mankind? Is He not even now filled with nameless dread? Is His soul not troubled unto death? Does He not see the awful monster of eternal death which He must swallow unto victory? Can He, will He take time out for merely two blind tramps?

Ah, but He is Jesus! He is not merely a man, but He is the perfect man, the good Man. He loves His neighbour as Himself. He is indeed willing to lay down His life for His sheep. And in the midst of the many different noises of the highway, He hears the voice of faith. And behind it all He hears the voice of His Father: See to it, My dearly Beloved, that Thou lose not one of them. It is the will of God, Jesus' Father, that He lose none of them.

No, Jesus is not different. He stands still. He does not pass by in indifference even as you and I. He takes time out for these two miserable wretches. No, that is not correct. His standing still for these two is part and parcel of His life, He is the Saviour.

Read it and weep for shame: He had *compassion*. Read it and weep, for we are indifferent. We would pass by. It is nothing to us that our brother's sorrow is like unto no other sorrow. We can enjoy (?) ourselves in the very midst of untold suffering that is around us.

We pass by. That's the curse of our corrupt natures.

Not so Jesus. He touched their eyes while His spirit is overwhelmed because of impending agony, He touched their blind eyes and immediately virtue goes out towards them: they are receiving their sight and they follow Him. That is: Heaven is born for them.

On the way to hell, Jesus prepares heaven for others.

\* \* \*

There is your and my example, brother. Are you not blushing for shame? Compare it with your and my cursed life of hatred and malice and envy and jealousy, yes, and indifference.

Go to now, you would-be merciful Samaritans! You, you, the old man of sin and corruption, never stirs a foot out of the indifferent, selfish way that you tread. Ah, the mercy of the world is cruel. Hold thy peace! This to the cry of agony of the brother who is made in the similitude of God, blessed forever.

Certainly there are the hospitals and institutions of human

mercy, but they are the attempts of *external* deportment and *outward* behaviour. The ever-repeated call from the blessed heavens is not to appear beautiful outwardly, but to be filled with *bowels* of mercy, with *inward* compassion for *all* the misery of man. And that requires a regenerated heart, first of all. And as an immediate corollary, that requires hospitals for the sickness of the soul, institutions against iniquity and trespasses.

Tell your doctor, while you are lying on his operating table, that he is on the way to hell because of his corruption: endeavour to preach the Gospel to him—and he will pass you by. The poor man has only external observance. He is akin to the god-forsaken mass of Israelites of whom the Lord complained: This people worship me with their lips, but their *heart* is far from Me!

Indifference, passing by our brother in his utmost agony, it is the curse of spiritual death!

\* \* \*

And Jesus?

Throughout His whole life He stood still, enquired, was intensely interested in the suffering of His sheep.

He went through the land doing good. When He saw and heard the widow who brought her only son to the grave, He was filled with untold compassion. He halted the bier and spoke the word of life: I say unto you, young man, arise! And again, heaven appeared. And note the pathetic touch: "And He delivered him to his mother!"

Ah, Jesus stands still. And the place of His pausing is your and my misery, brother. No, no, Jesus of Nazareth does not pass by. He stands still to save.

And how have we requited Him for His standing still?

Come with me; I will lead the way. We are ascending the place of the skull. Here we are. Do you hear that groaning, do you see that twisting of the limbs? Well, that is the agony of them that die the accursed death of the tree. These three forms are two murderers and the only real merciful Samaritan that ever lived. All other real mercy is but the outgoing of His virtue in others. He is the only Merciful One. Yes, and there He hangs now, between two murderers. That is His wages of the world and of the apostate church. When the mob summed up His life, they found that He was a malefactor, a rebel, inciting others to rebellion, and that He made Himself a King and the Son of God. A hellish mixture of truth and the lie. But that is His reward for doing good to you and to me.

\* \* \*

And, finally, notice! Do you notice that there are passers-by? Matth. 27:39. Yes, there are passers-by.

I have searched in all my commentaries for the identity of the passers-by and there are many. Many learned answers

I have found. Still, methinks, they do not fully fit the case in hand. The real point at issue they passed by. Certainly, they have been historical persons and I have no quarrel with their learned answers *as far as they went*.

But here is the full answer: These passers-by are we, are the human race, are the corrupt world of so-called merciful men and women.

"En ik dacht er niet aan, dat ik zelf door mijn schuld: Zijn kroon had gevlochten, Zijn beker gevuld!"

We have crucified the Christ of God. The nature of Judas, the Pharisees, Herod and Pilate and all their ilk, is my nature and your nature. It is the man of sin that "has hated Him without cause!"

And this is the tragedy of my life: I still pass by, as far as the old man of sin is concerned. It is the cause of the cry of the night: Be merciful to me the sinner!

But this is my song in the night of my sin: Jesus of Nazareth still stands still!

Here is more than human, here is Divine mercy!

And they follow Him.

And that is heaven!

G.V.

#### IN MEMORIAM

The Consistory of the Protestant Reformed Church of Randolph, Wisconsin, extends its sincere sympathy to its fellow brother and consistory member, Harry Rutgers, in the loss of his Father,

#### EMKO RUTGERS

Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

Rev. E. Emanuel, President  
Jake Fisher, Secretary

#### IN MEMORIAM

The consistory of the Hull Protestant Reformed church hereby expresses its sincere sympathy to its fellow office bearer, Mr. Henry Hoksbergen, in the loss of his father,

#### MR. JOHN HOKSBERGEN

May the God of all grace comfort his heart in the assurance that this is but the passing thru to the eternal, that better land, which is our hope.

Nick Wm. Kooiker, Vice President  
Peter Jansma, Secretary

#### IN MEMORIAM

The Delegate Board of the Eastern Ladies League wishes to express its sympathy to a sister member, Mrs. John Ezinga, in the death of her husband,

#### JOHN EZINGA

Our prayer is that she may be comforted and assured that her loss is his gain. Psalm 85:9: "Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land."

The Delegate Board

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## EDITORIALS

### The Future of Our Churches

#### 2.

May we believe that, by the grace of God, we have a future as Protestant Reformed Churches?

We may, indeed.

Our recent history confirms this fact.

In my last editorial, I wrote that our future is inseparably connected with our past, and that only then we may expect a future and to continue to exist if we remain distinct and maintain the truth for the sake of which we were, in 1924, cast out from the communion of the Christian Reformed Church.

Our recent history proves clearly that we still mean to maintain this truth.

We did not change.

The history we passed through in recent years proves that as churches we are still a healthy body that not only has a good appetite for Protestant Reformed truth but that is also able to eliminate all impure substances.

The history to which I refer centers around the following facts: the appearance of *Concordia*, the visit of Dr. Schilder, our subsequent attempt to seek correspondence with the Liberated Churches in the Netherlands, the visit of De Jong and Kok to the Netherlands, the letter of Holwerda to the Liberated in Chattam, the Declaration of Principles, the statements by DeWolf from the pulpit of the First Church in Grand Rapids, and the deposition of the latter and some of the elders.

*Concordia* appeared first in the early part of 1944. The reader will remember that, personally, I gave it a hearty welcome in *The Standard Bearer* and recommended it to all our readers (see St. B. Vol. 20, p. 252). I thought that there was room for a publication of this nature next to the *Standard Bearer*. Little did I surmise that, before long, it became evident that it was the purpose of some of the leaders in the West and of some of those that initiated this new publication to compete with the *Standard Bearer* and to replace it, if at all possible. Not only this, but before long it began to sound a very un-Protestant Reformed note, became the champion of conditional theology, defended the Liberated, and instigated schism in our churches. It is now very evident that Cammenga c.s. had the evil ambition to destroy the *Standard Bearer*, and lead our churches away from the Protestant Reformed truth.

By the grace of our God, this attempt failed. Even all their underhanded work (which also has become more and more apparent) was of no avail. It was, as will become more and more evident, self-destructive.

The visit of Dr. Schilder and the subsequent attempt of our churches to seek correspondence with the Liberated

Churches in the Netherlands was the next important factor of our recent history.

When Dr. Schilder arrived I was sick and still could hardly control my speech. When he first visited me I lay paralyzed on a day-bed in the backyard of my parsonage. But the Lord blessed me with a remarkably fast recovery so that, before he departed again for the Old Country, I was able to attend two conferences in which I defended, in thirteen propositions, our Protestant Reformed view of the covenant over against that of the Liberated. The final result was that we adjourned amiably and although I never could agree with Schilder, I said that he was Reformed. With this the Rev. Ophoff did not agree, and subsequent history shows that he was right and I was wrong.

In the meantime, the synod of the Liberated Churches (I relate from memory) decided to offer us correspondence with them, and even passed a resolution, to which seven or eight protests were lodged, to open their pulpits to our ministers that would visit the Netherlands. And our synod decided to send our deputies for correspondence, De Jong, Ophoff, and myself, to the Old Country, to confer with their deputies about the matter of correspondence.

At that time, Kok and DeJong went to the Netherlands and, as became soon evident, sold our churches to the Liberated. DeJong even had a letter in his pocket, which he did not deliver till three months later because he could hide it no longer, in which the Liberated asked for complete correspondence with our churches, even to the extent that they and we would open our pulpits mutually to one another.

Just in time, however, in the kind providence of God over our churches, the notorious letter of Holwerda was revealed in which he made it very plain that he, at least, must have nothing of our Protestant Reformed truth. I phoned him about that letter, and asked him whether he would write me verbally whether they really had said the things he had reported in his letter to Chattam, which he promised to do.

This promised he never fulfilled.

Twice I corresponded with him about the matter, but I never received a satisfactory answer. However, he never denied that they had said the things he had reported of them in his letter. From all this I concluded that the letter was true.

At one of the last classical meetings at which Kok was present, he informed the classis that, soon after he had returned from the Netherlands, he had read a statement from the pulpit in which he virtually called Holwerda a liar. This same statement he then read to the classis. If the readers are interested, we will publish this entire document in our paper. We have a copy of it. So just let me know.

Asked whether he had ever sent a copy of that statement to prof. Holwerda, he answered in the negative. It was, therefore, a matter of backbiting if not downright slander. At the time when he made this statement public to the classis, prof. Holwerda had died long ago. So the conclusion of

the matter is that the whole thing is decidedly immoral. Let Van Raalte, in the Netherlands, who will, undoubtedly, read this, please, take note of this. Let him, if possible defend the good name of prof. Holwerda. I will gladly give him space in our paper. If he wants a copy of Kok's statement from the pulpit and to the classis I will publish it in our paper.

The result of this entire phase of our recent history is the adoption of the Declaration of Principles.

The reader will understand that this had become very necessary if our Protestant Reformed Churches were to maintain the truth of God's sovereign grace and were not to be swamped with the conditional theology of the Liberated which was already favored by DeJong and Kok and other of our ministers.

At the synod of Hull it was decided that we seek limited correspondence with the Liberated not opening our pulpits to them. And at that synod also the Declaration of Principles was almost unanimously adopted. There was only one vote against its adoption.

It was, however, submitted to the churches in order to be finally adopted by the synod of 1951.

This was done in spite of several protests.

It was especially this Declaration of Principles, which is after all nothing but a statement of the truth of our Confessions, that revealed the spirits. Several of our ministers were vehemently opposed to it and protested against it again and again. It also became evident that the corruption lodged especially in Classis West, while, on the whole, Classis East stood rather solidly for the Protestant Reformed truth. It is, therefore, not too much to say that the Declaration of Principles was one of the chief means to save the Protestant Reformed Churches from utter ruin and corruption.

Finally, there are the two statements which DeWolf made from the pulpit of the First Church in Grand Rapids.

These statements simply served to bring things to a climax. They and their consequences were the culmination of the history of our churches in recent years.

What motivated him to make those statements of which he himself was conscious, I am confident, that they were not Protestant Reformed, and that they would evoke protests, is difficult for me to understand. It is not impossible that he had rather close contact with the wrong element in our churches, with those that were opposed to the Declaration of Principles and to all that was specifically Protestant Reformed. It is also possible that he felt many, the majority, perhaps, had by this time become sufficiently weaned away from the Protestant Reformed truth to support his heretical preaching, and that he felt safe to cater to them. It is not even impossible that some used him as a tool.

He was a good speaker as far as oratory makes a good speaker, but his sermons were generally poor in contents. Hardly ever especially during the latter half of his stay in the First Church did he preach the definite Protestant Reformed truth.

Never was he an enthusiastic supporter of Protestant Reformed instruction in our own school.

All this must, undoubtedly, be taken into consideration in answer to the question what motivated him to make the two heretical statements that were finally condemned and that led to his deposition.

The statements are well-known and I do not have to repeat them here. Be it sufficient to say that in both of them he deliberately proclaimed the conditional theology that was condemned by the Declaration of Principles.

Nevertheless, his statements were not condemned on the basis of the Declaration, for it was specifically maintained by our churches that this Declaration was not a fourth form. They were condemned on the basis of Scripture and the Confessions.

On this basis he was deposed from office and several elders with him.

Classis East supported the consistory of the First Church and they set their seal upon the deposition.

Classis West, very foolishly and illegally, condemned our consistory and maintained DeWolf and his schismatic elders. They, therefore, became themselves schismatic, although several churches in Classis West took the stand of Classis East and remained with us.

Now the worldly court has set its seal upon the action of the consistory of the First Church in claiming the right to the name, the property and the archives. The schismatics have appealed to the supreme court. And my prediction is that it will sustain the decision of Judge Taylor.

Thus far the history.

What may be deduced from it?

Negatively this: the schismatics have no future. They have destroyed themselves. Their separation from us is not based upon any principle. Therefore, they cannot stand. They will either be swallowed up by the Christian Reformed Church, by the Liberated, or will simply gradually dwindle away. But they have no distinctive future. They have no Theological School, no radio, no missionary, no grammar school of their own. They have nothing. They cannot continue to exist.

On the other hand, our history very plainly reveals that, since 1924, we have not changed. Every outsider, that knows our history, will corroborate the fact that we still stand for the Protestant Reformed truth. We have been tested and, by the grace of God, have not been found wanting but have weathered a severe storm of corruption and heresy. We still have our Theological School, our Mission Committee and our missionary, and we still sound forth the Protestant Reformed truth over the radio every Sunday.

Surely, in the light of our history we may be confident that we have a future as Protestant Reformed churches.

H.H.

## AS TO BOOKS

*Het Ware Geloof* (The True Faith), by the Rev. S. G. De Graaf. Published J. H. Kok, N.V., Kampen, the Netherlands. Price f 13.75.

This book is an exposition of the first twenty-two Lord's Days of the Heidelberg Catechism. In a foreword by the Rev. M. De Goede, the latter informs us that the author of this book had intended already for a long time to write a work on the Heidelberg Catechism and that when he finished the exposition of the first twenty Lord's Days, he became incapacitated. It was decided that the Rev. De Goede should write on the next two Lord's Days, so that the exposition of the Apostolic Confession would be finished. This was done. And thus the present volume covers Lord's Days I-XXII.

Gladly I recommend this book, not only to students and ministers, but also to the general public in as far as they can read Holland. It is Reformed in contents and written in a clear style. Especially do I like the exposition of Lord's Day IX in which the author explains that God created and governs all things as the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is, indeed, a fundamental and thoroughly Scriptural truth. And it presents a most beautiful conception of the whole of the works of God. This conception I have always maintained as the central truth of Holy Writ and, years ago, I expounded it in my exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism. Cf. Triple Knowledge. Vol. II, p. 165 ff.

With this conception, however, is not in harmony what the author writes on p. 44, that, apart from the fall into sin, the same glory could have been attained in Adam that is now reached in Christ.

What the author writes on "common grace," particularly in connection with Lord's Day II and III, I cannot accept. Nor do I agree with his conception of the covenant.

One more remark I must make. On p. 329 the Rev. De Graaf writes that Christ was the Reprobate for our sake. This is, of course, a Barthianism. Barth develops this idea in more than one work of his, but especially in his Romerbrief and in his Dogmatik II, 2. I do not believe that the Rev. De Graaf is a Barthian. But I must consider it a rather serious error to employ the terminology of Barth in this instance. Christ was never the Reprobate; always He was the Elect. Nor did He become the Reprobate for the sake of the people of God, for also these were elect. By His death Christ did not remove reprobation, as Barth would have it, but He bore the wrath of God for those that were given Him by the Father. Barth may deny this, but he really believes the *apokatastasis pantoön*. I consider it a dangerous play upon words for a Reformed writer to say that Christ is the Reprobate for our sake.

H.H.

*Jeugd zoekt een Haven* (Youth Seeks a Haven), by Nellie Van Dijk-Has. Published by J. H. Kok, N.V., Kampen, the Netherlands. Price f 5.40.

A very interesting story. Freek and Bets are compelled, because of the housing shortage to live in a poor neighborhood. They have seven children who all are still home. The upstairs of the house of Bets' vader and mother, who live in a much better neighborhood, becomes vacant and they offer it to Freek and Bets. Freek, who cannot bear the sight of his father-in-law, at first does not like the proposition but finally gives in. Suzie secretly keeps company with one that does not belong to the church. Bart, a son of Freek and Bets falls deeply in love with the daughter of a former fifth columnist . . . .

But why should I spoil the story for you? Read it for yourself. You'll find it very interesting.

One remark. When Grandpa, who is usually an old tease, cannot tease his youngest granddaughter because that little child with her open little soul is receptive only for all that is good, true and beautiful, I don't agree with "Grandpa" and not with Nellie Van Dijk. cf. p. 67.

H.H.

### IN MEMORIAM

Once again the Lord has visited us, by taking unto Himself a beloved husband, son and brother,

#### RICHARD DYKSTRA

On January 16, 1955, at the age of 22 years, unto His eternal rest, into the house of many mansions.

Our comfort is that the Lord is upright, He is my rock, there is no unrighteousness in Him.

Mr. Richard Dykstra  
Mr. and Mrs. John Dykstra, Sr.  
Mr. and Mrs. Herman Dykstra  
Mr. and Mrs. Christian Vander Stel.  
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Dykstra  
Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Dykstra  
Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Pluger  
Julia Dykstra  
Mr. and Mrs. Boreas Dykstra  
Mr. and Mrs. John Dykstra, Jr.  
Frank Dykstra  
Ruth Dykstra  
Theresa Dykstra  
Shirley Dykstra

### IN MEMORIAM

The Senior Young People's Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids hereby wishes to express its sympathy to Ruth and Shirley Dykstra in the loss of their brother,

#### RICHARD DYKSTRA

May the God of all grace comfort them in their sorrow.

Rev. C. Hanko, President  
Jeannette Faber, Secretary



# OUR DOCTRINE

## THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE

AN EXPOSITION OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

PART III — OF THANKFULNESS

LORD'S DAY 45

Chapter 1

The Necessity of Prayer

We understand, of course, that when the Catechism speaks in this connection of the grace of God and the Holy Spirit which God will give unto them that ask Him for them, it refers to the continually flowing fountain of grace from which the Christian lives and must live, and without which he cannot live. It refers to the continued indwelling and influx of the Holy Spirit whereby this grace is wrought constantly in his heart. It certainly does not refer to the principal grace of regeneration, that is wrought sovereignly in the heart of the sinner. It is not so that the sinner as such must first pray to God for the Holy Spirit and for His grace, before he can ever become a believer and a child of God, before he can ever be regenerated. That would be absolutely impossible. The natural man cannot and will not and cannot will to pray. He may, perhaps, sometimes, when he is in trouble, utter some desires for carnal and temporal things. But he certainly cannot pray for the grace of God and the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord. No, God is always first in salvation. If it were not so, we could never be saved. Principally we are not saved upon and because of our prayer, but we pray because we are saved. And therefore, the Heidelberg Catechism cannot and does not mean that God will not send His regenerating Spirit and His regenerating grace in our hearts, and call us sovereignly from darkness into light, unless we ask these blessings of Him. That would be impossible. If that were the meaning of the Heidelberg Catechism, how could it first state that prayer is the chief part of thankfulness. And therefore, we must have grace before we can ever pray. But the reference of the Heidelberg Catechism is to the constant and conscious possession of the blessings of grace, such as the forgiveness of sins, the righteousness in Jesus Christ our Lord, the adoption unto children, joy in the Lord, peace with God, the hope of everlasting life. And these blessings of grace are constantly bestowed upon us by the Holy Spirit of Christ. Christ in His exaltation received the Spirit of promise. And through that Spirit of promise He Himself blesses us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, according as it is written: "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." It is to that constant operation of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and in our conscious life, and to the constant influx of the grace of God in Christ Jesus into our regenerated hearts, that the Catechism refers when in this connection it speaks of the Holy Spirit and His grace.

And the Catechism emphasizes that God will not give His grace and His Holy Spirit except to those who with sincere desires continually ask them of Him, and are thankful for them. And this stands to reason. That will of God is not arbitrary. It is not thus, that He could just as well give His grace and His Holy Spirit to His people whether they desire these gifts and ask them of Him, or not. God wants His people to glorify Him. And how can they ever glorify Him unless they taste His goodness, and taste His grace? God does not deal with His people as sometimes a doctor deals with a sick man who is not able to take nourishment through his mouth, and therefore feeds him through his veins. That sick man, of course, never tastes his food and his drink. God wants His people to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and then they shall be satisfied. He wants them to approach consciously at the fountain of life, that they may drink from it and taste all its delicious goodness and refreshment. Never does God give His grace to us as stocks and blocks, but always as conscious rational, moral children of God. He comes to us in His Word, and promises us: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." In that promise the people of God ask. They pray, and drink from the fountain of life, and tasting it they glorify the God of their salvation.

Nevertheless, let us never imagine that at any time in the process of our salvation we are first. The opposite is true. God creates in us the need. He creates in us the hunger and thirst after righteousness by His Holy Spirit and grace. He causes us to pray, to ask, to seek, to knock. And while we consciously seek and ask and pray to the God of our salvation, He answers our prayer and fulfills the need and fills us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ forevermore.

## Chapter 2

### The Requisites of True Prayer

In Question and Answer 117 the Catechism enumerates some of the requisites of true prayer. These we will discuss in the present chapter.

The first requisite which is mentioned by the Catechism in this question and answer is that prayer must be directed to the one only true God; and that is the God Who has revealed Himself in His Word.

You may perhaps consider this a mere platitude, and think that it is quite superfluous to state this. Nevertheless, this truth can bear repeating, and must be emphasized.

What does it mean that we direct our prayer to the one and true and living God only? It means nothing less than

that in our prayers we are wholly dominated and guided by the true knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord as He has revealed Himself in His Word. This is paramount. Only thus is it possible for us to place ourselves in the presence of the true God, of the God of our salvation, to enter into His holy place, to present ourselves before His face, to worship Him and glorify Him, and to have communion with Him. It stands to reason that in order to pray truly, and to pray to the true God only, I must know Him. Now it is absolutely impossible for me to know Him of myself. He is of Himself the invisible One, the eternal God, the incomprehensible. I can therefore never find Him out. Whatever I say about God is sure to be a lie. Whatever god of my own imagination I may attempt to make is sure to be an idol. Only God Himself can make known to me who He is and what He is, and what is the glory of His adorable virtues. And therefore I must let Him speak to me before I can even begin to speak to Him. And thus He speaks to me in His Word, that is, in the Holy Scriptures. For though it is true that the invisible things of Him are also clearly discerned from the things that are made, yet I cannot know Him as the God of my salvation, Who forgiveth iniquities, and to Whom I can pray, except from His own Word, revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord, and contained in the Holy Scriptures. The conclusion from this is evident. The more fully and thoroughly God's people are instructed in the true knowledge of God, the more efficient they will become in the holy, spiritual art of prayer. And, on the other hand, the opposite is also true, that in the measure that we neglect our instruction in the Word of God contained in the Holy Scriptures, in that same measure our life of prayer must necessarily suffer.

This is a most fundamental truth.

First of all, the consciousness that in our prayers we are addressing the true and living God must needs determine the contents of our prayer. It means that we will not pray thoughtlessly, and ask for anything that may come into our mind, but that we will pray with holy intelligence, instructed as to the contents of our petitions by God's own Word and Spirit. The Catechism says that we may pray for all things which God has commanded us to ask of Him. This fundamental principle implies that we are consciously speaking to that great God Who made all things for His own name's sake, so that in our prayers we are not seeking our own little carnal ends, but God Himself, His name, His kingdom, His glory, His cause, and His will. It means also that we are consciously addressing the absolute Sovereign of heaven and earth. Who governs all things according to His eternal good pleasure, and Whose counsel shall stand forever. This means too that He is omniscient, so that we do not have to inform Him about conditions in the world: for He knows what we need far better than we do, before we ask Him. It means too that He is the all-wise, Who governs all things with perfect wisdom, and Who never fails

in His judgment, so that in our prayers we do not attempt to inform Him of our judgment as to the way He ought to govern our lives and all things in the world; but we rather humbly beseech Him for grace to submit our judgment to His, and to show us His way, that we may walk therein. It certainly means that our prayers are not an attempt to impose our own will upon the will of the Almighty, but rather a humble petition for grace that we may submit our will to His, and learn to will His will. For "this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us."

Our petitions therefore must, as far as their contents is concerned, be according to the will of God.

This cannot be emphasized too much, especially in view of the fact that there is so much misunderstanding and corruption of this holiest of arts. If one listens to many prayers and to many statements about prayer, one cannot but receive the impression that this spiritual exercise is looked upon as merely a means to obtain from the Lord what we want. We can pray for anything we desire, it seems. And if only we press our urgent request, and pray with sufficient pertinacity, the Lord will be persuaded by us and will grant our requests. We are heard because of our much speaking. Our prayers do change the mind of God, or at least His ways with us.

An appeal is even made to Scripture to substantiate this conception of prayer.

H.H.

### Announcement

The Eastern League of Men's Societies will hold their Membership meeting March 17, at 8 o'clock in the Fourth Protestant Reformed Church. Rev. R. Veldman will speak. Topic: "Women Suffrage in the Church."

The Board.

### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On March 4th our dear parents,

MR. and MRS. EDWARD BYLSMA

hope to celebrate their 58th wedding anniversary, D.V.

We are thankful to God who gave them to us and our prayer for them is Ps. 71 vs. 18.

"Now also when I am old and gray-headed O God, forsake me not until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation and thy power to every one that is to come.

Mr. and Mrs. George Spruyt  
Mr. and Mrs. John Bastelds  
Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Griffioen  
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph H. Meyer  
Mr. and Mrs. Gerard E. Bylsma  
Mr. and Mrs. George De Vries  
21 grandchildren  
12 great grand children



## THE DAY OF SHADOWS

### The Prophecy of Isaiah

13. Jehovah as a mighty man shall go forth,  
As a man of war He shall stir up zeal:  
He shall shout, yea, roar;  
With His enemies He shall show Himself strong.
14. I have been quiet from ancient times,  
I have been silent and constrained Myself:  
Now as a travailing woman I will cry, pant and  
consume at the same time.
15. I will make waste mountains and hills,  
And dry up all their herbs;  
And I will make the rivers for islands,  
And I will dry up the lakes.
16. And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew  
not;  
And in paths that they have not known will I make  
them to tread;  
I will make darkness before them for light,  
And crooked ways for a straight field.  
These things will I do unto them, and not forsake  
them.
17. They shall be turned back and greatly ashamed,  
That trust in graven images,  
That say to molten images,  
Ye are our gods.

The Lord's enemies are at once the enemies of His people. The foe here is common. For the Lord's people champion His cause in Babylon and thereby reveal themselves as being of His party. It is therefore as activated by hatred of the Lord that the enemies make war against His people. It is proper therefore that He calls them His enemies.

How the Lord's indignation burns. How amazing the ardour of His love. He goes forth in haste. To arouse His zeal He utters the cry of triumph and roars. It presages the awful demonstration of His might in the day of reckoning by which the enemies shall be destroyed and His people delivered from their clutch. The description is under images borrowed from the reactions and behaviour of a human warrior of ancient times. It makes wonderfully impressive the working of the Lord's love of His people with regard to the common foe.

The initial fulfilment of this prophecy was the working of the Lord by which through the agency of Cyrus Babylon was destroyed. Its final fulfillment is the coming of the Lord in judgment over the world in the last day. And it will be the working of the Lord — the triune Jehovah — through His "servant," the Christ. Hence the "servant" of vss. 2-4 is not one and Jehovah another. But this confronts us with the mystery of the incarnation.

The Lord's coming in judgment terminated a long period of silence and quiet on His part. Through all the years of the captivity of the exile He was quiet. And so through all the centuries of this new Dispensation of the World the exalted Christ at God's right hand is quiet. He would fain have come to the deliverance of His people. But He restrained Himself, not willing that any should perish. Besides the enemies had first to fill up their measure of iniquity. But now He will no longer be quiet, but He will cry and pant like a woman in the throes of childbirth and at the same time devour His enemies (vs. 14).

The figure is plain. As stirred by His great pity of His people, He will send deliverance and consume their adversaries. But more seems to be indicated. According to the figure, the work of deliverance involves the Lord in unspeakable sorrows. He cries, groans and pants. Doubtless the reference is in the first instance to the agonies of the suffering and dying Saviour. Was it not through His sorrows that He delivered His people from all their sins and in the point of view of right brought them into being a redeemed and glorified family of saints? And because men hate the Gospel and persecute its proclaimers, the work of gathering the elect still involves Christ in many sufferings that He endures in His Spirit filled church that is His body and that represents His cause in this world. The coming of the Lord will also effect the creature (vs. 15). There will be a universal drought. The mountains will be laid waste by the drying up of all their vegetation. The rivers and the marshes will be dried up. This calls to mind the plagues of the Revelations of St. John, — plagues that will be climaxed by the final world-catastrophe.

So will the Lord deliver His people. He will bring the blind by a way and lead them in paths that they know not being as they are spiritually blind. And the way is Christ and it leads to the Father. And the paths are the paths of salvation, of fear of the Lord, of peace and joy and victory in Him. And He will make darkness before them as light, that is, He will make them to walk in the light of His Word as dwelling richly in them, so that they will no longer be blind but will see, walking as they shall in His paths. And the crooked and the tortuous ways He will make for them a straight plain so that they shall walk before Him in ways that are straight.

All these things will He do unto them and not forsake them (vs. 16). But all the worshippers of idols shall be turned back and greatly ashamed (vs. 17). These idolators comprehend all the wicked that perish in their sins. They shall be ashamed and confounded, when they see Christ, whose existence they now deny in the impudence of their unbelief, coming in judgment over the world.

18. Ye deaf, hear;

Ye blind, look that ye may see.

This may be regarded as addressed to God's believing people, to the remnant according to the election in the cap-

tivity of the exile. By nature, apart from Christ's grace, they are blind and deaf as the others. As believers they have but a small beginning of the true obedience. They are still sinful men. This explains their here being addressed as blind and deaf and their being mandated to hear and to regard with attention that they may perceive, understand.

But they cannot give themselves sight and hearing. The Lord will bestow what He demands. He will heal them according to His promises previously given (vs. 7).

19. Who is blind except my servant?

Or deaf as my messenger that I send?

Who is blind as He that is endowed with salvation,  
And blind as the Lord's servant?

20. Seeing much, but not dost thou keep (observe);

Opening the ears, but not does he hear.

21. The Lord is well pleased because of his righteousness;  
He will magnify the law and make it honorable.

This is a rather obscure passage. It is therefore rather difficult to arrive at a decision regarding its meaning. If explained on the basis of the view that the "servant" is Christ, its meaning is this: The servant of the Lord (Christ) sees much. He foresees all His sufferings. He opens His ears to all the Word of God regarding His sufferings. But the terrible vision of the cup that He must drink awakens in Him no rebellion. He is not so effected by it that, as giving ear to the temptation of satan that He worship him for his kingdoms, he rejects His cross. So, with regard to His sufferings, the prophecies of which are always before His mind, He is in this respect blind and deaf and unobservant. His blindness and deafness are therefore virtues. They spell out His perfect obedience, His abiding determination to enter into His glory by the way of the cross. It is a blindness, a loving submission to God's will, that is His alone. In his prophetic vision the prophet receives a glimpse of the Lord's servant thus blind, and it causes him to exclaim in amazement, "Who is blind and deaf as my servant." And therefore the Lord is well pleased *with Him* (His servant) because of His (the servant's) righteousness. He (the servant) will magnify the law and make it honorable by fulfilling all its requirements and then by putting it in the minds of His people and writing it in their hearts.

The difficulty with this interpretation is, that it may be doubted whether vs. 20 can have the meaning here given it.

Others, on the basis of the view that the "servant" is sinful Israel, interpret our passage as follows: who is so (spiritually) blind as my servant (sinful Israel), or so deaf as my messenger (Israel) that I send to proclaim the Gospel to the Gentiles. Who is blind as He (Israel) that is endowed with salvation. Israel sees many things. He sees all God's marvelous works including His chastisements, but Israel does not observe, take it to heart. He opens his ears, but he hears not. Thus it is a people that hears indeed, but understands not, and they see indeed but perceive not (as

in IV: 9). The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness' sake, that is, He nevertheless is pleased to bless His ill-deserving people because of His promises to it. Should His promises fail, He would not be righteous God. The Lord will magnify the law and make it honorable by afflicting Christ for the transgressions of His people.

But this interpretation is not without difficulties. Vs. 20 reads, "Who is blind *but* my servant," and not, "Who is *so* blind *as* my servant. The meaning plainly is: My servant alone is blind and deaf and none other. Hence if the "servant" is sinful Israel, and if it is sinful blindness of which mention is here made, we must interpret here: Israel alone is blind and deaf, perverse of heart and mind and none other people or nation. But this is an impossible teaching.

If the text asserted that no one is so blind as the servant, the idea would be that all are blind but that in comparison the servant is the blindest. But as was stated the meaning is that all see but one and that one the "servant." It is a remarkable statement. Only on the basis of the view that the "servant" is Christ and that, accordingly, the blindness of our passage is a virtue, does the statement seem to have a discernible meaning. I must therefore give preference to the first of the two interpretations here presented. Christ alone is blind, lovingly submissive to the will of God for Him. Him God sends and endows with salvation.

If the servant is Christ, then the purpose of the mandate of Vs. 18 is also clear. God's blind people in the captivity of the exile must look attentively at the "servant" sent of God and clothed with salvation, that they may see, perceive and understand. The servant is present among them not as yet as the incarnate Son of God, but nevertheless present through His word and Gospel and through the God-fearing prophets that represent His cause.

22. But this is a people plundered and laid waste;

They pant in holes all of them,

In the houses of prisons they hide.

They are for a prey and there is none that delivers;

For a spoil and none saith, restore.

23. Who among you will give ear to this?

Who will attend and hear for the time after?

24. Who gave for a spoil Jacob,

And Israel to the plunderers?

Did not the Lord, He against whom we have sinned?

For not were they willing in His ways to walk,

Neither would they hearken to His law.

25. Therefore hath He poured upon them the heat of His anger. And the strength of battle.

And it hath set him on fire round about, but he knew not;

And it consumed him, and not did he lay it to heart.

The text presents a conundrum. Christ is present in Israel. He magnifies His law in this people. We have seen what this means. He atones their sins and writes His law

in their heart so that they believe in Him and keep His commandments (vs. 21). At the same time Israel is a people spoiled of God on account of their sins. They walk not in His ways and attend not to His law implying that they do not believe in the Lord's "servant" but despise and reject Him.

For a clear answer to this riddle we have to go to the New Testament Scriptures. "They are not all Israel that are of Israel."

The one people, natural seed of Abraham, divides into elect, children of God and reprobated, children of the flesh. This explains how that the prophet can say of this one people now that it is forgiven of God and therefore by His mercies keeps His covenant and will be saved of Him out of all their troubles, then that it is a people wicked and disobedient and that God will destroy it on account of its sins.

If God's prophecies are to be profitably dealt with, if they are to be understood at all, we must work with election and reprobation in interpreting them.

In our passage this one people appears as robbed and spoiled, set on fire and burnt of God on account of its sins. He did it. It was all the working of His anger. The enemies of this people were operative only as His agents.

The whole people is smitten. The children of God suffer along with the others. In the strong conviction that they, too, deserve God's strokes, they say, "Who gave Jacob for a spoil . . . Did not the Lord against whom we have sinned (vs. 24)?" Such is their confession. For they are contrite of heart. The Lord has a new message for them, Chapter XLIII:1-8.

I. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob,  
And He that formed thee, O Israel,  
Fear not: for I have redeemed thee,  
I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

Jacob-Israel, by which is to be understood the church of the elect, is God's creation and formation and not man's, born as she is of His mind and will both in His counsel from before the foundations of the world and in time. He redeemed Her with a price from all Her sins, that price being Christ, His shed blood. He called her efficaciously by a new name given her of Him and she appeared a temple of God, a holy nation, a royal priesthood. And therefore she is God's exclusively. This being true, Jacob-Israel, God's penitent people, in the captivity of the exile, shall not fear.

2. When thou passest in the waters, I will be with thee;  
And in the rivers, they shall not overflow thee;  
When thou walkest in the fire, not shalt thou be burned;

Neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

Belonging to God as His peculiar possession by virtue of her being born of Him, Jacob-Israel is indestructible.

Hence, the waters and rivers of the tribulations of this present time in which the church passes do not overwhelm her. She is not harmed by the fires of persecution in which she walks as she pursues her way through this world to the Father's house. Upon her the flame does not kindle. Though all of her that is of sin and of this earth perishes, as it must, She lives. All of her children shall appear before His face in Zion. For the Lord is with her.

3a. For I *am* Jehovah thy God,  
The Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.

Jehovah is He, the *I am*, the unchangeable One, who keepeth covenant trust, seeing that He cannot deny Himself. And *God* is He, the mighty One to whose power to save there is no limit. The Holy One of Israel is He, the separate one, the wholly other, wholly consecrated to self and the consecrator of Israel. Hence; Fear not thou, Israel-Jacob.

3b. I gave Egypt for thy ransom,  
Ethiopia and Sheba for thee.

4. Since thou wast precious in my eyes, Thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee:  
Therefore I will give men for thee  
And people for thy life.

The church, as was just said, was bought with a price and that price Christ, His shed blood. Hence the meaning is not certainly that the sins of the church were atoned by the sufferings of Egypt etc., that in this sense the nations were given as a ransom for God's people. The meaning is, that this "giving" of Egypt etc., was necessary to the salvation of the church, that had the nations not been "given" the church could not be saved.

It may be asked what it means that "men" were given. Our text does not say. But from the context it is plain that the answer to be supplied is, that they were given that they might serve God's counsel in persecuting Christ and His people, and that, when God had done with them, they might be destroyed. But to be destroyed are the nations according to the children of the flesh in them, and thus not the nations head for hear. It cannot be. For to the nations is the promise that in Abraham, that is, in Christ, they are blest. It is plain that we are confronted here by election and reprobation and thus carried back to the counsel of God.

Why did the Lord give "men" as a ransom for His people (in the sense explained)? Because He loved them and not the others, the "men." They were honorable in His sight. Clothed were they with heavenly perfection and glory in His counsel as chosen in Christ. And He loved them a people by nature dead in their sins and hating Him and thus in themselves no better than the "men." But we must still ask: Why did He love them, just them and not the others? There is but one answer: Because He willed. And why did He will? Because it pleased *Him*.

G.M.O.

## FROM HOLY WRIT

### Exposition of Galatians 5:22

This beautiful passage from the Word of God to which we call attention in this essay reads as follows: "*Now the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, longsuffering; against such there is no law.*"

It should not escape our attention that the general subject, which Paul is here treating in this entire section of Galatians 5:13-26, is, that as the free-born sons of Sarah, children of the Promise, we ought not to use our liberty in Christ as an occasion to the flesh, but rather that by love we should serve one another.

Because of the actual condition in the church at Galatia it was necessary for Paul to sound this warning to the believers in Galatia. There was a spirit of internal strife and rivalry becoming manifest. They did not yet fully appreciate the meaning and implication of freedom in Christ as a spiritual-psychological reality in their life; they were not perfecting sanctification in the fear of God. The "flesh" in the congregation was not being crucified as it ought to be; the works of the flesh were being brought to fruition. And these things ought not so to be.

It was indeed requisite for these Galatians to examine themselves whether they were walking in the faith; they should remember that if a man thinketh of himself to be something in the Lord, and is nothing, that such a one deceiveth himself and no one else.

There is nothing quite so sobering for the believer as to be confronted with the Scriptures concerning what real fruitfulness in the Lord is.

Let us remember that all fruit in the church is: the *fruit of the Spirit*.

In the first place we should notice, that "the Spirit" is mentioned several times by Paul here in the book of Galatians. Always Paul mentions the "Spirit" as the realization of the Promise to Abraham and to His Seed. He refers to the Holy Spirit as the Third Person in the Divine Trinity, as He is very God. And, yet, Paul refers to the Spirit as He again is the Spirit of the risen Christ, sitting at God's right hand. This Spirit has been shed abroad in the hearts of the church on the day of Pentecost. He is sent into the hearts of all the people of God as the Spirit of the Son. In this Spirit the believers, we, the children of God, cry: Abba, Father! It is through the quickening and saving power of the Spirit that we by faith expect the hope of righteousness. And it is by means of the Holy Spirit alone that we can and do walk in the living faith, in the plenitude of love: Love your neighbor as yourself.

This is expressed very beautifully in Gal. 5:22 — "Now the fruit of the Spirit is love . . . !

We ought to notice once more that what the Spirit brings forth in our life of faith is "fruit." They are "the normal outcropping of the Holy Spirit in us" (A. T. Robertson). And again (idem) "It is a beautiful tree of fruit that Paul pictures here with nine luscious fruits on it." Paul does not give a complete and comprehensive summary of all the fruits of the Spirit here; other passages from Paul and other apostles clearly testify that this list here is not complete. However, what we have here is a citation of those "fruits" which should be in our lives when we practice the "golden rule" towards our weak and sinful brother in Christ, so that we do not, in relation to the brother, bring the works of the flesh to fruition. Wherefore we should give the closer heed to this list and note carefully the fine and exact portraiture of one, who by love serves his neighbor!

The first and fundamental "fruit" of the Spirit is *love*.

We may not be able to give the exact relationship of these fruits of the Spirit to one another, but this much is certain that, Paul, as is his common practice, here placed the chief and all-comprehensive "fruit" on the foreground. Without this "fruit" called "love" the other fruits simply will not be present. "Nothing profits" where this love is absent. This should sink deep into our hearts. Nor should we forget for a moment that this love is solely and only the "fruit" of the Spirit. In no sense of the word is "love" out of the Christian by nature. Lightfoot gives the following instructive observation on this passage: "The difficulty of classification in the list which follows is still greater than in the case of the works of the flesh. Nevertheless some sort of order may be observed. The catalogue falls into three groups of three each. The first of these comprises Christian habits of the mind in their more general aspect, 'love, joy, peace'; the second gives special qualities affecting man's intercourse with his neighbor, 'longsuffering, kindness, beneficence'; while the third, again general in character like the first, exhibits the principles which guide a christian's conduct, 'honesty, gentleness, temperance.'"

We here repeat that it is our conviction that "Love" is the fundamental "fruit." It is the bond of perfection, which unites the hearts of the saints, so that with all their heart and mind and soul and strength they strive to serve one another, and thus fulfil the law of Christ for their life. Gal. 5:14; 6:2. For he that loveth keepeth the whole law! For this reason Paul writes the wonderful exposition concerning "the more excellent" way. It is the more excellent way which is trod by all those whose names are written in the book of life in heaven, and who rejoice not that the devils are obedient to them, but that their names are written in the book of life. Of this more excellent way Paul writes in I Corinthians 13:1-3, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could re-

move mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing."

Sobering words these are, are they not, beloved reader?

All-important words they are for everyone who willetth to walk in his liberty in Christ Jesus, and to thus bear fruit in the Holy Spirit.

On the one hand these words from Paul emphasize that "love" is the chief fruit. It is not true that one can harbor all kinds of "false-doctrines" and appeal to this text and say: love is the principal thing! If I do not have purity in doctrine, but have love then I have the principal thing. I answer: this does not follow from I Cor. 13 at all! Paul here does not belittle the need of "gifts," but he is showing the spiritual way in which we are to conduct ourselves by the Holy Spirit *with these gifts*. He, who depises "gifts" does not have love! For the love for God and the neighbor prizes the "gifts" of the Holy Spirit very highly. But the mere fact that we are "sound in doctrine" is not sufficient. We must also be "upright in walk." That fruit of the Holy Spirit must too be in our life. When men will not bow to the clear-cut testimony of the Scriptures and confessions and forever "talk" about "love" then all that talk about love only means: that they be granted license to teach error! This is not love. On the other hand there is often very much in us, who strive for purity of doctrine, which is far from the fruits of the Holy Spirit too; the "flesh" and all its "works," enters in. Let us not be deceived. How often has the prayer for forgiveness of these sins not arisen from the hearts of God's saints in the home, Consistory, Classis and Synod during the past years!

Sin cleaves to our best works; also to the work of Consistory, Classis and Synod. Sin cleaves to the good works of the church when she defends the truth of the Gospel. And only because of this Gospel do its defenders find peace for the sin cleaving to her defense of the truth in Jesus.

Let it therefore sink deep into our hearts; the fruit of the Spirit is *love*. It is the principal and chief fruit without which none other are possible.

He who is filled with "love" will also experience that fruit of the Holy Spirit in His heart, which is known as being "joy!" All the sorrows of this present time cannot extinguish this fruit of the Spirit in the Church. The more we see the truth doctrine of godliness, in Christ crucified, by faith working by love, the more shall we also have "joy" in our hearts as the fruit of the Spirit. Of this joy John writes, "And these things we write unto you in order that your joy may be full." We must have a full cup of joy up till this present moment of our life. And again we read in John 15:11, "These things have I spoken unto you in order that my joy might be in you and that your joy may be full," that is, be filled up to a full cup. And with a view to this full

cup of bliss and joy Jesus instructs His disciples saying: "Ask and ye shall receive in order that your joy may be full." John 16:24. Only thus will our cup of joy constantly be a full measure, lacking nothing. This "joy" which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit is such that it is a foretaste of the glory that shall be the real and lasting possession of the church in the ages to come: Hence, it is a joy unspeakable and full of glory. It is the joy of the Bride as she shares in the love of the Bride-Groom, our Lord Jesus Christ.

One, who serves his neighbor by love, will have this joy in his heart. It is the love, which when perfected in our hearts, drives away all fears and sorrows. Fear hath torment but perfect love casteth out all fear.

Such is the fruit of the Spirit in the heart of the free-born sons of Sarah, Jerusalem which is above.

The next virtue, fruit of the Spirit, in this first triad love, joy and peace, is *peace*.

This peace is certainly the peace which is ours being justified by faith in Jesus Christ. It is peace with God. It is the peace of which Jesus spoke to His disciples in the upper room in the night in which he was betrayed when he said: Peace I leave unto you, my peace I give unto you! John 14:27.

This peace is a wonderful fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives. When this peace becomes the guiding principle in our lives as the fruit of the Holy Spirit, it is said *to rule* us. Thus Paul says in Col. 3:15, "And the peace of Christ *rule in your hearts*, unto which also ye were called in one body." In this same tenor the Apostle Paul writes in Ephesians 4:1-6, "Wherefore I beseech you the bondman in the Lord to walk worthy of the calling wherewith ye have been called with all lowliness of mind and meekness, with longsuffering, upholding each other in love, striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of *peace*!"

This peace of Christ, the fruit of the Spirit in our hearts, has a spiritual-psychological function in our hearts; it keeps us inwardly spiritually in the path of the perfect law of Christ: love your neighbor as yourself. This peace has the same function in us as an umpire has at the games. The rule must be maintained. Now we are not under the law of works but we are under the law of the *inward necessity of the peace of Christ*. It is the law written in our hearts. That this "peace of Christ" according to Col. 3:15 acts as an umpire in our lives is evident from the meaning of the verb "brabeuoo" — "to be a director, arbiter in the public games." Hence, to administer, to rule. It is this peace as the fruit of the Spirit that is the portion of one who loves and has true joy in his heart. Such a one is a peace-maker and is, indeed, blessed.

Such fruit ought to be in our lives.

(to be continued)

G.L.

## IN HIS FEAR

### The Gate Is Open

(Continued)

A different approach.

A different viewpoint.

These are familiar statements that were voiced in the struggle in our churches to defend the Protestant Reformed truth over against the conditional theology that was introduced by those who left us.

But a different approach and a different viewpoint *can* be an entirely different thought and an entirely different belief.

A difference of emphasis also can be a difference of fundamental opinion. It can be an entirely different doctrine.

If you take a simple word as the word top, you can by a different approach and by a different viewpoint and emphasis present widely different thoughts.

Top may mean to you that which is uppermost and stands in distinction from bottom. But top may also be to you a little toy which children amuse themselves. A different approach makes a difference of fundamental meaning. When you come across the word in a list of toys, you know what it means, that it is another toy that one has in mind. When you come across it in a passage that speaks of a man striving for mastery, for victory you know that the top here means that he has attained to his goal, he is victorious. The context will always determine what you have in mind, when you use the word.

The context of conditional theology which speaks also of a different approach and of different emphasis and viewpoint will also reveal what its defenders have in mind. You will find that its context is always man-centered and speaks of the fear of losing man's responsibility and of making him a stock and block. That is its emphasis, viewpoint and approach. It never expresses fear of losing God's sovereignty, though to deceive it may state that it does not want to deny it. The approach, the emphasis must be man nad his responsibility.

That shift in emphasis is important!

What is more, if your approach is wrong, the whole thing is wrong. Taking once again that little word top, it makes a world of difference whether your approach is the English approach so that you read the letters in the order that we always do, or whether your approach is that of the Hebrew and you read the words in a way that is backward according to the English way of reading. Then your word top becomes pot. Quite a different thought again!

So it is also as applied to this "different approach" and "different emphasis" of which we have heard so much in this defense of conditional theology.

It makes a great deal of difference how you approach the Scriptures and the Confessions. It makes a difference also how you approach *that word*. And Protestant Reformed truth, the truth of Scriptures and of the Confessions becomes Arminian when you approach it from the viewpoint of conditional theology. You always land in Arminianism when you approach Scripture and the Confession with conditional theology and comb their pages to try to defend that philosophy of men. Then you need to come to Rev. Blankespoor's plea for the *whole* Word of God. Then in that *whole* Word of God you may find a text here or there that, taken all by itself, seems to exalt man to a place where he has to be considered, and — as Rev. Blankespoor agreed in the advice of his consistory about the Declaration — we have to give man the benefit of the doubt overagainst God and His truth. O, no, Rev. Blankespoor did not put it that way. He put it as though we must give the Liberated every benefit of the doubt overagainst those men in our movement who smelled the Arminianism that he was not able or not willing to detect. But nevertheless that is where this different emphasis brings you. It ends in giving man the benefit of the doubt over against God. It reverses the order of things, so that instead of beginning and ending in God, you begin and end in man. Begin with God, you will end with His glory. Begin with man's responsibility and you end with taking man's side overagainst the glory of God. The Liberated, man, must have the benefit of the doubt.

Rev. Blankespoor may agree with his consistory (see page 102, section 3b, of the advice in the Acts of Synod 1951) that "there is no case on record at present of any of our ministers or people disagreeing with the Confessions or with the interpretation we have given them in the past. There may be some difference as to approach, but at no time has there been a grievance or protest where it has been shown or even alleged that anyone differed with the fundamentals of the Protestant Reformed truth. In other words all agree with our peculiar Protestant Reformed truth. In other words all agree with our peculiar Protestant Reformed views . . . ." But will he please explain how it could be that, if in 1951 all were agreed and the approach was one that did not make a fundamental difference, the opponents of the Declaration almost as a solid block defend the literal statements of Rev. De Wolf?

Rev. Blankespoor, are we to understand that the approach to the Scriptures and Confessions that *these* statements demand is the Protestant Reformed approach? It is not! It is turning the top into a pot! It is going back to 1924! It is the Arminian approach to the Covenant of Prof. Veenhof and of all the Liberated.

That approach opens wide the gate of your churches for the Liberated with their Arminian covenant conception. It breaks down the walls sufficiently far that they may climb over.

How could you defend the literal statements of Rev. De



Wolf, if your approach was truly Protestant Reformed? Your emphasis upon man and his works has lead you to greater love for man in his honor than for God and His glory. The love of God moves man to take God's side and to fight against all heresy and danger of heresy. It does not allow natural love to father, mother, brother or sister, nor friendships stand in the way of this defense of the truth.

Rev. Blankespoor himself realized that his approach to the Scriptures and the Confessions which defended the conditional theology of the Liberated would end in a fundamentally different doctrine. That is why he felt the need of adding: (page 104, the last paragraph of the advice) "All this does not mean that we would sacrifice any one of the truths we as Protestant Reformed have confessed and preached during the past years. These we must keep, and may the Lord bless us. But how then present our views to others, especially to the immigrants in Canada? For that we have ample material in the form of the brochures which set forth our views as based on the Three Forms of Unity. And if need be we could add to them. These teach what we PREACH and that preaching is binding. To that preaching people must promise to be submissive and that they will not make propaganda against it. In this way through literature and above all through the preaching others can ceratinly know what we believe. Doing this we can certainly remain distinct and present our views to others without a declaration of principles."

The reader must remember that Rev. Blankespoor composed and signed this in 1951 while he was still of the conviction that his children belonged in a Protestant Reformed Christian School.

We sincerely like to believe that at that time he was sincere and actually did desire to remain distinct.

But even then it all goes to show that when your approach is wrong, the end is always wrong likewise. And there are several statements in this paragraph which, in the light of subsequent events, show that a different approach and a different emphasis do mean a different doctrine. Rev. Blankespoor, who was walking on very thin ice in this advice of his consistory to the Classis, fell through by the very weight of his opposition to the Declaration and went below the surface in his tenacious defense of the literally heretical statements of Rev. De Wolf.

He is troubled with how to present our views to the Liberated. There is only one way to present the truth to any group outside our denomination. When he singles out the Liberated he already shows us the weakness of this advice to the Classis and Synod. It is not the love to God and to the truth that has hold of him when he so writes but sympathy with those who by blood ties are one with us. It is the plea of one from dutch descent for others of dutch descent. As we said there is only one way to present the truth, and that is by taking a firm stand in regard to it. That is the God-centered, the Protestant Reformed way of presenting the

truth to all men. The man-centered way is to compromise, cut off the sharp corners, defend statements like those of Rev. De Wolf, statements which are fundamentally no different from those of Prof. Veenhof. If you please, we are to present the truth to people who agree with the covenant conception and with the conception of baptism which Prof. Veenhof maintains. And Rev. Blankespoor, who can read the dutch language well enough to be able to understand what he writes, asks how we can present the truth to these people? A weak stand surely is not the proper way.

And we ask Rev. Blankespoor what pamphlets he has in mind which will give a distinct answer to that conditional theology of Prof. Veenhof which the Liberated accept without protest or disagreement? If he is willing to pick out of all our pamphlets arguments or statements that will give the Liberated a clear and distinct answer to our doctrinal stand, I will show him without any trouble that these same passages and arguments condemn Rev. De Wolf's statements in their literal form. Rev. Blankespoor you will be doing the cause of God's kingdom and therefore of the Protestant Reformed Churches much good, if you will publish those passages from our pamphlets. We urge you for the truth's sake to do so.

And our preaching is binding?

Now just a minute, Rev. Blankespoor. You speak in the last sentence of this paragraph of remaining distinct. That was in 1951. But what preaching is binding? Those two sermons of Rev. De Wolf? Those two statements of Rev. De Wolf? They surely are distinct. But they are distinctly Liberated. They are distinctly in a class with Prof. Veenhof's appeal. That is binding on Protestant Reformed people?

That is where your different approach brought you.

That is where your different emphasis, different because it was not Protestant Reformed, brought you. There is a great difference even between the Rev. Blankespoor of 1951 and of 1953.

No wonder really that you did not want the Declaration.

In 1951 you pleaded for an open gate and for lower walls because we should give the Liberated every benefit of the doubt. And you pleaded for an approach to the Liberated and to the Scriptures and to the Confessions that would allow them into our churches.

And now comes 1953. Rev. De Wolf begins boldly to preach Prof. Veenhof's promise to every baptized child on the condition of faith. Only he made it a promise to every man that he might meet on the street.

And instead of striving with us to shut the gate, to build the walls high enough to protect our churches against this heresy, Rev. De Wolf and Rev. Blankespoor and all their colleagues rushed out of that open gate into forming a new "denomination" that doctrinally and church politically is indistinguishable from the Liberated.

Before God they ought to unite, even if it means that they are swallowed up by the Liberated and are outvoted by them.

J.A.H.

### John 21:25 — HYPERBOLE OR FACT?

At one time or another every Bible reader must have been struck by that last verse of John's majestic Gospel: "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

How must we take these words from the pen of the disciple whom Jesus loved, as hyperbole or simple fact? Have we to do here with poetic exaggeration, or must we take them literally and at face value?

What is a hyperbole?

A hyperbole is the opposite of a litotes. The words themselves may not be too familiar to many of us; the ideas they express are very simple. Both are figures of speech, common to every language under the sun. Both are for the same purpose of accentuating, emphasizing the point in question. This common purpose, however, is reached in directly opposite ways.

A litotes is an UNDERstatement for the sake of increased effect. It is a figure of speech in which the statement made clearly expresses *less* than is intended for the purpose of creating greater impression. This you do, for instance, when you emphasize the positive by denying the negative. "He is *not* homely!" You mean, of course, that he's above average in appearance. "He's *no* fool!" Obviously, the meaning is: he's exceptionally bright and alert. Actually, of course, you're saying very little when you say no more than what a person is NOT. Still in these cases you're saying more than you would by stating the simple fact. A litotes is also used when you employ diminution for the sake of effect. The author who spoke of "Little old New York" was in effect stressing the largeness of the city.

A hyperbole, on the other hand, is an OVERstatement, serving the same general purpose. It is a figure of speech in which you say *more* than is meant to accentuate the point in question. If it is a bit cool in church, a person might be heard to say, "I nearly froze this morning." Because the ventilation was not quite up to par people "practically suffocated to death."

Both these figures of speech are found in Holy Writ. There is a beautiful example of a litotes in Romans 8:12, "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, *not* to the flesh, to live after the flesh." Certainly, Paul meant to stress that too. However, the main thrust of his argument, as is evident from the next verse, is that we are debtors to the Spirit, to live after the Spirit. Clearly, he accentuates the latter by not even mentioning it. Hyperboles are even more common in the Word of God. David employs this mode of exaggeration when he complains in Psalm 6:6, "I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears." Did he? That's a hyperbole. "Oh that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears,"

laments Jeremiah, "that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!"

Must John 21:25 be taken in this hyperbolic sense, or is it a simple statement of fact? "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one (one by one), I suppose, (deem, figure, compute) that even the world itself could not contain (would have no room for) the books that should be written."

The question might be put this way: Is John thinking of the number of the works of Jesus rather than their nature and intrinsic worth, or is the latter primary here? Is he counting, or weighing, — or both?

\* \* \* \*

That this verse, too, was written by the Apostle John we shall not question. There is considerable doubt about this among leading Bible students. Some draw its very authenticity into question. In one leading commentary I read this revolting evaluation of John 21:25: "It is an exaggeration so surprising, unapostolical, and in such absolute contradiction to the Johannean simplicity, intelligence and delicacy, that it is impossible that it can have proceeded from the pen of the apostle, but must appear probably as a later, although very ancient, form of conclusion, an apocryphal and inharmonious echo of Chapter 20:30." A moment later the same author says, "The absurd and tasteless exaggeration in verse 25 is un-Johannean, bearing the apocryphal stamp." Others, including commentators like Dr. C. Bouma of the Netherlands, doubt the Johannean authorship. "Verse 25," writes he, "leaves the impression of having been written by another, out of the circle of John." Notice, that Dr. Bouma speaks only of "leaving the impression." There is nothing very objective about "impressions." These dissenters from the position that also this final verse of the gospel emanated from the heart and pen of John himself, point to several things. The style, they are sure, is simply not John's. Besides, John had already come to a similar conclusion at the end of the previous chapter, verse 30, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book." John would not echo virtually the same sentiments only one chapter later, these objectors feel. This objection, however, inspires little in the way of conviction. If John would not do this, why should anyone else? The most cogent argument against the Johannean authorship of this verse lies, perhaps, in that "I suppose." When John speaks of himself it is never in the first person, — invariably in the third person. However, since no further evidence is adduced, and the proofs advanced are so much in the nature of "impressions," we shall not question any further the Johannean origin of this verse. The important thing, after all, is its divine authorship.

Most expositors of Scripture speak here of "hyperbole," although the majority do so in such a way, that actually the verse becomes simple fact quite as much as poetic exaggeration.

tion. Thus Calvin speaks of John 21:25 as a hyperbole, "whereby John stresses that he passed over more than he wrote." He adds, however, that the apostle "employs a frequent and ordinary figure of speech for COMMENDING THE EXCELLENCE of the works of Christ." He's thinking of the nature as well as the multiplicity of Christ's activities in our flesh. In a similar vein the strong predestinarian, Pink, writes that John "closes with a hyperbole to stress the impossibility of fully telling THE INFINITE GLORIES OF CHRIST." The very able and eminent Greek scholar, A. T. Robertson, says about this verse, "This is, of course, natural hyperbole, but graphically pictures for us the vastness of the works and words of Jesus from which the author has made a small selection." Barnes too makes it pure hyperbole "a mode of speech where the words express more than is literally true." He sees the verse as alluding only to the countless number of Christ's works. "No one supposes that John means this literally. John means a great many books; of that it would be extremely difficult to record all Jesus said and did."

That the number of Jesus' works is prominent in the mind of John is quite evident from the text. In this sense we would certainly seem to have to do here with a hyperbole. The apostle speaks of "the many *other* things which Jesus did." If he were speaking merely of the infinite character of the works and words of the Lord Jesus, there would have been no need of referring to the "many other things." Every work of Christ, because of the one Who performed it, partook of the nature of the infinite. Besides, he adds: "if they should be written *one by one*." Every one! ALL of them! He is thinking now, in closing, of the many more whom Jesus healed. Multitudes came to Jesus with their diseased and impotent, — blind, deaf, maimed, paralytics, devil-possessed, etc. etc. "And He healed them all." John mentions only a few of these miracles. All the gospels together record only a fraction of the mighty works of the Lord Jesus on earth. Coming now to the close of his gospel, and in retrospect, he cannot help but think now of those countless other wonders which the Savior performed. "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." 20:30, 31. The apostle is thinking, too, of the numerous discourses, the countless words of Jesus, so many more than the sacred narratives record. He is simply overwhelmed by the numbers of words and works compressed into those few marvelous years of the Incarnate Word in this world. He cannot find the words to express his amazement. Much as we might say of the accomplishments and efforts of some outstanding leader: "there's no end to the labors he performed, no limit to that man's endurance and energy," thus John writes here in holy amazement: "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they were written everyone, I sup-

pose than even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

However, we can and should say more. John is not merely counting, — he's weighing too. He is thinking, not merely of the multiplicity of Jesus' works, but as well of their nature and infinite significance. Can you ever regard the works of our Lord apart from Him Who performed them, — the mere number apart from their intrinsic worth?

Think of this Jesus, of Whom John here speaks! Is he mere man? The greatest of all men, far surpassing all the intellectual titans who ever lived? We know better! Jesus is God in flesh appearing. He is the everlasting Word become flesh. He and the Father are one. He is Himself the immeasurable God. The Jews were so right, when they understood that he made Himself equal with God. His Name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Could all the world produce the minds, the pens or the ink, to reveal the fulness of that Christ? If it were possible, would there be room in all this creation of God, so infinitesimally small compared with the immeasurable Godhead, to contain the books that should be written?

Think of His mighty works, — His amazing miracles. Not only were they countless in number, but each was of infinite significance. Each an actual demonstration in the realm of the visible and physical of the amazing power of the God of heaven and earth! Each an incontrovertible proof of the Godhead of that Jesus of Nazareth, Whom we saw and heard and our hands have touched! Each a blessed manifestation of that same power of the Highest, whereby a lost world is redeemed and exalted to the indescribable life and glories of heaven! If all the minds of men were combined into one, could they begin to analyze these marvelous works? If they could, would there be room in all this world to contain the books that should be written?

Think of His mighty words. "Words of eternal life." The same questions are applicable here.

Is it a wonder, then, that John ends his gospel on this note of ecstasy? "If they should be written one by one . . . even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." Of course they couldn't! Can the finite contain the infinite? Can this tiny world contain what the heaven of heavens are not able to contain? Only an absolute circumstance is in keeping with the absolute contents of the Person and of the Life of Christ. We must not only take into account the number of works, says Calvin, but also their importance and magnitude. Then we say with the great reformer, "The majesty of Christ is infinite, swallows up not only the senses of men, but heaven and earth." Think of all the sermons preached, all the books written about Christ, — and each different from all the rest. Even so, the surface has not even been scratched. Human words cannot begin to spell out the glory of Him, Whom John reveals to us in his gospel. All

(Continued on page 261)

## The Voice of Our Fathers

### The Canons of Dordrecht

#### PART TWO

#### EXPOSITION OF THE CANONS

#### FIRST HEAD OF DOCTRINE

#### OF DIVINE PREDESTINATION

#### Article 15 (continued)

For a brief and concise explanation of this essential subordination of the decree of reprobation to the decree of election we can do no better than to quote from the mimeographed dogmatics of the Rev. H. Hoeksema. He writes, "Theology," page 201, ff.:

"We therefore place ourselves without reservation on the standpoint of supralapsarianism, and maintain that it is the Scriptural and the only consistent presentation of the decree of God's predestination. But we would like to modify this supralapsarian view in such a way that it is in harmony with our organic conception of things. We must emphasize not so much what is first or last in the decree of God, but much rather place ourselves before the question: what in those decrees is conceived as purpose, and what as means? What is the main object in those decrees, and what is subordinate and subservient to that main object? In this way we first of all escape the danger to leave the impression that there after all is a temporal order in the decrees of God. And in the second place, according to our way of presenting the doctrine of predestination we may open the way to find an answer to the question: why is there a reprobation? It is true that supralapsarians give a partial answer to this question, when they assert that God also has willed the ungodly for His own name's sake and to the manifestation of His righteousness, justice, power, and wrath. But this is by no means the final answer that may be given to this question; nor does it satisfy us, for in this way we still cannot escape the impression that there is arbitrariness in God. The reprobate are evidently not necessary to reveal God's power and wrath and righteousness; for these virtues certainly never came to a clearer, more definite revelation than at the cross of Jesus Christ. He certainly satisfied the justice and the righteousness of God and bore all His wrath.

"We, therefore, would like to present the matter of God's counsel of predestination as follows. God conceived and willed all things in His eternal decree for His own name's sake, that is, to the glory of His name and the reflection of His divine virtues and life. And as the highest in God is His own covenant life, He willed to establish and to reveal His covenant in Christ; and all other things in the counsel of God are related to that main purpose of God as means. Hence, we obtain the following order: 1) God wants to reveal His own eternal glory in the establishment of His covenant. 2)

For the realization of this purpose the Son becomes Christ, the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, that in Him as the first begotten of the dead all the fulness of God might dwell. 3) For that Christ and the revelation of all His fulness the Church is decreed, and all the elect. In the decree of God Christ is not designed for the Church, but the Church for Christ. The Church is His body, and serves the purpose to reveal the fulness there is in Him. 4) For the purpose of realizing this Church of Christ, and, therefore, the glory of Christ, the reprobate are determined as vessels of wrath. Reprobation serves the purpose of election as chaff serves the ripening of the wheat. This is in harmony with the current thought of Scripture, and we find it expressed literally in Isaiah 43:3, 4; 'For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.' 5) Finally, in the counsel of God all other things in heaven and on earth are designed as means to the realization of both election and reprobation, and therefore of the glory of Christ and His Church. And because in the decree of God all things are conceived in this manner, therefore all things must work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose. And in this light we can also understand Scripture when it teaches us, as in I Cor. 3:21-23, that 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 are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

This same view is worked out in great detail in the "Christology" of the Rev. H. Hoeksema, pp. 3-84, in his thorough discussion of the "Pactum Salutis," (Counsel of Peace). In this connection we take just a few statements, in order to show that the author does by no means coordinate election and reprobation. We quote from page 80:

"Hence, in God's decree of the covenant and upon His election of the Christ follows immediately the election of the church. Reprobation is indeed immediately connected with election, *but cannot be placed with election on a par. Reprobation follows upon election, and the former serves the latter.* (Italics mine, H.C.H.). It has its motive in the divine will to realize the covenant in the antithetical way of sin and grace. For the fulness of the Godhead dwells in the resurrected Christ. From the depth of misery and death Christ enters into the glory of the full covenant life of God. And this way from suffering to glory, from sin to righteousness, the righteousness of the kingdom of heaven, from death into life, also the church must follow. And in following this way the reprobate shell of the human organism serves the church in Christ. In the shell of reprobation the elect kernel becomes ripe. For that reason reprobation cannot be put on the same line with election. Election is the divine foreordination of the one church with its millions of elect unto

the salvation of the life of God's covenant in Christ. The church serves Christ. The elect church is given to Christ as His body. She must serve to manifest and radiate in a thousand-fold way the glory that is in Christ Jesus, which is the glory of God . . . ."

This is, of course, the view which some delight to characterize as "super supralapsarianism," but which may more properly be called a "modified supralapsarianism." And to a large extent, though not exclusively, that modification consists exactly in the fact that this form subordinates, rather than coordinates, reprobation to election. We freely grant that it is not the view of the *Canons*. We also insist that it is not contradictory of the *Canons*, and that historically supralapsarianism was not condemned by Dordrecht, simply because it was not an issue there. Dordrecht was rather non-committal on the issue, though indeed it had the opportunity to condemn certain supra expressions, but refused.

In the light of this conception of reprobation it may be said with even stronger emphasis: "What peculiarly tends to illustrate and recommend to us the eternal and unmerited grace of election, is the express testimony of sacred Scripture, that not all, but some only are elected." For in this light we not only see our election against the background of the fact that some are sovereignly not elected, though we are no different than they in ourselves. But we behold much more richly the eternal and unmerited character of the grace of election that us, in whom could never be found the reason for the divine choice, He has nevertheless chosen to make the objects of His covenant friendship, to include in His wonderful purpose, while the others, reprobate, He has determined not to give a place in that purpose, but instead to employ them as vessels of wrath as so many means to the realization of His purpose of our salvation. What wondrously free grace that is! Well may we ever acknowledge, when we behold them whom God has from eternity and sovereignly determined to be vessels of wrath and to employ them as mere means to the realization of His purpose: "There, but for the eternal and unmerited grace of God, go I. For it is not of myself that He chose me. Of myself I would never have shown anything else than utter unworthiness to be one of His chosen ones. But it was of His free, absolutely sovereign grace. Glory to His name alone!"

The final element in this article concerning reprobation is the assertion that this doctrine by no means makes God the author of sin, the very thought of which is blasphemy; but that this doctrine certainly does declare God to be an awful, irreprehensible, and righteous judge and avenger of sin. In general we make the following remarks concerning this statement:

1) In the first place, it is directed against the Arminians. For it was the Arminians who cast this accusation in the teeth of those who wanted to maintain sovereign reprobation. In this connection we may note too that it is only against

the Reformed man, who maintains that reprobation is sovereign, that this accusation is ever brought. Against any one else the accusation simply does not fit. For only when you teach that the fact of sin is sovereignly included in the counsel of God do men come with the charge that you make God the author of sin. 2) In the second place, this statement is simply a denial. Dordrecht casts the accusation for away, as a blasphemous suggestion. We may not even consider that God might ever be the author of sin. The very opposite is true: God is the judge and avenger of sin. 3) In the third place, it is not true that this is peculiarly the property of infralapsarianism. Also *infra* includes the fact of sin and the fall in the sovereign counsel of God, even when it speaks of God's "permissive will." And also *infra* must face this accusation, as is plain from this very 15th Article. But also *supra* emphatically maintains: "The very thought that God might be the author of sin is blasphemous."

In explanation of this statement of the *Canons*,—an explanation which the fathers do not trouble to make at this point,—we may bear in mind the following. God created man, and therefore also conceived of man in His counsel, as a rational, moral, responsible being. The question of the authorship of any deed, good or evil, concerns this rational, moral, responsible nature of man. As long as this rational, moral creature is not touched in his spiritual, ethical existence, and thus compelled to do certain deeds by an outside force, that creature is morally free, and therefore from an ethical point of view the cause of his own actions. Man's sinful deeds are always such rational, moral actions, performed according to the determination of his own will. He wants to sin. He is the author of his own sin, even though God remains on the throne and sovereignly controls also the moral actions of that sinful man. God hates sin; the sinner loves it. And man indeed chooses sin, while God rules and controls also that choosing man, and realizes His own counsel. And therefore, we may say in the second place, that while God is certainly not the author of sin, God has sovereignly determined that man shall be the author and the cause of his own sin. Unless this is maintained, the entire concept of God's sovereign counsel is destroyed.

And therefore let it be well understood: we who maintain a sovereign decree of reprobation consider it blasphemy to consider that God is the author of sin. He is the infinitely Holy One. Instead, we maintain that this very decree of reprobation declares God to be the awful, unblameable, and righteous judge and avenger of sin. Our God is a consuming fire!

H.C.H.

#### A GREAT SAVIOR

Sir James Simpson, the great Scotch surgeon, was asked by a young man what he regarded as his greatest discovery. He replied, "*My greatest discovery is that I am great sinner and Jesus is a Great Savior.*"

## DECENCY and ORDER

### Students for the Ministry

"The churches shall exert themselves, as far as necessary, that there may be students supported by them to be trained for the ministry of the Word." — Article 19, D.K.O.

In accordance with the stipulations of this article of our church order, our Synod has a standing committee and has established a permanent fund to which our seminarians who have need may apply for financial assistance. Synod has also made rules governing the support that is granted from this fund and unless certain requirements are met, the applicant's request for aid is refused. One of the most significant of these rules is the one that bars any married students from receiving financial aid. Some of those now serving in the ministry in our churches were refused assistance under this rule in their student days. A few years ago we received three applicants to our Theological School from the Episcopal Reformed Church who, because they were married, could not be aided with E.B.P. Funds. At that time a separate society was organized which raised the needed funds which, because of the ruling of Synod, could not be obtained directly from the E.B.P. Committee. Today, with our ministerial shortage, we have applicants who desire to be admitted into our Theological School but who are confronted with the problem of supporting their families during the interim of study and preparation for the ministry. For some these things make the way into the ministry very difficult while for others it becomes a virtual impossibility. Is this right? Is it in harmony with the meaning of the 19th. Article of our Church Order?

This leads us to ask two questions. The first of these is: "Do we, as churches, adequately fulfill the intention of Article 19 of our church order by merely setting up an E.B.P. committee and fund?" We would answer this question negatively and will point out later that the real intention of this article is far broader and, in a certain respect, altogether different from this. Our second question is, "Are our Synodical rulings with respect to this matter in conflict with the intention of Article 19 of our church order so that this intention is virtually nullified by these rulings?" This question we refrain from answering with either a blank "yes" or "no" but would rather discuss it somewhat in detail especially since Classis East is overturing the Synod of 1955 to review and reconsider this entire matter. The question before the Synod will be, "Should we, in the light of our present circumstances and with a view to future exigencies, maintain our present rules, drop them altogether, or change them?" It is well, especially with a matter of this proportion, that Synod does not act hastily under the influencing pressures of present circumstances, to do what will not only be later regretted but will prove detrimental to the churches in years to come. This can

be avoided by discussing thoroughly in advance the implications of the problems involved and then, when rules are to be made, to make sure that they comply with the intent or principles of the church order so that under the rules the mandate of the church order is not obstructed but rather is more easily executed by the churches. And Article 19 of the church order deals with the important matter of perpetuating the ministry of the word and then it should be remembered, as one author aptly expressed it, "The purpose of Article 19 is not to help needy students, but rather to help the churches." That is a principle and our rules ought to be governed by it so that the welfare of the churches is placed above that of any individuals. Further, that is of greatest importance because this matter involves the ministry of the Word and nothing effects the welfare of the churches more keenly than this. Too often matters of this nature are evaluated on a dollar and cents basis and this is a serious mistake. The money involved is certainly a factor of consideration but there are elements, involving the welfare of the churches, which are more weighty and should be considered first but which are sometimes entirely ignored. These we purpose to bring out in subsequent writing under this article.

To begin with, then, let us give a brief historical sketch of this article. The churches of the Reformation soon realized their need of trained ministers of the gospel. To undergo such training required years of schooling and involved considerable expense. There were a few who could afford this and, consequently, many promising youths were compelled to seek occupation in other fields. It was in a letter dated March 21, 1570 that Marnix of St. Aldegonde first called attention to this matter in the Refugee Churches. Among other things he suggested in his letter that the churches should establish a common fund from which those preparing for the ministry of the Word could receive assistance if needed. Acting upon this suggestion the Synods of Emden 1571, Dordrecht 1574, Dordrecht, 1578, and 's-Gravenhage 1586 adopted measures whereby support for needy students was obtained. This was then the beginning of the E. B. P. Fund.

Of interest it is to know why this fund for needy students is called the E. B. P. Fund. These letters represent the Latin phrase, "ex bonis publicis," which means, "out of the public goods" or a public grant or endowment. In former times, especially in the Netherlands, there was a very close relation between the church and the state. When Protestantism became victorious over Roman Catholicism much of the latter's lands and possessions were taken over by the government and revenues derived from these properties were given to the church so that out of these public funds emeritus ministers and needy students were supported. And, so the expression, "ex bonis publicis," has remained in usage unto the present time and although, strictly speaking, it is a mis-



nomer, it is still applied to the current practices of the church.

Now, to return once more to the 19th. Article of the Church Order. Our redaction of this article, which is the same as that of the Christian Reformed Church, differs from that of the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands in one particular. It omits the phrase, "in theology." The Article, as maintained in the Netherlands, reads: "De gemeenten zullen, voor zooveel noodig, arbeiden, dat er studenten in de theologie zijn, die door haar onderhouden worden." The omission of the phrase, "in theology," was occasioned by the desire to also aid those students who were engaged in work preparatory to their studies in theology in other schools. This practice the churches in the Netherlands does not admit. The Reformed Churches there do not help students other than those directly engaged in theological study. The reason for this seems to be that there is too much of a risk that students, after receiving help for some time, will undergo a change of mind and never enter into theology and become of service to the churches that assisted them. Omitting this phrase, as is done in the redaction of 1914, allows for the possibility of extending aid to students during their preparatory studies. If the inclusion of this phrase makes such assistance impossible, its omission would seem to be justified for preparatory work in theology is very essential.

However, there is also a danger in this omission. Without the phrase, "in theology" an emphasis is placed in the article upon that which is of secondary importance and the main purpose or intention of the article is virtually lost. As our present article reads, the main thrust of the article is that the churches shall exert themselves, as far as necessary, *to support students preparing for the ministry*. But the intent of the article is to express that the churches shall exert themselves, as far as necessary, that there *may be students in theology*. That is something else. The matter of support is of secondary importance and is brought in because the lack of material resources should not be a barrier to entering the ministry for one who has the capabilities and desire for the office. Then the churches ought to give support. This then becomes a means unto the attainment of a certain end. And the end or purpose is to obtain students in theology. That is first in importance as the calling of the church is to perpetuate the ministry of the word and this can be done only when there are men constantly prepared for that labor. These suitable candidates must be found and then, if there is need and insofar as is necessary, the churches must also aid in supporting them during their years of preparation.

This emphasis in the article follows from its position and relation to the preceeding article which speaks of the Professors of Theology and their task. II Timothy 2:1 tells us that the church must maintain this office and this, too, can be done only when the churches also exert themselves toward securing capable men to be instructed. Articles 3 to 21 of the Church Order set forth the various principles

for the orderly maintenance and perpetuation of the ministry of the church. This must be remembered lest we be distracted to occupy ourselves with too many other things of lesser importance. From this point of view, the omission of the words, "in theology" is to be regretted. They should be retained and a further addition made to the article allowing for support of those engaged in preparatory work, provided an assurance is given of their intention to enter into the work of the ministry.

We must add a concluding remark of clarification to the above lest we be misunderstood. It is true, of course, that men are ultimately inclined toward and brought to seek the work of the ministry through the *calling of God*. What has been previously written on that subject may properly be repeated here. This calling is indispensable. However, this does not abrogate the calling of the churches to exert themselves toward locating such men whom the Lord is pleased to call and to even aid them in bringing them to the awareness of that calling. There are times when a little advice or encouragement is beneficial. No doubt consistories, ministers and even parents could do much more than is done toward directing those young men who are worthy and qualified to seek the labor of the ministry of the Word. Even as those lacking essential qualifications should be advised against seeking this labor, those who show indications of promise ought to be encouraged. At any rate, let the churches do what is possible and necessary that there may be students for the future ministry of the churches. That is first!

(to be continued)

G. VandenBerg.

#### JOHN 21:25 — HYPERBOLE OR FACT?

(Continued from page 257)

the world cannot begin to comprehend it. There's no end, literally, to the study and development of the truth of God in Christ. There are no limitations here, except those of man's own heart and mind. Like the immensity of the heavens, ever increasing as the power of vision is lengthened. The farther we go, the more the realization of infinity rises upon us.

From the viewpoint of mere number, therefore, we may speak here of a hyperbole. However, I dare not leave it there. Knowing Him of Whom we speak, by faith, and the divine magnitude of His words and works, we shall leave it as simple fact: "If they should be written every one . . . even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

R.V.

## ALL AROUND US

### *What Really Happened In Our Churches.*

This is the final article in our series in which we have been quoting and criticizing an essay written by the Rev. J. Blankespoor in Concordia of December 2, 1954. We have been quoting his essay in its entirety and then offering our comments. Whatever the Rev. Blankespoor may say about our criticism of him we do not know, but we are assured that he will never be able to say that we did not quote him fairly. This we do now also with respect to what he calls his church political viewpoint. It will not be difficult to criticize what he says about this simply because he says nothing. This is what he wrote in the conclusion of his article.

"From the church political viewpoint the same is true. I cannot help but find also here tendencies towards sectarianism and hierarchy in their actions. This is true of what happened in the Fuller Ave. consistory, what happened at the October, 1953 meeting of Classis East, and at the September, 1953 meeting of Classis West. I'm sure that Rev. De Wolf didn't realize all the implications of what took place at that time. Neither did he always know exactly which step to take. But what is the deepest reason for his refusal to submit to their unjust demands? The conviction that their actions were contrary to the Word of God. And the same is true of the Revs. Kok, Knott and myself at the October meeting of Classis East. I will for one readily admit that I didn't understand Art. 31 of the Church Order at that time as I do now. But why then refuse to submit? Surely not because everything was crystal clear to us. No, we were convinced that their actions were contrary to the Divine Word. Before that only we would bow, regardless of consequences inflicted upon us by men. No doubt, the same principles guided Classis West with its stand on the Declaration, and the censure of the office-bearers of Fuller Ave.

"Without any doubt this is also true of the laity. Surely most of our people didn't see all the implications of the denial of every form of condition, and of the difficulty with the Declaration. But with their simple but strong faith they realized that somehow many of these things were contrary to the plain teachings of the Scriptures. We may conclude from this that the multitudes still love the 'simple,' but also the whole Word of God.

"In the light of all this, our history indeed is a sad one. But on the other hand we must continue to say: 'Too bad, too bad.' Since this seems to be the direction in which the other side is going we must be thankful that it has pleased God to by His grace show us the right way. As leaders we surely must also give leadership by personally bowing before that Word. At this stage let us not continue to sit down by the ruins of what we once had, deploring the situation,

but let us also learn to say: Ebenezer, hitherto the Lord hath helped us. And in faith look into the future!" This concludes Blankespoor's essay.

I repeat that it is not difficult to criticize this conclusion of Blankespoor's essay simply because he says nothing. What we have here is some more idle prating cloaked in pious phrases. Some bold charges without a grain of proof.

We are charged with not only having tendencies toward sectarianism but also with hierarchy. He refers to meetings of consistory and Classes but says nothing about what actually happened at these meetings. We simply have to take Rev. Blankespoor's word for it that Rev. De Wolf and his elders and the unseating of Kok, Knott and Blankespoor was hierarchy. I am surprised that he mentions the meeting of Classis West. Does he want us to imply that that was hierarchical too? Or is this a slip of the pen? The reader will note that nowhere does Blankespoor say what was hierarchical. The reader of his "fine" essay is just supposed to believe this on the word of Blankespoor. He gives no article of the Church Order to prove his point. The only article of the Church Order to which he refers is Article 31. Evidently he assumed that all his readers were supposed to know what is in this article. And Rev. Blankespoor admits that he himself has only lately begun to understand it. Rev. Kok has obviously explained the meaning of this article to him. And where the former was instructed no one knows. Perhaps he has been in conference with a few radical Canadian Liberated. They too believe that every one is a law unto himself in the church of Christ. Hence they could set ministers right out on the street if they felt like it and that too without a pang of conscience. That's the Church Order which Rev. Kok wants and in which he evidently has instructed the Rev. Blankespoor. And so the latter has now come to understand the true meaning of Article 31.

Rev. Blankespoor has evidently no understanding of the Formula of Subscription which he has signed more than once, in which he promised "that we (he) will neither publicly nor privately propose, teach, or defend the same (namely, the errors that militate against the doctrine adopted by Dordt 1618-'19 — M. S.) either by preaching or writing, until we (he) have first revealed such sentiments to the consistory, Classis and Synod, that the same may there be examined, being ready always cheerfully to submit to the judgment of the consistory, Classis and Synod, under penalty in case of refusal to be, by that very fact, suspended from our (my) office.

"And further, if at any time 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 (me) a further explanation of our (my) sentiments respecting any particular article of the Confession of Faith, the Catechism, or the explanation of the National Synod, we (I) do hereby promise to be always willing and ready to comply with such requisition, under the penalty

above mentioned, reserving for ourselves (myself), however, the right of an appeal, whenever we (I) shall believe ourselves (myself) aggrieved by the sentence of the consistory, the Classis, or the Synod, and *until a decision is made upon such an appeal, we (I) will acquiesce in the determination and judgment already passed.*" (The italics mine —M. S.)

What Blankespoor et al did with their new understanding of Article 31 amounted simply to this that they concluded when they stood in opposition to the consistory and the Classis that they did not have to "acquiesce in the determination and judgment already passed" until they made their appeal. They could have their offices and function regularly in them, serve as delegates to Classis, continue to propagate their false doctrine. This is anarchy of the lowest rank. Besides, it was a determined attempt to deny the promise they made when they signed the Formula of Subscription. Much more could be said about this very evident error of which Rev. Blankespoor et al made themselves guilty. He must not charge us with hierarchy, but let him rather confess his independentism and rebellion. And since the Rev. Blankespoor likes to prate about his desire to be bound only by the whole Word of God, will he please show us where in that Word he finds support for this rebellion and independentism?

The reader will also note how Rev. Blankespoor again makes a play for the people. Writes he "Without any doubt this is also true of the laity. (That they were guided by the Word of God — M. S.) Surely most of our people didn't see all the implications of the denial of every form of condition, and of the difficulty with the Declaration. But with their simple but strong faith they realized that somehow many of these things were contrary to the plain teachings of the Scriptures. We may conclude from this that the multitudes still love the 'simple' but also the whole Word of God."

One could ask several questions here. I ask only this one: How is it that so many, if they are so many, realize that the denial of conditions and the adoption of the Declaration of Principles were so contrary to the Word of God? The answer is not that any of the schismatic leaders have proved this from the Scriptures. This they could never do, nor have they ever publicly attempted to do this. All I have ever heard them say is: "we don't need the Declaration — it didn't come into being in the right way — we can organize churches without the Declaration." But they have never proved from the Scriptures or the Confessions that it was contrary to Scripture or these Confessions. They also declared that there are conditions in a Reformed sense. But I have yet to this day to see one text of Scripture which they have produced to prove this assertion. The reason why any of the laity have gone along with the schismatic leaders is not because they have the light of Scripture. Rather, they have been confused and led astray by their erring teachers.

They have been made to swallow the lie. They were taught not to read the Standard Bearer which has always thrown light both of Scripture and the Confessions on the issues which now separate us. Of this I am becoming more and more convinced. The letters I receive occasionally from some of these disillusioned people clearly indicates this. My conversations with them reveal how miserably they have been deceived. O, of course I do not mean to say by this that all the people that follow these schismatic leaders are deceived. No doubt there are many of them that want this false doctrine, and they have wanted it for years. But surely they are not the "multitudes." And I would warn these schismatic leaders that they had better work still harder to keep these people under their preaching. Do not allow them to hear Protestant Reformed preachers. If you do, you will lose them, for they will hear the difference immediately. Several who have left them have already testified to this. And let me warn you not to let them hear Christian Reformed preaching either, for I assure you they will hear no difference, and you are bound to lose many of them. In fact I hear that several of your followers have already left for the Christian Reformed Churches. And if they have no principle about them, I can easily understand that they left you, for what future have they if they stay with you? Even Rev. Hofman indicates that much in his recent editorial in Concordia that almost sounded like a swan-song.

But back to Rev. Blankespoor and his "fine" essay. That last paragraph of the above quotation is a puzzle to me. I have read and re-read this paragraph several times and am at a loss to know just what he means by the expression "But on the other hand we must continue to say: 'Too bad, too bad.' Since this seems to be the direction in which the other side is going we must be thankful that it had pleased God to by His grace show us the right way." It looks to me like there is a typographical error here. He meant to write, "But on the other hand we must not continue to say 'Too bad, etc.'" At any rate whatever he meant, it is plain that Blankespoor is thankful for the split. He is glad he is no longer with us, all because he thinks we are hierarchical and have a tendency to sectarianism. If he really believes this I can understand how he can be thankful. But he can also understand how we are thankful too that he and his followers are no longer with us. For what really happened in our Churches? I will tell you in a very few words. It does not take a long-winded essay to tell all the world what happened. It is briefly this.

Rev. Blankespoor et al wanted to be big. They saw that to hold strictly to our Protestant Reformed doctrine and practice would keep them small and despised. They were "ecumenically minded" and seized upon the idea that association with the Liberated and the Christian Reformed Churches, which embrace essentially the same doctrine, they would be able to broaden and strengthen their forces and

thus reach their objective. And so they began to talk conditions. Rev. Kok and Rev. De Jong served as their liaison committee to effect relations with the Liberated in the Netherlands. They then went head over heels with the Canadian emigrants. They then began to talk of conditions. And what really happened was that the Lord moved our Churches to adopt the Declaration of Principles which forever made it impossible for the Liberated and the Christian Reformed to stand with us on the same basis. And that Declaration moved these schismatic leaders to become bitterly angry with the Revs. Hoeksema and Ophof and others. So bitter they became that they conceived of the idea of getting rid of these men and swallowing up our Churches and putting them on a silver platter as a gift to the Liberated and Christian Reformed Churches. But again the Lord said: "No! You cannot do that with My Church unto whom I have given my peculiar truth to preserve and proclaim." And so the Lord spoiled their plan and set them outside of our Churches, not through hierarchy, as it is charged, but through sovereign and righteous discipline. That is the truth.

And so we say indeed: Ebenezer, hitherto hath the Lord helped us! That His blessing is upon our Churches, now purified, we have the evidence each Lord's Day. That He will bless us also in the future is our firmest conviction. And so we shall continue in His truth even though the numbers become smaller and smaller. We shall continue to call these erring brethren to repentance, and to pray that they may truly be humbled and to embrace the truth once more that salvation is of the Lord, *unconditionally*.

M.S.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

### Kok's "Proselyte" Reports

Further during the informal talk of Rev. Kok he called attention to the two statements of Rev. De Wolf. Rather silly to hang a man when he did not mean those statements, he said. Yet, they could stand under the doctrines of the Protestant Ref. churches. When he talked about the second statement he quoted it as follows: "Our act of conversion in the *indispensable requirement* to enter into the kingdom." During the question period I asked the Rev. Kok to repeat for us the second statement. This he did and this time he quoted it correctly. Instead of using "indispensable requirement" he used "Prerequisite." When I asked him why he did not quote it correctly during his talk he said that he used the term "indispensable requirement" for emphasis sake. So, dear readers, I would have you to see what tricks of the trade are being used to convince the public. Since when is an "indispensable requirement" in any way, shape or form the same as "prerequisite?" Also how can you say "indispensable requirement" to emphasize "prerequisite?" This reminds me

of the tactics of Hitler who used to say, "if you tell an untruth often enough and loud enough the people will soon believe it."

While the Rev. Kok was in Manhattan, he thought a lot of Rev. Hoeksema. In fact in his bulletins which he used to send out every week he would quite often quote from some article which he thought was worthy of special note. So it happened that while he was there, he made such a quotation with comment on a bulletin, dated Oct. 5, 1939. We quote the following: "In the last Standard Bearer the Rev. Hoeksema has clearly presented the difference between the Protestant and the Christian Reformed churches. He does so in the following series of true and false questions.

Questions	Chr. Ref.	Prot. Ref.
	answers	answers
1. God loves all men, only in degrees.	true	false
2. God hates no man, only his sin.	true	false
3. God loves the elect only.	false	true
4. God hates the reprobate.	false	true
5. "Common Grace" is a lower degree of the same grace as "special grace."	true	false
6. God earnestly desires the salvation of all.	true	false
7. God desires the salvation of the elect only.	false	true
8. The preaching of the gospel is proof of God's gracious desire to save all men.	true	false
9. Faith and repentance are "conditions" which man can fulfil. (everyman)	true	false

Please study these questions carefully so that you too may clearly understand the difference between the Protestant Reformed and the Chr. Ref. churches. The differences are far greater than you think. Which answers do you agree with, the Chr. Ref. or the Prot. Ref.? The Rev. Kok here quotes part of an article which can be found in Standard Bearer, Vol. 16, p.4, entitled, "More Confusion." The reader will please note that the Rev. Hoeksema here used the term "Conditions" and had it surrounded by quotations marks, which means that it was the term of another or one which did not altogether fit. When you read the whole article you right away know and feel that he does not like the term at all.

However, today if I should again want to be a "Proselyte" of Rev. Kok I would like to point the Rev. to the above quotation and then I would like to add as follows:

10. God promises every one of you salvation if you believe.  
Chr. Ref. answer, true. Prot. Ref. answer, false.
11. Our act of conversion is prerequisite to our entering into the kingdom.  
Chr. Ref. answer, true. Prot. Ref. answer, false.

They line up pretty well with the Chr. Ref. answers don't they? But I am puzzled now with one thing. When a "proselyte" returns to that from whence he came is he then a double proselyte or does he become a heathen again?

John Flikkema