

# THE STANDARD

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## MEDITATION

### What a Friend!

"Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray Me. And while He yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed Him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He: hold Him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master; and kissed Him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus and took Him." Matt. 26:46-50  
"But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with kiss?" Luke 22:48

My friends, we are going to watch a sorry spectacle: the betraying of our Lord Jesus Christ was a kiss (of all things!)

I have often wondered at Jesus' address: "Friend!"

But let us watch this sorry spectacle.

It is night. There is a lurid glow of torches and lanterns, carried by some of the multitude of soldiers and servants of the chief priests that are accompanying Judas, the archfiend. In that glow of flickering light we see the small band of Jesus and His disciples, surrounded by the "great multitude" with their swords and staves. The fools! A million swords, multiplied a million times cannot take the God who made the heaven and the earth! A simple answer is given to a simple question, and God shows His majesty and almighty power; they stagger backwards and fall to the earth.

But wait!

There is one man among the soldiers that draws our attention: he has a false smile on his face: he has recognized the Saviour. He hastens forward, falls on Jesus' neck and repeatedly kisses Him: "Hail, Master!"

Oh, why is it, that Jesus does not reel back in horror! It is worse than the deadliest adder who embraces Him!

Instead, we hear the voice of Jesus: "Friend!"

How is this possible? Did He not call him a devil this same night?

\* \* \*

A few hours ago Jesus had said: "Henceforth I call ye not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you."

And Judas was among the company that Jesus addressed. And in harmony with that conversation, Jesus calls Judas His friend.

What constitutes a friend? What is the meaning of friendship?

It is really very simple. Friendship is the exchange of the secrets of the heart. You heard that definition in the above quotation: John 15:15. And in the Old Testament God said concerning Abraham, the friend of God: "And the Lord said, shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" No, God would not hide it from Abraham, for he was God's friend. And so God told him.

Friendship is the exchange of the thoughts of the hearts of two or more friends.

Certainly, Jesus had opened His heart and had told Judas, as well as the other apostles, all the secrets of His mission. He had declared the Father to them all. Judas had heard everything the others had gleaned from the mouth of Jesus.

And ostensibly Judas had also given his heart to Jesus. That is, ostensibly. It was also his confession, as well as of the others, that Jesus was his Lord, his Saviour, his Master, his God. Judas had made confession of faith. When Jesus had said to him: Follow Me! he had left all and followed Jesus.

There are a great many of this class of people: the most miserable of all men.

And Judas carried it through to the very moment when he came with his despicable band of soldiers. Oh, that kiss of Judas! He will not forget it unto everlasting. Nor will he forget that strange address of Jesus: Friend! Do you not see it now? Jesus accepts unto the very last the confession of Judas, and also will judge him according to it.

I said: there are a great many of such men and women. The elder son in the parable of the Prodigal Son is one of

them. And God, in the parable, accepts and judges him on the basis of his confession: all that is mine is thine: you ought therefore to have been glad when this thy brother returned from the dead. You ought to be very happy and glad, and not lurk outside, murmuring and condemning!

But such people condemn themselves. In fact, I am sure that the whole of humanity which is lost will condemn themselves in that great and dreadful day of the Lord.

But the Lord reveals many pre-auditions of this dreadful day.

In our text we have one of them: Judas, My friend, dost thou betray the Son of man with a kiss?

A kiss!!

Is there anything sweeter?

It is the token of love, specifically, of the love of God.

Attend to this: "Kiss the Son!" Psalm 2. Kiss the God of your eternal salvation!

Attend to this: "Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth!" It is the petition of the Church of all the ages.

The kiss is a token of the love of God.

In it the lovers express how they delight in all the manifestation, the revelation which the hearts have exchanged to one another.

Such is the weak shadow among men, and such is the spiritual counterpart in the intimate communion between God and man in Christ Jesus the Lord.

And on that pathway we find the adder, which is called Judas.

Yes, he is called Judas.

That name harmonized with his exalted position: the apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Judas means Praiser of God!

Well, is there anything incongruous in the praiser of God to kiss His Son? I trow not.

But here is the point: Judas is a traitor. Judas is a liar. Judas has the personal Devil in his heart, and the devil instigated that kiss. Satan reveals his inmost heart. It could only have originated in that arch enemy of God and His son. And Judas, an apt pupil of the devil, acquiesces.

The chief priests and he must have planned all this. They must have said: Judas, it is night, and it is dark in the garden. How shall we know that the right person is apprehended. And at that juncture the devil and Judas concocted the plan. When you see me kissing a person, grab him: it is He!

What unspeakable perfidy!

The betrayal of the love of God by a sign which cries from a thousand hills: I love Thee! See, behold, how I love Thee: I will seal it with a kiss. (If we are to believe some commentators, he kissed Him repeatedly, at least most warmly and profusely.)

There was glee in hell that night. But angels hide their faces.

\* \* \*

And yet . . .

Shall we stand from afar, or on the heights of righteous indignation and enjoy our indignation and horror of Judas?

Shall we draw our robes of righteousness a bit tighter around us?

For shame, Judas: I am more righteous than thou!

Shall we draw a diagram of the pit and place Judas in the very center of such drawing: the rays of the wrath of God descending straight from heaven into hell, and the first one who is touched and burned is Judas the perfidious friend of Jesus?

But, oh God, are we without fault, without the fault of Judas?

No, I am not going to accuse you.

Because I am of those that are false and perfidious.

We shall listen to God.

Jesus addresses Judas as His friend, and we wondered at that. But Jesus took him at face value, in order to condemn him the more. Those words of Jesus which I prefixed above this meditation must have been as molten lead on the heart of Judas. Luke 22:48.

But here is the point I desire to make: did not Jesus say the same thing to Peter the Apostle? Peter, lovest thou Me? Lovest thou Me, of Whom thou saidst: I know not the Man!

And David?

Jesus Christ spoke in the Hittite Uriah.

And how did David react to him? Uriah, my friend, go in unto thy wife. Rest from the strenuous task of being a soldier. Go into thy house and have a good time.

But it did not help. Uriah was a man of stern virtue. He slept on the floor, and would have none of connubial bliss.

And then? David played the hypocrite to Joab, and later also to the messenger who brought the evil tidings that Uriah and others had fallen in the battle. ". . . for the sword devoureth *one as well as another*"! Oh, yes, but David had his eye on the obituary of Uriah!

And what doth God say in Jeremiah 17:9?

This: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

And that, my friends, concerns us.

No, let us not draw our robes of righteousness a bit tighter about us. No, let us not stand afar and above poor, pitifully poor, Judas.

I ask you: did you ever play the host to Satan himself? Did the devil ever inhabit your heart? No, I do not ask if you ever had a devil or devils within you. I ask, did you ever have a visit from the arch-fiend himself? I know of no other man of whom the Holy Bible says that the devil came within him. And when that happens, you can expect the things you saw in the lurid light of torches and lanterns in the garden of Gethsemane.

When that happens, your face and my face assume the filthy smile of Satanic deceit. And innocent prey falls by the wayside.

Yes, Jesus called him friend, and there was no divine pity for him. He subsequently hanged himself, and he is damned forever.

Peter was also false, devilishly false, but the Lord loved him from eternity. And after the question: Lovest thou me, Peter? there came the announcement of wonderful work in the kingdom of God. Peter was included in the bundle of the living.

Above this meditation I wrote: WHAT A FRIEND! Note that exclamation point.

It is meant for you to say: not much! But let us in conclusion forget about Judas, and look strongly on Jesus, and then say again: What a Friend! He opened and gave His heart, His all for you and me.

And calls us to be His friends: giving our hearts to Him, and through Him to God, in everlasting adoration for such a Saviour, betrayed by a kiss of perfidy.

G. V.

#### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On March 11, 1956, the Lord willing, our dear Parents and Grandparents

MR. and MRS. JOHN FABER

will commemorate their 30th Wedding Anniversary. We are thankful to our God for having spared them for each other and for us these many years. Our earnest prayer is that He may further bless them in the way that lies ahead.

Their grateful children:

Mr. and Mrs. John Wm. Faber  
Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Faber.  
Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Faber  
and 2 grandchildren.

#### NOW GLORIOUS

I praised the earth, in beauty seen  
With garlands gay of various green;  
I praised the sea, whose ample field  
Shone glorious as a silver shield;  
And earth and ocean seem'd to say,  
"Our beauties are but for a day!"

I praised the sun, whose chariot roll'd  
On wheels of amber and of gold;  
I praised the moon, whose softer eye  
Gleam'd sweetly through the summer sky!  
And moon and sun in answer said,  
"Our days of light are numbered!"

O God! O Good beyond compare!  
If thus Thy meaner works are fair!  
If thus Thy bounties gild the span  
Of ruin'd earth and sinful man,  
How glorious must the mansion be  
Where Thy redeemed shall dwell with Thee!

— Reginald Heber

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Editor — REV. HERMAN HOEKSEMA

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## EDITORIALS

### **The Apostates of 1953 and the Three Points**

An article in *De Wachter* of Feb. 14, 1956, by Prof. M. Monsma, indirectly corroborates what I have been writing about the apostates and the Three Points of 1924. At least, the professor suggests that those that apostatized from the truth as maintained by our churches might better return to the fold of the Christian Reformed Church, and virtually gives them an invitation to do so.

He does so by suggesting to draw a gentle line and to make it as easy as possible for the apostates to return and that, too, for their ministers. To be sure they must apologize, as did Van Weelden, for the sins they have committed by rejecting the Three Points, but it is not necessary to publish all this in the church papers. It would be sufficient and much better according to the professor, that their classes "in such cases would simply announce that, with joy and thanks to God, they make known to the churches that the brother — to be mentioned by name after thorough investigation, fully satisfied the classis and, confidently, gave him consent to preach."

That, it seems to me, is easy enough, provided they agree with the Three Points, and confess that it was sinful that they ever opposed them. This Van Weelden did and this all that apostatized from the Protestant Reformed Churches, no doubt, can also do as, principally, they did already. According to the author of this article in *De Wachter*, and according to the western classis that accepted Van Weelden, they can even retain their ministerial status. This also implies, of course, that the Christian Reformed Church is ready to recognize the instruction in our seminary.

In that case, the minister could take his whole congregation along, and the individual members of such a congregation would not have to apologize.

My advice to them is that they follow the suggestion of Prof. Monsma. As a separate church they will not continue to exist seeing that they have no principle ground on which to stand as such. They have to be swallowed up by some church.

Secondly, Prof. Monsma makes it rather easy to return to the Christian Reformed Church by stating that the apostates are not bad heretics at all.

Writes he: "It seems to me that this is all the more proper because, in regard to those that went along with the schism of 1924, we deal with brethren and sisters who, according to the language of the Synod of 1924, did not want and intend anything else 'than to teach and maintain the doctrine of Scripture and the Confessions.' In those that left us we do not have to do, for instance, with members that became Arminian, Baptist, or even liberal. Not at all. If that were true the case would be entirely different."

Prof. Monsma might have added that the Synod of 1924

also declared, with regard to the pastors Danhof and Hoeksema that "it cannot be denied that, in the fundamental truths, as they are formulated in the Confessions, they are Reformed, although it be with a tendency to one-sidedness."

But, of course, this cannot be said of the apostates or of anyone that subscribes to the Three Points. For the latter surely are not Reformed according to the Confessions.

But, at any rate, the professor here provides an added inducement for the apostates to return to the Christian Reformed fold. And I advise them to follow up this inducement.

This advice, you understand, is based solely on their present attitude and standpoint, not on the basis of the truth. If I should give them advice, sound advice, which is, according to my conviction, based on the truth, I would have to urge them to return from their evil way, to confess from the heart, before God and us, that they have fundamentally departed from the Reformed truth, and that, for a long time already, they have become guilty of slander, intrigue and corrupting our churches. If they would do this we would, indeed, rejoice with thanks to God. But this appears so hopeless that it would seem to be impossible advice. Hence, all they can do if they would still remain as churches, will be that they allow themselves to be swallowed up by the Christian Reformed Church.

There is still a third inducement which the professor offers for the apostates to return to the Christian Reformed Church. This is really the most important of all, because it concerns the Three Points themselves. It is this, that the Three Points are not so bad as we, Danhof, Ophoff, and Hoeksema, always made them.

Writes the professor:

"And it also remains a fact that most of those that left us simply followed a few leaders who read, in the declarations of Kalamazoo, things for which the Synod would never have considered itself responsible. Personally, I am, at any rate, convinced that, if the deviated ones would have accepted our own interpretations of the synodical decisions, instead of the interpretations of the ministers Danhof and Hoeksema, many of them would have remained with us with a good conscience. The brethren above mentioned proclaimed everywhere that we had become unreformed, and that we had taken Arminianism under our wings."

The last sentence is the only one that is true in the above paragraph. It is, indeed, true that we proclaimed everywhere that the Three Points are not Reformed. Moreover, especially at the beginning of our movement, we always offered free debate whenever we proclaimed this. No one ever took up our challenge to debate.

I will still challenge Prof. Monsma to debate with me when I state here that all the rest of the above paragraph is not true.

My interpretation and discussion of the Three Points Prof. Monsma and anyone may read in my *History of the Protestant Reformed Churches*. Anyone may also consult the different volumes of the *Standard Bearer*, not only for

my interpretation, but also for that of the Revs. Danhof and Ophoff. Besides we have discussed openly the brochures of Berkhof and H. J. Kuiper.

We claim that the Three Points:

1. Are not in harmony with the Confessions; nor with Scripture.

2. That, if the Three Points are viewed in the light of the passages of the Confessions and of Scripture that are quoted by the Synod of 1924, they are not Reformed but Arminian and Pelagian.

I will not take space, at present, to prove these contentions. If Prof. Monsma will take up my challenge, however, I will be glad to offer him all the space in our paper he needs. Even at this late date it may be fruitful to conduct a discussion of this nature.

But to prove the two statements above mentioned, I will quote just two glaring examples.

The first of the Three Points, as we all know, reads as follows:

"Relative to the first point which concerns the favorable attitude of God to humanity in general and not only to the elect, Synod declares it to be established according to Scripture and the Confessions that, apart from the saving grace of God shown only to those that are elect unto eternal life, there is also a certain favor or grace of God which he shows to His creatures in general. This is evident from the Scriptural passages quoted and from the Canons of Dordrecht II, 5 and III, IV, 8, 9, which deal with the general offer of the gospel."

Now, I will only refer to the supposed proof for this point in Canons II, 5. There we read:

"Moreover the promise of the gospel is that whosoever believeth in Christ crucified, shall not perish but have everlasting life. This promise, together with the demand to repent and believe, ought to be declared and published to all nations and all persons promiscuously and without distinction, to whom God of his good pleasure sends the gospel."

Now, I would ask Prof. Monsma whether he, by any form of logic or by any stretch of the imagination, can deduce from this passage of the Canons that there is a grace of God to all creatures. Or, to speak more definitely, will he prove from this part of the Canons that God is gracious to the reprobate which is the real intention of the first point when it speaks of a grace or favor of God to all creatures or when it teaches in the last part of a favor or grace of God over his creatures in general as is evident from the general offer of salvation? For that this is the real intention of the first point by the camouflage expression "all creatures" is evident from the original form in which this point appeared in the report of the committee. According to that report the first point had to read that "according to Scripture and the Confession it is established that God is favorably inclined and shows grace unto ungodly and unrighteous under which the reprobate are, of course, comprehended." This, therefore,

is the meaning of the first point: God is gracious to the reprobate in the preaching of the gospel.

Does not Prof. Monsma remember that we sent this particular question, at the time, all over the Reformed world: "What grace do the reprobate receive in the preaching of the gospel?"

Can Prof. Monsma deny that this is the real teaching of the first point?

He cannot.

But can he show that this denial of reprobation is proved by Canons II, 5?

I say: by no stretch of the imagination can he find this false doctrine in this or in any other canon.

What does Canon II, 5 teach? It teaches:

1. That the promise of God unto salvation is particular. It is for those that believe in Christ. And since, according to the Canons and to all our Confessions, faith is a gift of God which is sovereignly bestowed on whomsoever He will bestow it, without the aid or will of man, the promise is for the elect only.

2. That the particular promise must be proclaimed and published to all men and to all nations promiscuously without distinction. In other words, the preaching of the gospel is general, as we have always taught and as we, indeed, practice. And this preaching of the gospel must be accompanied with the command to repent and believe. Does this mean that in the preaching God is graciously inclined to all that hear the gospel? Prof. Monsma knows better. It is all for the salvation of the elect and for the hardening of the reprobate.

3. And this is, not in God's favor to the reprobate, but according to the counsel of God: "to whom God out of his good pleasure sends the gospel."

This, then, is our interpretation of the first point. Let Prof. Monsma attempt a different explanation.

H. H.

## AS TO BOOKS

Expository Outlines on the Whole Bible: Revelation; by Charles Simeon. Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Price \$3.95.

What I have remarked about this commentary in other numbers of our Standard Bearer I may repeat here in regard to this volume on the book of Revelation, even though I cannot agree with every detail of its exposition, which, besides, is rather fragmentary. I have a deep respect for the work of Charles Simeon and gladly recommend it to every student of the Bible. And this ought to include all our readers. This volume is concluded by notes on the composition of a sermon, by Claude, and by several indexes some of which are rather extensive.

As I remarked before, I cannot agree with every detail of this exposition of Revelation. This is not surprising, of course, in view of the many different interpretations of this book. Besides, this is not a continuous commentary. It is very fragmentary. Whole sections as, e. g., chapter VI and several other important parts, are omitted. As to Simeon's view on the millennium, it seems that he adopts the view that, before the coming of the Lord, there will be a period when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth; as the waters cover the sea." The whole world shall then be converted to the faith in Christ. pp. 165 ff. This is also in harmony with his view of "the first resurrection" in Rev. 20:5, which, according to him, does not refer to the bodily resurrection of the saints (with which I can agree), but refers to a figurative resurrection, consisting in this that the piety of the saints shall live in successive generations during "the thousand years" (with which I do not agree).

But I recommend this entire commentary (of which I still did not receive all the volumes) to our readers, convinced that, although they do not agree with every detail, they will derive spiritual benefit from it.

H. H.

*Het Woord Gods Bij Agustinus* (The Word of God in Augustine), by Dr. A. D. R. Polman. Published by J. H. Kok N. V. Kampen, the Netherlands. Price f. 8.90.

That Dr. Polman is interested in the study of Augustine we have learned before from his study about the doctrine Calvin. The volume about the Word of God by Augustine is presented as the first of a series under the general heading "The Theology of Augustine." The book has seven chapters: 1. The Word of God, Christ; 2. The Word of God as Holy Writ; 3. The Word of God as the Word of Christ; 4. The Word of God as Preaching; 5. The Word of God in the Church; 6. The Word of God in the Personal Christian Life; 7. Without and by the Word of God.

In a general introduction, the author tells us that he lets Augustine speak as much as possible. This promise he, indeed, fulfils very liberally. The book is filled with many quotations from the works of Augustine. He also distinguishes, throughout the book, the period of Augustine's life and work, in which this church father was still rather deeply influenced by Neo-Platonic philosophy and the last period when he had largely, though not entirely overcome this influence. Interesting it is to read that Augustine placed the Septuagint on a par with the Hebrew original of the Old Testament and emphasized that they were equally inspired, and that he even believed the legend about the origin of the Septuagint.

The author writes a clear style. The quotations from Augustine's works are all translated. Anyone, therefore, that is interested in the study of Augustine and that can read Dutch, had better acquire this book of Dr. Polman.

H. H.

## OUR DOCTRINE

### THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE

AN EXPOSITION OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

PART III — OF THANKFULNESS

LORD'S DAY 52

Chapter One

A Serious Limiting Clause

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." But I need quote no more. All Scripture is full of the truth that justification cannot possibly stand alone, but must have its end and fruit in sanctification and complete deliverance from sin and death. Nevertheless, the relation between the fifth and sixth petition is such that the former is basic for the latter. Justification is the basis of sanctification. In the gift of justification we have the right to be sanctified. We are justified in order that we may be delivered from sin and death. We are pardoned in order that we may be liberated. We are forgiven in order that we may be freed from the power and pollution of sin.

There is still another relation between the fifth and sixth petition of the Lord's Prayer. In the objective sense, as we said, the forgiveness of sins is the ground of the deliverance from evil; and justification looks forward to sanctification. But also subjectively, that is, in the experience of the believer and in the application of these blessings to the elect, the two are most intimately related and can never be separated. In the life and consciousness of the Christian justification never exists alone, without sanctification. He that believes that he is justified is already in principle delivered from evil. Although in the objective sense justification is the basis of sanctification, yet in principle the believer is made holy and is principally delivered from evil before he can ever lay hold on the blessing of the forgiveness of sins. It is the regenerated, called, and believing Christian that longs for, seeks, and receives his justification in Christ Jesus our Lord. For it is only the beginning of a sincere love of God and the consciousness of a deep sorrow after God that makes the believer cry for forgiveness. But by the same token, the prayer for forgiveness of sins cannot be his final request with respect to sin. As long as he is in need of the prayer for remission, he has not reached perfection. He is still sinful, and he still transgresses the good commandments of his God in thought, word, and deed. With this condition he can never be satisfied. The very same sorrow after God that makes him bemoan his sins and impells him to cry out for forgiveness also causes him to hate sin, to realize the danger of falling into temptation while he is in this world, to seek strength to fight against the powers of evil within him and



round about him, and to long and pray for the state in which he will be completely delivered from the dominion and corruption of sin and serve his Father in heaven in perfect righteousness. Hence, the petition for forgiveness of sins already looks forward to, and must needs be followed by this other prayer, "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

The question now is: what is the idea of temptation?

According to the Heidelberg Catechism, temptation is the occasion and cause of a very bitter spiritual warfare against "our mortal enemies, the devil, the world, and our own flesh," that never cease to assault us.

The Greek term that in the New Testament is translated by the English "temptation" does not always have the same connotation. In James 1:2 we read: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." In this passage the word could better have been translated by our English "trials," as is evident from the fact that in vs. 3 the text continues as follows: "Knowing, this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." The meaning is that temptations, or rather, trials, test the faith of the believer, give to that faith a tried character, and thus bear the fruit of the spiritual grace of patience. The same is evidently the meaning in vs. 12 of the same chapter. There we read: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." The same term that in the above passages is translated by "temptations" occurs in I Peter 4:12, but is there correctly translated by the term "trial." There we read: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you." This is also true of I Peter 1:6, though there in the Authorized Version the term is translated by "temptations," while the Revised Version renders it more correctly by "trials." In this passage we read: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations." But on the other hand, there are also several passages where the word evidently means temptations in the evil sense of the word. Thus it is clearly in James 1:13, 14: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man! But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." Here the term is evidently used in the unfavorable sense of the word, and has the same meaning as in Matt. 4:1, where we read: "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil." There are more passages in Holy Writ where the word is properly translated by "tempt" or "temptation," while in some cases it is difficult to determine what is the proper rendering.

It is evident from the above passages that the term "temptation" has two different connotations, one favorable, the other unfavorable. Or perhaps we may say that the concept which is denoted by the term *temptation* may be ap-

plied in a favorable and an unfavorable, in a good and an evil sense of the word. It may be conceived from two different points of view.

Fact is that temptation and trial are closely related concepts. They are materially the same, only they differ with respect to their aim and motive. It is perhaps safe to say that for the people of God all temptation is also trial, and trial is at the same time temptation. Yet there is a good deal of difference between the two. First of all, we may note that one cannot speak of trial with respect to the wicked. Trial presupposes something good in man which is put to the test and which is improved, purified, and strengthened by the testing process. Gold and silver are tried, in order to purify them, to separate the foreign elements in them, and to enhance the beauty of their luster. But one does not test a lump of clay or a piece of stone. The wicked, therefore, cannot be said to be tried, for there is no good in them. They are totally depraved. But God's people are tried in as far as they are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, in order that the power and beauty of the work of God's grace may become manifest, they may be purified, and strengthened in their faith, so that the trial of their faith may be to the "praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." I Peter 1:7. The wicked are indeed tempted, but never tried. For while trial aims at the bringing to light the beauty of the work of God's grace, temptation appeals to the sinful nature of the wicked and causes him to manifest himself in all the corruption of his nature. However, it will be evident that the very same means whereby the people of God are tried also constitute for them temptations. For there is but a small beginning of the new obedience in them, and all the rest is flesh and corruption. What therefore is a trial of their faith is at the same time a temptation for their sinful nature. When, for instance, a believer is threatened with the loss of a profitable position in the world unless he in some way becomes unfaithful and denies his Lord, his faith is being tried; but the same situation is an appeal to his sinful nature to deny Christ and keep his position. It certainly was a fiery trial of their faith when in the early church believers were sometimes confronted with the choice of confessing that Caesar was lord or being thrown into a pot filled with boiling oil. But of course, the enemy meant this horrible threat to be a temptation for their flesh, to bow the knee to Caesar and to deny the sole lordship of Christ. And thus it is always: what is a trial for our faith is a temptation for our flesh.

But this is not all.

We must make a further distinction between trial and temptation.

Trial always presents the truth; temptation is always a lie. Temptation always presents the way of sin and iniquity, of backsliding and unfaithfulness, of denying Christ and violating the covenant of God, as something desirable, as a good that is worth striving for, as preferable to the way of obedience, righteousness, holiness, and faithfulness to Christ.

When God places the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in paradise, and gives man the so-called probationary command, He proves, He tries, Adam. But He tells him the truth, "The day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." But when the devil tempts man in paradise, he presents the lie to him. He contradicts the Word of God, causes the woman to see that the tree was good for food and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; he tells her, moreover, that they shall not surely die, but that God is jealous in the evil sense of the word and knows that when they eat of the tree, their eyes shall be opened and they shall be as God, knowing good and evil. And thus it is always. It is never a good, a thing to be desired, to walk in the way of iniquity, to pursue after evil, to violate the Word of God, and to serve mammon. That truth is always presented as truth in trial. But temptation always makes use of the lie, that there is a good apart from God, in the way of sin. Temptation is moral, ethical deception; trial deals with the truth.

We must make still another distinction between trial and temptation.

There is between the two a fundamental difference in motive and purpose. Hatred of God and hatred of one another, hatred of that which is good and delight in sin and corruption, — these are the motives of temptation. And the purpose of the tempter is always God's dishonor and the damnation and destruction of the believer. It makes no difference who it is that assumes the role of tempter in regard to you. It may be your husband or wife, your brother or sister, your dearest friend: in the capacity of tempter he hates God and you, and seeks your destruction. When your best friend tempts you to depart from the way of truth and righteousness and to follow after the lie and vanity, he is your enemy, and you should never hesitate to say to him: "Get thee behind me, Satan." But trial is always motivated by love, by the love of God and of one another. And the purpose of trial is always your own good and salvation. Temptation, then, is that lying appeal to our sinful nature that is motivated by enmity against God, His cause, and His people, and which aims at God's dishonor and destruction.

Such, in brief, is the idea of temptation.

## Chapter Two

### God's Sovereignty Over Temptations

We must not overlook the fact that in the sixth petition the believer is taught to pray emphatically, "*Lead us not into temptation.*"

The meaning of these words is not, and cannot possibly be, that the believer implores his Father in heaven that he may never be tempted or tried. For that would be impossible as long as we still have but a small beginning of the new obedience, as long as we are still in the flesh and in the world, and as long as the devil goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Hence, the meaning cannot be either that the child of God prays to his Father in heaven that he

may not be led into the circumstances and situations that constitute temptations. Also this would require that the Lord remove us from the world. As long as we are in the world, we are surrounded by temptations. The three factors, or agencies, that work together to bring us into the temptation are always present. For, as we said before, they are the well-known triumvirate of the devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh.

The devil is the arch-liar and deceiver. And he is Satan, the opponent of God and of His people. And although he no longer has the power to deceive which he did in the old dispensation, and although he can no longer enter into heaven as he did before the coming of Christ (cf. Job 1, Rev. 12), because Christ is now in heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God, exalted in the highest heaven, and clothed with all power in heaven and on earth, yet the devil has great power, and constantly seeks to deceive and devour the people of God. He does not do so personally and individually, for he is by no means omnipresent. It appears that only in crucial moments of history the devil appears in person on the scene of temptation to deceive the people of God. He did so in paradise, in the form of a serpent, to induce our first parents to fall away from the living God. He did so in the case of Job, when God gave him permission to torment that servant of the Lord. And he did so in the case of Judas Iscariot, in whose heart Satan entered, that he might betray his Lord. But for the rest we do not read that Satan appears personally, although most likely in the days of Antichrist and of Gog and Magog he will take a personal part. But he has many helpers. He is the chief of the demons, and they obey him, and evidently go wherever he sends them. And therefore, there is a host of wickedness in high places, according to Scripture, against which we have our battle.

Secondly, there is the agency of the world in its evil sense, the world of which the apostle John writes: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." In a thousand ways that world, in the midst of which we have our life and walk, tempts us to leave the way of righteousness and to follow after the lusts of the flesh. Sometimes it attacks us by its vain philosophy, attempting to toss us to and fro by every wind of false doctrine. Then again, it tries to entice us by its treasures and pleasures, offering them to us if we will only forsake the way of truth and righteousness and become unfaithful to our Lord and our Father in heaven. Again, it threatens us with the fury of its wrath, deprives us of name and position in the world, mocks and blasphemes, or even erects scaffold and stake, to terrorize us into the denial of the name of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ. That world too, therefore, is a powerful agency of temptation. And the child of God can never avoid it. H.H.



## THE DAY OF SHADOWS

### The Prophecy of Zechariah

The Solemn declaration to Joshua, verses 6-10.

6. *And the angel of the Lord protested to Joshua and said,*

7. *Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts, If thou wilt walk in my ways and keep my charge, Thou shalt judge my house and also keep my courts, And I will give thee access among those standing here.*

8. *Hear, I pray, O Joshua the highpriest, Thou and thy colleagues who sit before thee, For men of wonder are they, For, behold, I bring my servant, Branch.*

9. *For, behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone are seven eyes; Behold, I shall engrave the engravings thereof; And I remove the iniquity of this land in one day.*

10. *In that day, saith the Lord of Hosts, shall ye invite every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree.*

6. *Protest* — Not in the sense of *object* to. The meaning is that the angel solemnly affirmed, vowed to the highpriest.

7. *Walk in my ways* — Be undefiled in the way by walking in the law of the Lord and seeking Him with the whole heart (Ps. cxix. I, 2), or, in the language of the New Testament Scriptures, lay off sin and put on Christ as every believer is certain to do by God's grace. *Keep my charge* — This expression must be explained in its context. The common priests made atonement for individual offenders. But the Lord's charge to the highpriest was that he make atonement for the accumulated iniquities of the whole congregation of the children of Israel that they might be clean from all their sins before the Lord. This was done annually on the great day of atonement (Lev. xvi. 29). On this day Aaron lay both his hands upon the live goat, and confessed over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions and all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, whereupon he was sent away into the wilderness as bearing away, symbolically, all the iniquities of the people. The other goat in the transaction was slain. Its blood was sprinkled by the highpriest upon the mercy-seat — upon the lid of the ark of the covenant that stood in the holy place — and accepted of the Lord as a covering of the sins of the people. If Joshua will fear the Lord — if he will faithfully cover, blot out (symbolically) the sins of the covenant people by the blood of his sacrifice, intercede for them as he saw himself doing in the vision, confess their sins and implore Jehovah's forgiveness — he will be rewarded. The Lord will exalt him. It will be given him to judge God's house. If by "house" is understood the temple that at the time was in process of being built, the promise is that Joshua will be given custody of the temple and the oversight over the common priests in order that he may guard against all idolatry and the profanation of the services by unworthy

priests and carnal worshippers. But the difficulty is that the charge to the highpriest already included these honors. Eli had the custody of the sanctuary. But his great fault was that he did not use his authority to restrain his wicked sons who were desecrating the sacrifices. If by "house" is understood the people of Israel, the promise is that Joshua will be given also the kingship so that he will be the sole ruler in the post-exilic community as well as the great priest. But then he must have replaced Zerubbabel — a view for which there is not the slightest basis. So it is best to regard the promise as holding forth to Joshua eventual custody of the temple.

In the final instance the promise has respect to Christ, and the temple to the church of the elect, the whole family of redeemed, all the members of which are priests and kings unto God. Being come a highpriest, Christ entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us — entered in not by the blood of goats and calves but by His own blood. Here the atoning blood and the priest are one and the same. He was obedient unto death even the death of the cross. He, in a word, kept the charge. And therefore God also mightily exalted Him and gave Him a name which is above every name. And this mighty Christ was given to be the head over all things in the church. This house He gathers. To Him was given its key — the key of David. He openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth. *And also keep my courts* — elucidation of the promise of the previous clause. The reference is to the courts of the temple, the outer court, the holies, and the holiest place. It will be Joshua's duty and privilege to see to it that no one enters these sacred places who has no right. *And I will give thee places to walk among those standing here* — An important additional promise. Those standing here or by are the angels in the vision. They stand by the angel of Jehovah as poised to do His bidding as His servants. It will be given Joshua freely to walk among them. They will be his friends. Implied is that at all times he will have free access to the throne of grace as intercessor of the people for whom he acts. So did the Father reward Christ. When He had kept the charge, blotted out by His death the sins of His people and was raised from the dead because of their justification, the Father gave Him and His people in Him places to walk among the angels — a privilege that they once enjoyed but had lost through Adam's transgression.

8. Verses 8 and 9 contain the concluding promises. *Hear . . . O Joshua the highpriest* — Though Joshua has been paying strict attention all along, he nevertheless is admonished to hear. It indicates that what the angel is now about to declare is of highest significance. *Thou and thy colleagues* — Joshua's companions in office, namely the common priests. They are now absent. But the words of the angel will be relayed to them by Joshua. Then with undivided attention they shall listen to what is reported. *Who sit before thee* — Not now while Joshua stands before the angel but in the assembly of priests. *For men of wonder are they* — It would

be strange if the reference here were to the common priests alone and not also to Joshua seeing that he was the high-priest. Joshua and his colleagues were men of wonder as priests, that is, their being men of this description subsisted not in their person but in their office. As priests in offering sacrifices and making atonement for sin they were signs and wonders, miracles. This is the idea. For the Hebrew here is *mopheeth*, a word used of miracles performed by God and by those sent by Him, Exod 4:21; 7:3, 9, etc. And to *wonder* the Scriptures join *sign*. The expression "signs and wonders" is common. Joshua and his companions as priests were not the body, reality — it was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin. — but they were signs, shadows, types, that is they pointed away from themselves to something else. And as signs they were wonders. For they foreshadowed, signified as signs not things earthly and not things illusory, but they foreshadowed the realities of God's heavenly kingdom — Christ and His redemption — that God would surely bring forth, would needs have to bring forth because of their being foreshadowed, promised of Him. That this is the meaning is plain from the succeeding line. *For, behold, I will bring forth my servant BRANCH* — The thought-process is clearly this: Joshua and his companions are wonders. For they foreshadow my servant Branch. They do surely, Because without fail I, God, will bring him forth. But there is more to say. The fact that the covenant people are being told that Joshua and his companions, that thus the priesthood foreshadows God's servant Branch, means that they are being given to understand that he will be brought forth as priest, even as their true priest and that this priest, God's servant Branch, seeing that he is not just another shadow but the body, will cause all their sins to pass from upon them not by the blood of bulls and goats, for then he, too, were but a shadow, but by his own blood. This is the thrust of the Gospel as it here being proclaimed unto them. The only question is whether they understood. We may say that they did but without our losing sight of the fact that it was the dispensation of Shadows. The Spirit was not yet to lead into all truth in that Christ had not yet died. One thing may be regarded as certain, namely that they did understand that their sins were not being covered, blotted out, by the death of their animal sacrifices, that thus they were not being redeemed from their iniquities by the priesthood that now represented them. But by whose blood, if not by this blood? And by what priest, if not by this priesthood? These must have been among the questions uppermost in the mind of every saint. By what blood? By the blood of God's servant Branch. By what priest? By the priest whom God calls "my servant Branch." For Joshua and his companions are men of wonder. They foreshadowed this priest. This was now God's answer to these questions. He had answered them before and all along, but never in this way. It was new instruction, new light shed upon the promise. So, in this way, in the way of shedding always new light upon the promise and thereby

causing it to unfold before the eyes of His people, God was preparing the church for the coming of His servant Branch.

In the above interpretation I proceeded on the basis of the view that the priests were men of wonder because they typified Christ our great highpriest. However, the priests — the priesthood — may also be taken as typifying the family of redeemed, formed as they are of a people made of Christ priests, and kings unto God. The type of Christ was more particularly the highpriest. Perhaps we should retain both views by combining them. But if the former view be adopted, the flow of thought of these verses is this: The priests, being what they are, men of wonder typifying the family of redeemed formed as they are of man made of Christ priests and kings unto God, is a sure pledge that I, Jehovah, will bring forth without fail Branch, the Christ, that He may redeem the people typified by these men of wonder.

*My servant Branch* — written without the article — Branch. Not, *the* Branch. For there are not other Branches in comparison with which he is *the* Branch. There is then but one Branch, namely this servant. Zerubbabel was not this servant. He was not Branch as some claim. For the priesthood did not typify him, seeing that he was the governor of the post-exilic community. Besides, he had already appeared upon the scene, while Branch was still to be brought forth. It was necessary that God call him "my servant Branch," in other words, that servant be joined to Branch. For the name *servant* was borne also by the people of Israel as a whole and in addition by the church of the elect. Besides, the prophets were also servants of God and every saint in Israel as well. That it might be known that it was he that God meant when talking about Him to the covenant people, He set Him apart from all other servants by calling Him "my servant Branch." And the name Branch, better *shoot*, *scion* became Him. For that is what He was, namely, a scion, a shoot coming forth out of the stump of Jesse, a scion growing out of his roots (Isa. ii. 1). A stump, let us consider, is what remains of a stately tree, when it is cut down. The family tree, the house of Jesse, the father of king David, had been cut down, reduced to a stump in the ground, that is, all its earthly power and glory had been made to pass from it even long before Christ came forth out of it as born of the virgin. The throne of David had been vacant for all of four hundred years. Worse than this. At the time of Christ's birth it was occupied by an Edomite, descendant of the reprobated Esau. And to the world-power that he represented the people of Israel were in bondage. How had the gold become dim. What a difference, as to status, mode of existence and circumstance of life, between Joseph, the supposed father of Jesus, and Solomon, — the former a poor carpenter, the latter king of glory (typical) who had ruled over an empire that stretched from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates. Out of that stump Jesus came forth. He was, therefore, indeed what His name signified — not a tall, mighty and stately tree, but Branch, scion, a shoot growing out of a stump in a dry ground. So, of earthly

power and glory He had nothing. He was strictly without form, comeliness, beauty that anyone should desire Him (Isa. liii. 2). But being a shoot of the stump of Jesse, what He did have was the promises of God. And as we shall see presently, with these promises our prophet is again occupied in the succeeding verses.

A similar imagery is contained in the prophecy of Ezekiel (Chapter xvii). There is a difference, but it is not essential. Here Christ is not a shoot that grows out of a stump in a dry ground but a tender twig that God crops off, the topmost branch of a strong and lofty cedar — the house of Israel — that He has plucked up by the roots and left to wither and die. He plants the twig in the mountain of the height of Israel. The twig takes root, brings forth boughs, and bears fruit, and is a goodly cedar. Under it dwell all fowl of every wing. And all the trees of the field know that it is the Lord who has brought down the high tree, and exalted the low tree, dried up the green tree, and made the dry tree, the tender twig, to flourish. This is a wonder. It is an accomplishment of which Jehovah alone is capable. For the Messiah was but a root-shoot, a twig cropped off a tree, without beauty and undesired therefore. Nay worse, He was despised and rejected of all men. From a human standpoint, therefore, He was without expectation altogether.

*For, behold, I bring forth* — Namely Branch, scion. God brought Him forth. He sent His only begotten Son. By the wonder of His grace He made Him to grow out of the stump of Jesse. That alone God could do. For the stump was rooted in a dry ground. There was no moisture. And so it was not by the will of man that Christ was born of the virgin. But the Holy Ghost came upon her, and she was overshadowed by the power of the Highest. Therefore also that holy thing that was born of her was called the Son of God (Luke i. 34). And the Spirit of Jehovah rested upon Him — the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, and made Him quick of understanding (Isa. ii. 3). And when He bore the burden of God's wrath against our sin, who was it that sustained Him? None other than God. And isn't it owing to God alone that the tender twig, planted of Him in the mountain of the height of Israel — and the height of Israel here is the Zion that is above — brings forth boughs and bears fruit? Christ is the vine and His people the branches. But the husbandman is the Father. He planted the twig. "Behold, I bring forth my servant Branch." The goodly cedar is God's production, and His alone. This receives the emphasis also in what follows.

9. *For, behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua, upon one stone seven eyes* — The one stone is the same stone that was laid before Joshua, so that the meaning is: For, behold, upon the one stone that I have laid before Joshua shall be seven eyes. What is the stone? Here follows the several answers that have been given to this question: the precious stone adorning the highpriest's breast; the stone as substitute for the ark of the covenant that had been permanently

lost; the temple itself; the people of Israel as the foundation of the new order of things; the kingdom or people of God, outwardly insignificant when compared with the great mountain (iv. 7); the plummet.

All of these explanations are doubtful. It is well to observe in the first place that this verse is closely connected with the preceding, and that the connecting particle "for," Hebrew *ki*, is causal, so that the thought-process here is this: I will bring forth my servant Branch who by His death, such is the implication, will cause all your sins to pass from upon you, because, behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua, upon this stone shall be seven eyes. So then, God will bring forth His servant Branch, the Christ *because* He has laid this stone before Joshua, this one stone, the head stone, chief corner stone (iv. 7). In the first instance this head stone is the chief cornerstone of Zerubbabel's temple. Upon this stone shall be seven eyes or facets, namely a number of small plane surfaces like those of a cut diamond and shining like eyes. The stone, therefore, must be some kind of gem or precious stone to begin with. For it has possibilities. It can be cut or engraved like a diamond and thereby be made to glitter. *Behold, I will engrave the engravings thereof, saith the Lord* — The stone (of Zerubbabel's temple) will be beautified by the Lord. He will do the engraving, of course, through human artificers as His organs. The stone in its beauty, like the temple, will be His workmanship. This stone is unto Joshua the certain pledge that God without fail will bring forth Branch, the Christ. *And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day* — All the guilt of the people is to be removed on one day. This, too, will be God's work that He will accomplish through the Branch on the great day of atonement at Golgotha.

10. *In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree* — This phrase is borrowed from I Kings 4:25, where it describes the happy period under Solomon. Here is again hung before us an earthly picture of the blessedness of the saints — their peace and prosperity — as residents of the new earth.

How plain then from the flow of thought in this passage that the stone typified Christ. That the stone fore-shadows Christ is proved by the following considerations: 1) The context does not indicate that the stone signifies anything else but strongly favors the view that it typifies Christ. 2) It is called one stone in the text, which can only mean that it is the head stone (iv. 7), the chief corner stone of Zerubbabel's temple. According to I Peter ii. 6, 7 the chief corner stone is Christ. 3) The stone has seven eyes, facets. In Rev. v. 6 Christ is presented to view having seven eyes. 4) Like Christ the stone of Zerubbabel's temple was precious and chosen. 5) God was the founder and beautifier of this stone. So, too, was He the founder and beautifier of Christ. 6) The text states that God will bring forth Branch, the Christ because he has laid before Joshua this stone. This can only imply that the stone typifies Christ.

G. M. O.

## FROM HOLY WRIT

### Exposition of I Corinthians 1-4

#### 10.

In connection with the verses 1-4 of the second chapter of I Corinthians we must still make a few observations. We refer, of course, to the rather well-known theory that Paul gives expression to a *renewed* and a *rededicated* resolve to walk in the calling wherewith he had been called as an Apostle.

The theory just mentioned reasons, briefly, as follows:

In the first place, that Paul prior to his coming to Corinth had labored exceedingly hard and with much hardship in Philippi, Thessalonica and in Berea. There he had endured great persecution so that it was necessary for him to flee from Macedonia and come to Athens.

Paul, according to this theory, had come to Athens and there he had preached something besides Jesus Christ and Him crucified! He had proclaimed a certain "natural theology" in Athens, in appealing to the religiousness and perverted worship of these Athenians, particularly in their worship of the UNKNOWN GOD. But that ministry had failed, and so Paul, having taken inventory of these labors in Athens, sees its shortcomings, its inadequacy!

Hence, when Paul comes to Corinth, so this theory holds, he resolved that here he would know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified! With the failure in Athens in mind he says "And I, having come to you, determined to know nothing except Jesus Christ and Him crucified!"

Now, what are we to say about this "theory" in the light of the very wording of the text in question itself, as well as from what we read in Acts 17, where Luke records to us the labors of Paul in Athens?

In the first place, we would observe that there is nothing in the entire context here to even suggest this "interpretation" of the phrase here in question. Paul is here not making an apology for his labors in Athens, but rather he here is defending the truth that in his labors in Corinth he had proclaimed, had not held back from proclaiming the full counsel of God. See Acts 20:28. Paul here takes away from these partisans, Pauline partisans every imaginary reason for boasting in Paul and not in the Lord! Here is a grandeur beyond compare. And this grandeur of Paul's humble boast cannot be shaken by a specious theory that Paul here speaks by implication of his failure in Athens, a failure which he did not repeat in Corinth.

Besides, a careful reading of the text in the original Greek shows us that Paul does not state here at all a resolution, a "determination" *not to preach* anything save Jesus Christ and Him Crucified. Literally the text reads: "For not I judged to preach anything in your midst save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." The negation is with the judgment.

Paul did not plan to leave the beaten path, which he had faithfully pursued up till this point. He had never left it up till this point, and even *in Corinth* he did not make an exception to the rule. Had such been the case, then — of course, these partisans would be able to place the responsibility of their boasting in Paul upon Paul himself. Paul's preaching in Corinth was true to the very Word of the Cross, and such preaching simply excludes all boasting, save in the Lord!

Furthermore, a careful examination of Paul's labors in Athens shows that it is rather far-fetched to distil from the Scriptural accounts of Acts 17, that Paul had there been derelict in his apostolic duty. The Apostle certainly did not pour strange waters of a "natural theology" with the pure waters of the "Word of the Cross"!

In the first place this is proven by the real fruit of faith in the hearts of some of the Athenians. In Acts 17:34, "Howbeit, certain men clave unto him, and believed: among them which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them." That there was not much fruit, that not many believed here is not due to the fact that Paul's preaching here lacked efficaciousness, since it was empty of the Word of the Cross, but rather to the fact, that God did not have "much people" of election in the city! Compare Acts 18:9, 10. And, let it be noticed, that there was not only fruit upon Paul's labors performed in the Jewish synagogue (vs. 17) but that his speech, spoken in the Areopagus, the so-called "Natural Theology" speech, also bore fruit of faith and repentance. Certainly the crucified and risen Lord sanctioned the labors of Paul in Athens, as is attested by the very evident fruit of faith wrought by the preaching through the Holy Ghost, as the Spirit of Christ.

Secondly, that Paul's preaching in Athens was not a leaving of the Word of the Cross, but a preaching of the full counsel of God, in as far as the moral consciousness of these Stoics and Epicureans permitted of, is proven from a careful analysis of the speech of Paul himself in Athens, standing in the Areopagus.

I cannot do better than to quote here what I wrote on this subject already in 1944. I quote in part from Beacon Lights, December, 1944. There I wrote under the heading "Paul's Speech In The Areopagus," and noticed three cardinal points in this message.

The first was: "God in His relationship to the creature. Vss. 24, 25."

Concerning this we wrote: "He is the Creator. He made the Cosmos as it is one harmonious, beautiful whole. And nothing is to be excluded from this work of creation. As such He is *transcendent* above the creature. He has an essence apart from the Cosmos. Therefore, also apart from temples *made with hands*. God dwells in Himself. This has been changed by foolish man. . . ."

Further: "This God, *being Lord of heaven and earth*, does not need to be served for the reason, that without our service He would lack. He is the FOUNTAIN! . . . ." The proof of this, according to Paul here in Athens is: Creation

and providence. And concerning these fundamental works of God Paul makes the following clear: "1. God as the Fountain gives life and breath and all things . . . God gives us existence. He upholds all things by the Word of His power, Heb. 1:3. This was a fundamental blow at all the idols of heathendom, and of that of these Athenians in particular! 2. Indeed these Athenians did not know GOD! And their whole philosophic conception and foolish religion topples with this one mighty cut of the Word of God."

I now ask: is Paul in thus preaching to these Athenians not preaching the Word of the Cross *implicitly*? One might as well, it seems to me, accuse John of the same thing in the "Prologue" of the first 18 verses of his Gospel. And, again, one might as well accuse Paul of the same in Romans 1:18 through Romans 2:16. To teach that man can know God apart from the Word of the Cross is one thing; but to deny the "glimmerings of natural light" and the "external regard for virtue, the difference between good and evil" is quite another. And when Paul appeals to this "glimmerings of natural light" in these Stoics and Epicureans, he finds a psychological "point of contact" in this Audience! Yes, the greater part keeps even this truth down in unrighteousness. Yet, even so, they betray that once they were created in the image of God!

It seems to me that we should never allow the fact of man's depravity as taught by Scripture and confessed in the Confessions, to be so interpreted that the "glimmerings of natural light," the *traces* of the original, be no longer recognized. Man does not become an animal, an irrational brute. This is evident from the song of Cleanthes, the Stoic, quoted by Paul in verse 28 "For we are also his offspring." Of course, this quotation of Cleanthes is no indication that this Stoic properly understood the real truth of the matter as taught in Scripture and confessed by the church. On the contrary. Cleanthes did not understand. Even so, he kept down the truth in unrighteousness by doing which he became "without excuse" before God. Cleanthes, even in composing this song, did not sin in a vacuum. He sinned keeping down the truth in unrighteousness. And so he never engaged in "natural theology," but was busy with "unnatural idolatry."

And, finally, let it be understood that Paul also directly preached Christ, the judgment of the world by the Son of God. He makes his speech effective by appealing to the "work" of the law, in which they are ever engaged even in their depravity.

Such is Paul's "point of contact" here when he would preach Christ, who hath put and is putting all things under his feet. That only a "few" are here thus "apprehended of Christ" does not change the fact of Paul's moral and judicial point of contact in the minds of these Athenians. Their "seeking" God is not the true seeking which finds, but is the seeking of God, in trying to feel after him and find Him. They first identify Divinity with the creature. And then try the impossibility of finding the Transcendent One, who

does not live in temples made with hands! That is not natural theology taught by Paul, but a spiritual-psychological analysis of the blind, of moral depravity seeking what it cannot find, and, yet, not finding, can never be blessed. For man cannot rest save he rests in God.

And so when a "few" are apprehended here by Christ, it still remains true that "I was found of them that sought me not." And to this axiom of Scripture Paul remains faithful also in this sermon in the Areopagus.

Wherefore, we take the stand, for the above enumerated reasons, that the entire theory of Paul's having been derelict in his duty in Athens rests upon conjecture, exegetical inaccuracy, and stems from a preconceived philosophic and dogmatical bias. Surely the heathen philosophers did not and could not construct a natural theology; but to show this we can employ better weapons than those of misunderstanding! Furthermore, we need not throw away the baby with the wash. Let us maintain the "glimmerings of natural light" lest we lose a "point of contact" even in testifying in an evil world of sin, righteousness and judgment!

Such Paul did not do in Athens!

And here in the church at Corinth? He is the unchanged Paul. The content of His preaching is not different in Corinth than in Athens. The audience was different and so the "approach" is different here in the stronghold of philosophic tradition.

Let not the modern common grace enthusiast make of Paul's speech the occasion of a "natural theology," nor the Pauline partisan make Paul's preaching a reason for strife. But let everyone, who feareth the Lord, glory in the Lord in creation and in re-creation!

G. L.

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### Notice for Classis West

Classis West of the Protestant Reformed Churches will meet, the Lord willing, in Edgerton, Wednesday, March 7, 1956. The consistories are reminded of the rule that they are expected to nominate an elder or elders who are able to serve as synodical delegate.

Rev. H. Veldman, Stated Clerk

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### Bound Volume Notice

A charge of \$5.00 will be made for all bindings beginning with Volume 32. Credit of \$1.50 will be given upon return of complete set of the old issue.

The Board

## IN HIS FEAR

### The Sabbath In His Fear

(5)

"Equally true it is that what is good and according to God's law on Monday is good and according to His law on the Sabbath."

So we wrote in the February 1 issue of the *Standard Bearer*.

We pause briefly in our consideration of how positively to observe the Sabbath in His fear, as we began to do in the last issue, to say a few more things about the above statement.

There may be need for this. At least it was brought to our attention that there might for some be need of clarification.

We want to make sure that the sentence taken all by itself out of the paragraph and out of the whole series on "The Sabbath In His Fear" is not used to overthrow all that which we have thus far written. We did not write the statement above about the Sabbath and Monday's works to open a back door to all manner of activity on the Sabbath after tightly padlocking the front door.

The fact cannot be denied that there are times when we all perform works on the Sabbath which we condemn when they are executed by the world on the Sabbath; and we perform them convinced that we did so because we interpreted the Sabbath as Jesus did: "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath."

We would not go fishing on the Sabbath; and we condemn it as an act of unbelief in the countless number of the world who wait for the Sabbath exactly for such pleasure seeking. However, we would not deny the youth of our church who are serving in the armed forces of our country and who might be forced down in a forsaken part of our country on late Saturday afternoon, because of plane engine failure or the like, to fish on the Sabbath morning in order to try to obtain some food for the day. We would not insist that to fish — which is good and according to God's law on Monday — is forbidden them and that God ordains that, though He has brought them down by a stream with plenty of fish, He insists that they go without food all that day. Jesus defended His disciples who picked corn to eat as they walked through the fields. Catching fish, which is good and according to God's law on Monday is good and according to God's law on the Sabbath also.

With no need to catch fish for the necessities of our body for that day, with plenty of other food on hand, going out to fish would mean that we sin against the Holy God; but not because it is sinful to fish on the Sabbath. The sin is not one of fishing. The sin is that of using the day for a purpose for which it had not been given by God in His grace and of not using it for the purpose for which He did give it. The sin is

that one of which Paul speaks to Timothy and tells him that we can expect these things in the time in which we live — it was not manifested so clearly and boldly in the Church at that time! — that men are "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God," II Timothy 3:4. Our sin, then, is that by our fishing or whatever earthly pleasure we seek, we say to God that we deem this more important than to worship Him in His sanctuary, that we consider the things of this present life more enjoyable and more worth our time and effort than the salvation He has prepared for His people. The sin is not in the activity as such that we are engaged in on that day but in our purpose and motive in seeking it.

We buy on the Sabbath when it becomes *essential*. We buy gasoline when we receive word that a loved one is dying in a distant city. We buy a train ticket, a bus or a plane ticket when it becomes essential to being with such a loved one before he is taken away from us. We buy and sell medicine. We buy electricity, though we pay for it on another day. We hire men to work for us that we may broadcast the gospel over the air on the Sabbath.

In all this it becomes evident that what is good and according to God's law on Monday is also good and according to His law on the Sabbath. We sin when we do these things on the Sabbath when the motive for doing them is wrong. That is what always determines whether a deed is wrong or right in God's sight. There are works that are in themselves wicked because they can have no good motive. One cannot bow down before an idol with a righteous motive. That is always a wrong deed. Even works that outwardly seem evil can be according to God's law and good in His sight. The man who closes the switch so that the power flows into the electric chair to kill the man sentenced to death by the earthly judge is not necessarily violating the sixth commandment which says: "Thou shalt not kill." If this motive is personal revenge upon the man whom he is called to execute, it is murder. If he does it simply as a mandate from the authorities without any malice in his heart for the man he kills, he is innocent of his murder even though it might be proven later on that the man was not guilty of the crime for which he was executed. That holds true also for the judge who sentenced him when all things pointed to him as the guilty one. If he erred because the man had nothing to prove his innocence, the judge has not committed murder.

With every sin it is always a question as to the motive in the heart. Many works which we judged to be good may be revealed to be very evil in the day of judgment when God reveals the *secrets* of the hearts of all men. Many of the things we condemned, because we did not see the motive, may also be revealed as having been pleasing in God's sight. Even the disciples were rebuked by Jesus when they objected to the women presenting their babes to Jesus to have them blessed. Many a man (and prophet) was considered to be a child of the devil because he defended the truth, rebuked men for their sins or spoke a word of warning to others against their ruin. As we said, certain deeds can never



be good in God's sight — whether committed on the Sabbath or on any day in the week — because they can have no good motive. There never is a righteous motive for denying God His glory. Nevertheless, the motive determines whether the deed is good in God's sight or not. When we try to make a list of what we may do and what we may not do on the Sabbath, therefore, we will have to determine what works can and what works cannot have a good motive for performance on the Sabbath. The Sabbath being by God's sovereign appointment a special day in the week we will have to bear that in mind when we speak of the proper motive for a work on that day.

All this does not mean that the Sabbath is a dull, gloomy day in which we must be sure that not as much as a smile forms upon our faces and must be sure that we have not had joy or pleasure on that day. It is not as the quaker pastor once gave advice and answer to the question whether one might take a walk on the Sabbath: "Yes, but be sure that you do not enjoy yourself." Surely we are not to assume that on the Sabbath we may not enjoy and find pleasure in the same food that the day before had such a delicious taste. Our food does not suddenly begin to lose its flavor when the Sabbath rolls around. God does not want it to taste dull and flat on that day. We may have *that* pleasure on the Sabbath. Receiving it with thanksgiving and remembering the Lord Who gave it and Who put that delicious flavor in it in a marvelous way we surely may enjoy it. For that reason He gave it and put that flavor in it. Walking through His creation conscious of His power and wisdom, His beauty and order we certainly may enjoy our walk.

Because it is the motive behind the work which *always* determines whether the deed is sinful or not, we hesitated and refrained from setting down a list of what actions are living on the Sabbath in His fear and which are not. We will instead list two categories in which the works which are sinful because they can have no good motive and leave it up to the readers to judge their own deeds according to their motives. In the first category we place all those deeds which we perform instead of frequenting the church of God to hear His word, to use the sacraments and publicly to call upon Him when He has not taken the possibility away from us. Let it be added that when God has not made us sick, has not made it *essential* that we stay with the sick or babes, when God has not blocked the roads with snow or in some other way closed the physical way to His sanctuary or in some other way made it undeniably plain that He wants us elsewhere, we cannot have a good motive for the things which we do instead. In fact it may be stated unequivocally that then you do not frequent His house because you have an evil motive in your mind.

Let it be understood that we are writing about the Sabbath in His fear. It is not a question as to whether we can persuade men to believe that we have a good reason and therefore a good motive for staying away from divine serv-

ices. You can always find a "church" that will agree with you. You can, without too much difficulty find a "church" that has three months vacation during the summer months. In fact you can even find "churches" which will never bother you even if you *never* again appear for worship with them on the Sabbath and still retain you as a member in good standing. However, it is the Sabbath in His fear that has our interest. A sabbath in the fear of man is not even worthy of the effort of any thought on the matter. The motive must be one of which God can and does approve.

In the second category we place all those works which reveal that we make the Sabbath a holiday and a day for doing the things for which we would not take time during the week and whereby we to any degree choke the word that was heard and was preached.

It is quite contrary to the whole exposition of the Law as we find it in the Heidelberg Catechism to accuse our Fathers of teaching that if we attend the services on the Sabbath we have kept the *day* and now have the rest of the day for the flesh. In the sixth, seventh and eighth commandments especially, the Catechism strongly emphasizes the spirit of the law as well as the letter. It is certainly doing our Fathers an injustice to maintain that all they had in mind when they approved of this answer in Lord's Day thirty-eight is that in accordance with the letter of the answer all that is required of us is that we attend the services to perform the things which are then listed. Had they been confronted at that time with all the godless entertainment which lures the church on the Sabbath as well as on the week days, we may be sure they would have indicated a holy indignation for all these things especially on the Sabbath. Likewise is it entirely out of line and contrary to the very thing that is stated in this answer. Frequenting God's church to hear His word and these godless entertainments are so in conflict with each other that it may safely be said that we have not heard and enjoyed that word if we can rush home to revel in the godless entertainment of the radio and television program.

Next time, D. V., we will continue where we left off as to the positive living in His fear on the Sabbath and will have opportunity to say more about these things wherein we make a holiday out of the holy day in connection with what we ought to do. We, therefore, can let the matter rest for now and continue next time more positively.

J. A. H.

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"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

I Thess. 5:24

"Yet if any man suffer as a Christian let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name."

I Peter 4:16.

## THE CONCEPT "FAITH" IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Have you any idea how often the word "faith" and its related terms "faithful, faithfully, faithfulness and believe" occur in the English Old Testament? I have in mind the King James Version, which is the one commonly used in our churches. A study of your Bible with this question in mind will prove to be most revealing, even startling.

Do you know how often you find the word "faith" in the Old Testament? Exactly twice. In Deuteronomy 32:20 the Lord speaks concerning His people: "They are a very forward generation, children in whom is no faith." In Habakkuk 2:4 we find the well known words: "The just shall live by faith." In both cases a word is used in the original that is commonly translated "faithful" or "faithfulness." Accordingly, "children in whom is no faith" could as well have been translated "children in whom is no faithfulness," and "The just shall live by faith" might as well have been made to read "The just shall live by his faithfulness."

Do you know how often the word "faithful" occurs in the Old Testament? Exactly 28 times, with various shades of meaning. Sometimes the idea of truthfulness is clearly on the foreground. At other times the notion of stability or steadiness or steadfastness is more predominant. Several times the word is used in reference to God Himself. "All thy commandments are faithful," we read in Psalm 119:86. In verse 138 the Psalmist rejoices: "Thy testimonies are very faithful." In Deuteronomy 7:9 we find the beautiful words: "Know therefore that the Lord thy God is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him." At other times the word is used with reference to men, often however, in a rather general sense and without direct reference to the relation of man to God. "A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador is health," Proverbs 13:17. "A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies," 14:5. "Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" 20:6. Only 13 times is the word used with reference, more directly or less so, to man's relation to God, to the manifestation of the grace of God unto salvation in the heart of the sinner. "O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful," Psalm 31:23, etc.

How often do you find the adverb "faithfully" in the Old Testament? No oftener than 5 times. Not once does it refer directly to man's ethical relation to God, unless it be in a very remote and general sense.

How about the word "faithfulness"? Only 19 times it is used in the Old Testament. The Psalms contain the term some 13 times, always, however, in reference to God Himself. Not once do they speak of the faithfulness of man. Isaiah 11:5 speaks of Christ: "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." Isaiah 25:1 refers to the counsels of God: "Thy counsels

of old are faithfulness and truth." Psalm 5:9 is speaking of the wicked, when it says: "For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness." It is only in Hosea 2:20 that the reference may be to man's relation to God. There Jehovah speaks: "I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord." It is more than possible that even here the reference is not to some faithfulness that is worked in man's heart, but to the faithfulness in God whereby he will betroth His own unto Himself.

Finally, do you know how often the term "believe" occurs in the Old Testament? Exactly 44 times. Of these some 25 have no regard whatsoever to saving faith in God. Jacob's heart fainted because he believed not the word of his sons. Moses feared that Israel would not believe that Jehovah had sent him. Achish believed David. The queen of Sheba believed not the words she had heard concerning the acts and wisdom of Solomon. Only 19 times does the term have reference at all to God. The majority of these refer simply to accepting as truth some definite word of God. Only six or seven have a truly religious connotation, such as the word has for us today when we speak of the activity of faith in the God of our salvation.

What does it all add up to? Taken together, the terms "faith, faithful, faithfully, faithfulness, believe" are used only 35 times in the Old Testament in a sense approximating their connotation in the New Dispensation. Several of these are more or less doubtful as far as their specific religious significance is concerned. In the Old Testament there are 39 books; more than 900 chapters. Hence, the average is less than once per book; once per 26 chapters. Compare this with the 27 books of the New Testament, where the noun for "faith" and the verb for "believing" occurs some 240 times each. We shall venture an explanation presently.

What about the original?

The Old Testament lacks a definite noun for "faith" such as we do have in the New Testament. That does not mean that the matter itself does not appear repeatedly in the Old Testament. It does. The entire Old Testament is full of the "promise," which could be appropriated certainly only by a true and living faith in God. Acts and activities of faith are recorded on almost every page of the Old Testament, and the New Testament repeatedly refers to them as such. However, the technical term for "faith" is lacking in the Old Testament. The spiritual-ethical relation of man to God is usually expressed by words such as fear, serve, love, cleave, obey, trust, hope and wait.

The words in the Old Testament approaching closest in meaning to the New Testament words for "faith" and "believing" are all derived from the verb "aman." This word in its different forms has various shades of meaning. From it, by the way, is derived our word "amen," meaning: verily, truly, certainly.

In one form (Qal) the word means: to stay, to support;

also to nurse, to nourish, to bring up. In the latter sense the word is used in Esther 2:20: "For Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was *brought up* with him." In Numbers 11:12 it is used in the sense of nursing: "Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a *nursing* father beareth the sucking child?" Notice, this is the word approaching closest to the New Testament word for "faith."

In another form (Niphal) the word means: to be supported, to be nursed, to be borne; also, to be durable, lasting, permanent; further, to be confirmed, founded; and finally, to be faithful, trustworthy, sure, with respect to God, His Word, His law, His people, etc.

In still another form, the most common in the Old Testament, the word means: to trust, to confide in, to lean, and thus to believe. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that *believeth* shall not make haste." Isaiah 28:16.

For the religious significance of the term in the Old Testament three passages are perhaps most pertinent. Genesis 15:6 tells us that Abraham believed in God and that faith was reckoned unto him for righteousness. He did not doubt the promise, but trusted unconditionally, though all seemed dark and hopeless, in the living God. Isaiah 7:9 tells us that Ahaz, who seeks help from and leans on Assyria, will not be established, if he does not look away from Assyria and lean on God alone. In Habakkuk 2:4 it is said that the just shall live only in the way of trust in God and His promise.

Faith and trust always go hand in hand. God is the ever Faithful One and they that believe in Him in spite of all adversity and opposition are the faithful in the land.

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As far as the concept "faith" is concerned, therefore, there is a tremendous difference in usage between the Old and the New Testament. Why this difference?

It seems to us that the answer lies in Christ and His coming into the flesh in the fulness of time. Always on the foreground in the Word of God is the spiritual relation of faith to Christ and our salvation in Him alone. Faith is that work of God in the elect whereby the latter are implanted into Christ and embrace and appropriate Him and all His benefits. By faith, therefore, we are ingrafted into Christ. It is the spiritual means whereby we are united with Him; the bond which makes one body with Him. All our salvation is in Christ alone; all our redemption, forgiveness, righteousness, knowledge of God, wisdom, sanctification, eternal life and light and joy. To obtain all these we must become one plant with Him. The bond that realizes this mystical unity is the bond of true faith. As a power, a spiritual aptitude, it has Christ as its chief object. Faith is the power to appropriate Christ; the fitness to believe in Christ. Without this power all believing is eternally impossible. In its activity it

is actual believing, trusting in Christ alone; God in Christ, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved." It is spiritual, experiential, saving knowledge of God in Christ. In Christ all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily and of that fulness we receive grace for grace. Faith is confidence, spiritual confidence in Christ, in Whom and in Whom alone God reveals Himself to us as the God of our salvation. This is certainly the significance of "faith" in the Word of God. Christ is its chief object and its significance grows in the measure He is more clearly revealed unto us.

In the Old Dispensation Christ was not yet. God was, of course, also as the Father of His people and the God of their salvation. Christ was, yes, but only in type and shadow. The reality had not yet come. All Israel's faith was directed to the shadows as the promise of better things to come. It was the dispensation of the promise, the law, the type and shadow. Therefore the emphasis is very much on the activity rather than the spiritual bond. Therefore the Old Testament does not speak of faith as does the New. Therefore words like fear, love, serve, obey, trust, hope and wait are more predominant than faith.

Does that mean that faith was not in the Old Testament as well as in the New? Of course not! Principally the way of salvation does not change. Israel as well as we were saved through faith. The New Testament speaks much of faith in connection with the saints of the Old Dispensation. "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Rom. 4:3. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all." Rom. 4:16. Read Hebrews 11 to see how all the saints of the Old Testament lived and acted by faith. The way of salvation was the same in the Old Testament as in the New. "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." Acts 15:11. Then as well as now it was true that the just should live by faith. They as well as we needed from God the power, the habitus of faith. They as well as we lived and served God through the activity of faith.

All of which, however, does not gainsay the difference in dispensations. As the promise is fulfilled in the living Redeemer the significance of faith comes into ever clearer focus. In the Old Testament the eyes of the saints were directed in hope and expectation to the coming Christ; in the New Testament the life of the church is in the Word Incarnate Himself. In the Old Testament hope is predominant; in the New Testament faith. Therefore the difference in the use of the term. Therefore the noun and the verb for faith and believing occur some 240 times each in the New Testament. Therefore both have an almost exclusively religious connotation in the New Testament. Very seldom are they used in a general sense. As Christ becomes richer the concept "faith" becomes richer, both in Scripture itself and the consciousness and conception of the church. R. Veldman.

## The Voice of Our Fathers

### The Canons of Dordrecht

#### PART TWO

#### EXPOSITION OF THE CANONS

#### SECOND HEAD OF DOCTRINE

#### OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST, AND THE REDEMPTION OF MEN THEREBY

Article 6. And, whereas many who are called by the gospel, do not repent, nor believe in Christ, but perish in unbelief; this is not owing to any defect or insufficiency in the sacrifice offered by Christ upon the cross, but is wholly to be imputed to themselves.

Our English translation is not all that could be desired. I refer especially to the last clause, which is correct if the word "imputed" be properly understood, but which is verbose and far from literal, and for that reason not clear. The Latin is simply: "*sed propria ipsorum culpa.*" And the Dutch renders it more correctly: "*maar door hunne eigene schuld.*" A correct and literal English translation, retaining the Latin construction and literal meaning of the word *culpa* would be: "but is exclusively through their own blame (guilt)."

And this little reference to the translation brings to our attention immediately and sharply the main subject of this article, namely, *the guilt, blame, fault, of the unbelief of many who are called by the gospel.* Moreover, it is of the utmost importance that we clearly understand that this is indeed the subject of this article. The subject is not: the sovereign reason of this unbelief of many. It is not: the relation between the fault of unbelieving men and the sovereign counsel of reprobation. These, although they are important questions and are without doubt involved in the present question, are not mentioned in the article. As a matter of fact, the article itself traces the unbelief of many no farther than the "guilt" which it mentions. That guilt of unbelief is the subject, and that too, in contradistinction from any possible defect or insufficiency in the sacrifice of Christ offered on the cross and proclaimed in the gospel.

Once again we must bear in mind that this article was written against the Arminians and with the purpose of setting forth the true Reformed position over against the caricature of that Reformed position which the Arminians ascribed to the Reformed. We have referred to this characteristic of our *Canons* more than once. But it is well to remind ourselves of this continually in our discussion of the *Canons*. In the positive section of the *Canons* you do not find an exposé and condemnation of the Arminian errors as such: that you find in the Rejection of Errors appended to each chapter. But in the positive section of each chapter you find the setting forth of the Reformed position as such. Only it must be remembered that also this declaration of the Reformed position is slanted against the Arminians. Each article is occasioned not merely by some aspect of the Arminian error, but by a false presentation, a caricature, of

the Reformed view presented by the Arminians. That use of caricatures, of so-called "straw men," is characteristic of heresy and heretics. They do not come against the truth as such. That would be open folly. But they twist and contort the truth, deliberately eliminating some aspect or drawing false conclusions or setting up false contrasts; and then they attribute their own twisted caricature of the truth as being the correct presentation of that truth, in order to hold it up to scorn and ridicule and contempt as a wicked and horrible and impossible position. And, let it be added, they do this, of course, out of the desire to cover up at the same time their own false view. Such a contortion of the truth is implied in the well-known objection against predestination found in Romans 9: "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" And another is involved in the false conclusion that since salvation is of grace only, "let us continue in sin that grace may abound." A current example is found in the attempt to present our Protestant Reformed view as consisting in a false contrast between faith as a means unto salvation and faith as a fruit of salvation, while the true issue was whether faith is a condition of salvation or a means unto salvation. Such deliberate, slanderous, intellectually dishonest attempts are characteristic of heresy and heretics. And in effect many of the *Canons* expose these "straw men" as being truly made of "straw," and they at the same time reveal what the real Reformed stuff consists in. And, as it were, the fathers say in the *Canons*: "The Arminians do not present our view correctly; they change it. And it is against their own misconception and misrepresentation of our view that they shoot their arrows, claiming that they demonstrate the absurdity and untenableness of the Reformed position. But they have not demolished our position at all; they have merely destroyed a straw man of their own making. If they would destroy our position, here it is. Let them truly aim at it and show its absurdity, if they can. But let them not claim that our own position is absurd and untenable while they have never in reality aimed at it."

Now if it be asked, "What is the straw man the Arminians set up in connection with this sixth article?" the answer is: the Arminians came with the age-old and over-used argument essentially that the Reformed position denies the responsibility of man,—here particularly the responsibility of the unbeliever. And they charged that the Reformed position really implied an insufficiency and a defect in the sacrifice of Christ. Their argument ran that since the Reformed position is that Christ did not die for all and every man, but only for the elect, and since, therefore, there was no possibility for all men to be saved, but only the possibility that the elect could be saved, therefore those who are lost, i.e., the unbelievers and unrepentant, cannot be blamed for their unbelief and impenitence: they never had a chance to be saved anyway. And therefore, the Arminians claimed, the Reformed position ends rationally with denying the guilt of unbelief, and must also end with charging this blame instead to the sacrifice of Christ. That fact, recognized by

both Arminian and Reformed, that many do not believe and that many go lost forever, must be explained somehow. The Reformed, according to the Arminian charge, must logically explain it not by charging the unbeliever with guilt, but by ascribing a defect and insufficiency to the sacrifice of Christ. If Christ had only died for all men, then they would all be saved; but He did not, and so the fault is in His sacrifice.

What is to be said of this accusation?

First of all, let it be noted that it is a very serious charge, so serious that with it stands or falls the entire Reformed position. It is indeed true that the accusation as such concerns only the subject of the sufficiency of Christ's death. But if we trace the implications of this charge, we will soon discover that it strikes at the fundamental basis of the Reformed position, namely, sovereign predestination. Once the charge is granted, one must give up also that last-named truth. For remember that Christ's sacrificial death is limited and particular in character because of sovereign election. And if, therefore, the death of Christ is insufficient and defective because it is limited, then in last instance that defect is not due to Christ's death as such, but to God's predestination. And so the blame must be laid upon God: He must be the fault, the blame, of the unbelief of man. Ergo: God is the Author of sin. And if that charge can be successfully maintained, the Reformed truth is proved false.

Secondly, and in close connection therewith, let it be noted that this is a very horrible accusation. If it is true, then the Reformed faith is an awful thing. That Christ's death is insufficient and defective? That the blame, the guilt, of unbelief must be laid upon Christ and upon God? To maintain a view which really teaches such horrible lies would be terrible. Then our "Christ" is an unholy Christ, and our "God" is a religious monstrosity, and our religion is blasphemous. We must then at once, and without any hesitation, forsake such a monstrously blasphemous view. All this I say, *IF* . . . the Arminian charge is true.

But, thanks be to God, it is not true!

The Reformed Churches maintain without any hesitation that the guilt of unbelief is exclusively man's, and that the fact that many perish in impenitence and unbelief is exclusively through their own fault, *propria ipsorum culpa*. Unbelief is never this, that man earnestly desires to be saved, sincerely yearns after the righteousness of Christ, and would indeed believe if only he could, but that the sacrifice of Christ is defective, that it is not valuable enough to cover him too, and that therefore he must go lost forever despite his good will and intentions. Never does it occur that a man sincerely believes and repents, or would believe and repent, and really says: "Oh, how I wish to be a child of God, how I long for salvation," and that he receives the answer from God, "I'm sorry, but Christ didn't die for you." Never will any man be able to appear in the day of judgment before God, and say: "I wanted to believe in Christ and be saved, but the sacrifice of Thy Son was defective, was not good enough; Thy salvation was not great enough for me." The

truth of sovereign predestination and limited atonement is not at all in conflict with the truth that he that cometh to Christ will never be cast out, while he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. No, the guilt, the terrible guilt of unbelief, of despising the goodness and forbearance and longsuffering of God, is ever sinful man's, not Christ's, and not God's.

But how is this fact to be explained?

Is it to be explained by making the death of Christ general and unlimited? Then we give up the Reformed position for that of the Arminian. Is it to be explained by making the gospel a general, well-meant offer of salvation on the part of God to all who hear the preaching? Then we must choose between coming to the Arminian position of unlimited atonement as the basis for such an offer, or charging God with lying in that general offer, offering something which He has not.

No, the explanation of the fact that a man is guilty of unbelief while there is not and never was a possibility of salvation for him lies in the Reformed maintenance, first of all, of the *general* proclamation of a *particular* gospel. That preaching comes to elect and reprobate alike. And in that preaching Christ is set forth evidently before the eyes of elect and reprobate alike. And that Christ Who is set forth in the preaching the unbeliever knowingly and willingly despises and scorns and rejects. And that is his sin. In the second place, the explanation of this guilt lies in the corollary truth that it is not necessary at all to have anything or to have an objective right to anything in order to despise and scorn it and to reject it in my soul. I must know the thing, must have some conception of it; but I need not have it or have the right to it. I need not possess a million dollars in order to despise it; I need only have some conception of a million dollars in order to scorn it. So it is also with unbelief. The unbeliever has no right to Christ or any of His blessings. Christ never died for him. Christ has no salvation for him. But that Christ is plainly set before him in the preaching, so that he beholds Him, His cross, His atonement, His righteousness, His life, His glory. And that Christ of the preached Word the unbeliever despises and rejects. The guilt is therefore a matter of his own wicked heart and will. He, the unbeliever, according to a morally free act of his own will despises God's Christ.

All this is not to say that such an unbeliever is sovereignly free. The *Canons* do not here go further into the subject. But you have the deeper explanation, even though in infralapsarian language, in Article 6 of *Canons* I: "That some receive the gift of faith from God, *and others do not receive it, proceeds from God's eternal decree.*" And, in the light of Scripture, we may say still more. We may say that according to that general decree, God also hardens whom He will. Also the reprobate come into contact with the living Word of God. And this living Word of God is to them a savour of death unto death. Rom. 9:18; John 12:39, 40.

H. C. H.

## DECENCY and ORDER

### Family Visitation

#### D. Objections To Family Visiting

Frequently, even among those who are members of Reformed Churches, there emits rather strong sentiments of discontentment with the venerable practice of family visitation. In some circles these dissatisfactions are catered to, resulting in either the complete abolition of the practice or in its being substituted with something less poignant and official. Since generally the objections that are raised are tendered by those who for carnal reason detest any form of spiritual investigation of their faith and walk, such a surrender on the part of the church characterizes her as spiritually weak and more willing to appease men than to unstintingly perform her spiritual duty. Thus the flesh prevails and the communion of saints is reduced to a common society. Order and decency as maintained by spiritual rule are lost and each member does without restraint as seems good in their own eyes. The salt hath lost its savor!

Every instance of protestation to the practice of family visiting, however, is not hereby judged carnal. We can conceive of sincere and legitimate criticisms being offered, not for the purpose of destroying the institution or reducing it to an absurdity but rather, in an earnest effort to improve upon the present practice. One may feel that family visiting does not attain its real spiritual purpose and wish to seriously inquire into the reason for its defect. Another may honestly judge that the manner in which the work is performed is not wholly beneficial and may, therefore, offer legitimate protestations along this line. Another may sincerely question whether the official character of this work obstructs the procuring of spiritual information that is sought. One may question the necessity of family visiting where the consistory is aware before the visit is made that normal spiritual circumstances prevail. Or one may doubt the validity of dealing with the individual in the presence of the entire family.

Where such objections are raised, two things ought to be kept in mind. In the first place, the objections are not raised against the institution of family visiting as such but, although they differ in form, the criticism are all against the method which is used in executing this work. On the latter point there is always room for criticism and improvement provided that this criticism is constructively offered and aims at the betterment rather than at the destruction of the institution. On the former point there is no room nor possibility of protest. Let me illustrate. I may offer many objections to the manner in which the government of the state is conducted but I may never protest to government itself. The latter is instituted by God Who in His Word commands me to be subject. To this I may never rebel. Thus we have shown in previous writings that family visit-

ing belongs to the institution of the office of the elders, is based upon God's Word and, therefore, against it no complaint may be lodged. To rebel is to rebel against God. And the church must not surrender to rebels but must fight them with the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. We repeat, however, that there may be legitimate criticism of the methodology. This is something quite different.

In the second place, where such objections are properly raised they should not be brushed aside and ignored but seriously considered by all concerned. On the part of those who raise the objections, there should be open-mindedness and a ready willingness to be shown if and in how far their objections are inconclusive because of a lack of understanding on the part of the objector of the purpose and nature of family visiting. This may very well be the case since often sincere objections result from a lack of mature understanding. Further, the objector must then not be a chronic complainer but must be ready to offer a concrete improvement in regard to the matter he contests. He must be positive as well as negative. If he is not, his objections cannot be constructive and helpful. It were better that he, in that case, either kept still or simply sought information instead of protesting. And on the part of the church there must always be a readiness to consider in order that the very best in all things may be sought. This spirit is conducive to further development of sound institutions.

Now then, let us briefly note some of the common objections that are frequently heard. In his "Poimonic Notes," the Rev. G. M. Ophof enumerates the following:

- "(1) Family visiting is too mechanical.
- (2) It tends toward clericism.
- (3) It prevents the office bearers from really learning to know the sheep since a false front is often presented. It fosters hypocrisy.
- (4) It is the ban of intimate contact of fellowship between the office bearer and the sheep.
- (5) It partakes more of the character of church discipline than of soul care."

In his book, "Taking Heed To The Flock," the Rev. P. De Jong points out that the objections to this institution may be regarded as two-fold. Firstly, there are those whose objections are based on the principle that there should be no supervision of the membership in the church by those in authority since all believers are equal in rank before Christ. Secondly, there are those who object for various practical reasons.

He then proceeds under separate headings to discuss the following objections to the practice of family visiting: It is

- "(1) A Poor Substitute for the Confessional.
- (2) A Denial of the Equality of All Believers.
- (3) A Legalistic Conception of Spiritual Life.
- (4) A Fruitless Work Because of its Formal Character.
- (5) An Unwelcome and Unappreciated Work.
- (6) An Unnecessary Work in a Normal Church.
- (7) A Disregard of the Needs of the Individual.



Our space does not permit a detailed discussion of each of these objections. Neither is that necessary since the burden of proof lies with the critics. It is not for us to disprove these claims but rather it is the task of those who make them to show clearly that they are true and of such weight as to require the cessation of the work of family visiting. Until this is done we are impressed but little by these criticisms.

However, a few words concerning them in general may be in place. In evaluating them as a whole we would classify these objections in four separate groups.

The first group contains those criticisms that are positively untrue. As an example of this we cite the following: "That family visitation is a poor substitute for the Confessional; or that it is an unnecessary work in a normal church." These arguments can easily be shown to be entirely false.

The second group contains arguments which are mere conjectures or simply wrong conclusions which the objector draws as a matter of opinion and for which he offers not the slightest proof. Thus, for example, the argument that family visiting fosters hypocrisy or that it assumes the character of church discipline or that it disregards the need of the individual. That the possibility of some of these things becoming a reality exists does not have to be denied but that such things are inherent in the institution itself is certainly false. Neither can this mode of reasoning serve as a sound basis for the abolition of this work. We cannot reason that way with respect to other things, nor do we do so. For example, the possibility exists that there may be poison in my food that will kill me. It does not follow from this that all food is poisonous or that I should, therefore, cease to eat. Such reasoning is folly.

The third group, which is also the group most worthy of careful consideration, contains those objections that are really directed against the manner in which this work is performed rather than against the work itself. As an example of this we cite the arguments that family visiting tends toward clericism; leads to a legalistic conception of spiritual life; is fruitless because of its formal character, etc. We do not say that these things are true but only admit that when this work is done in a wrong manner the criticisms may be valid. However, even if they are true they do not prove the necessity of discontinuing the work but only point to the need of reforming it. This is true on general principles of virtually everything. When things are done wrong harmful effects will result. When I drive my car contrary to the law I will be involved in accident in which I may get killed or I will be indicted for traffic violation. This is no reason I should not drive my car but is a strong argument that I should always drive it properly. So it is with family visiting. If it is improperly conducted more spiritual harm will result than good. It is imperative then that this work be done properly "in good order and decency."

Finally, there are those objections that are based upon

wrong conceptions of other things. Thus, for example, the objection that family visiting denies the equality of all believers. Of course this is not true. No Reformed person having a Reformed conception of the church and its offices would voice such an objection. It is the Anabaptist whose insistence upon equality repudiates the authority in the visible church who reasons this way. He can do so only because his view of the church is a distorted one.

Hence, in conclusion, we insist that none of these objections give good reason to discontinue this venerable practice. The spiritual benefits of family visiting are many for the church as well as for the individual. And it need not be considered strange that there always have been and will continue to be objections raised against any practice that promotes the spiritual. This is to be expected as long as the church is on the present earth. She need not become alarmed at these criticisms but let her beware when her practices meet with the approval of all men and arouse the ire of none. Then assuredly something is wrong.

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle." (II Thess. 2:15)

G.V.d.B.

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"Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in work they deny him, being disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." Titus 1:15, 16.

"I wrote unto the church; but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them received us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church." III John 9, 10.

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book. If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book. He that testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen."

Rev. 22:18-20

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22:20.

## ALL AROUND US

### *Nova Scotia Pastor Understands the Truth.*

In the January 1st issue of the *Standard Bearer* Rev. H. Hoeksema, on p. 149, reflected briefly on the writing of a Nova Scotia pastor in which the latter commented favorably on the pamphlet *A Triple Breach* written by Rev. Hoeksema years ago in which he showed clearly the error of *The Three Points* of 1924.

Undersigned was the recipient of two copies of *The Contender*, a paper written by the above referred to minister, one of which contains the quotation which Rev. Hoeksema made. Not only the Rev. Hoeksema, but also the undersigned was amazed at the clear cut appraisal the Rev. Malcolm R. MacKay made of the Reformed doctrines of unconditional election and reprobation and his sharp denunciation of the Arminianism implied in the *Three Points* of 1924 as well as that of *The Free Offer of the Gospel* defended by the Profs. Murray, Stonehouse, and Van Til of the Orthodox Presbyterian Seminary of Philadelphia.

I know our people will rejoice with us in reading a few more excerpts of the articles written by Rev. MacKay. In this and the next issue of the *Standard Bearer* we wish to give you rather lengthy quotations of his writings and ask the manager of the R.F.P.A. to see to it that these copies of the S. B. be sent to the Rev. M. R. MacKay, 240 Albert Street, New Glasgow, N.S., Canada. With Rev. Hoeksema I say it is indeed refreshing to note that there are still the seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal.

Rev. MacKay devotes two issues of *The Contender* to the subject: "All To The Praise Of God's Glorious Mercy And Justice." The two passages of Scripture which he uses as basis for this theme are: II Cor. 2:15, 16, "We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life." And I Pet. 2:7, 8, "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone (Christ) which the builders disallowed the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence even to them which stumble at the Word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed."

Concerning these passages the Rev. MacKay writes:

"In the words of our text we find two classes of people referred to, namely, the elect and the non-elect, or the redeemed and the reprobated. They are spoken of here with reference to the gospel of Christ and His headship over the Church. They are those in whom the gospel produces either eternal life or eternal death, according to the words of the apostle Paul. Or, they are those to whom the Rock that is Christ becomes either the cornerstone of the church, or a stumbling stone (rock of offence) over which they are

precipitated into hell, according to the words of the apostle Peter.

"Everyone who accepts the Bible as the infallible revelation of God recognizes the solemn fact that there are these two classes of people—the elect and the non-elect or the redeemed and the reprobated—and that a great gulf fixed separates them from each other spiritually, although physically, in this world, they are intermingled, and commonly are found even in the same families. In considering the composition of the human race, no greater error can be made than to identify or confuse the physical unity of the race ("God hath made of one blood of all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." Acts 17:26a) with the spiritual destiny of men. These two things are by no means equal to each other. Although the whole human race is, alike, born 'dead in trespasses and sins,' yet this original 'unity' in sin and death does not long continue, God, by His eternal decrees of election and reprobation (damnation) divides the fallen human race into the two portions which are mentioned in the words of our texts. Thus we see that the fond theory of the spiritual oneness of the human race, especially as taught by the modernists, is shipwrecked upon the rock of the decrees of God. Not only the human race is thus divided, but also the hosts of angels. Paul refers to the 'elect' angels (I Tim. 5:21), indicating that by the sovereign will of God some angels 'kept their first estate' while the rest did not, but fell into sin under the leadership of Satan and lost their heavenly status. See Jude 6 and II Pet. 2:4. Hence, let us resist to the death the modern craze (as in the World Council of Churches, the United Nations, etc.) for the superficial and unreal unity of all mankind. This urge towards unity denies or rejects, ignores or minimizes, conceals or confuses the sovereign will of God who has eternally separated the human race into two distinct portions, the elect and the non-elect, the redeemed and the reprobated."

From the above quotation the reader will observe what pastor MacKay is driving at. On the one hand, he would maintain the doctrine of God's sovereign election and reprobation; while on the other, he purposes to militate against the pernicious doctrine of modernism which would destroy this doctrine. This becomes plainer still in the next three paragraphs of his first article, which he entitles: "Break Down This Distinction At All Costs! Cries Satan."

"Often we have referred to the false modernistic doctrine of the universal spiritual fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. At one stroke, Satan has deluded a large portion of Christendom into thinking that there is no eternal separation from God in hell and that literally every human being will finally arrive in heaven. Thus Satan, through modernism, has succeeded in breaking down in the minds of many the distinction between elect and non-elect, or between redeemed and reprobated.

"Always the chief attack of Satan against God and His kingdom centers upon the twin decrees of predestination and reprobation. (MacKay evidently means by predestination—

election — M.S.) These two stand or fall together . . . . A moment's reflection will show why this is so. If God chooses certain people but not all, for heaven, it goes without saying that however you may think about it, He does not choose the rest. And from this follows what is doubtless the most solemn aspect of all, namely, that since God does not choose to save these people, He does not *intend* to save them. Or, in other words, His sovereign purpose is not to save them but to turn them over to eternal judgment. Thus we are brought to believe that reprobation is far more than a mere negative thing — not choosing —; it means that God has a positive purpose in regard to these people, and that is to manifest through their reprobation the glory of His sovereign justice.

"It is this *positive* purpose of God in reprobation that men hate, and rebel against more than any other particular point in the whole Bible. For anyone to try to accept predestination (election — M.S.) without accepting reprobation with it, is to give God less 'credit' than he would give to a wise man. If a prominent man chooses certain people of his acquaintanceship to share his choice benefits, but not others, it is equivalent to saying that he has a particular reason why he does not choose those whom he passes by. But there are those who would like to believe that God chooses certain people for salvation, but they close their eyes to the idea of God having any particular or positive purpose to accomplish in not choosing the rest. It 'boils down' to this: there is a tremendous aversion in men to the truth of eternal justice in God. If this could be removed from the Bible, the human race would rejoice over it more than anything else in relation to God. But try as hard as he can, man cannot get rid of God's justice. It is always there as an attitude of God's person to speak to him of sin and of righteousness and of judgment to come. Nevertheless Satan turns his biggest guns upon the truth of God's eternal justice which is particularly manifested in the damnation of the non-elect in hell."

In the next section of his first article Rev. MacKay, writing under the heading: "God's Eternal Justice Is Revealed, Not Concealed," remarks that "even among those who profess to believe in the eternal justice of God, as manifested in the damnation of the reprobate, a strange attitude is often reflected . . . . God's justice as revealed in the decree of reprobation (damnation) is something, they insist, that we are not supposed to inquire into too deeply, but rather keep away from, as from an awesome, secret power that is liable to do us great harm or even destroy us. This is just about what the attitude towards God's eternal justice amounts to in the thinking of many Presbyterian and Reformed men . . . They are trying to adhere to the historic and Reformed doctrine of reprobation on the one hand, and are attracted by the false modern tendency (as in Arminianism and Modernism) to reduce the holy love of God to a soft sentimentalism which God is said to display toward all mankind indiscriminately, thus breaking down the Biblical distinction between God's holy electing love in Christ toward the re-

deemed, and His burning, condemning wrath upon the lost for their sin. That this is no mere imagination is seen in the enthusiasm with which they are developing the false theory of a 'favourable attitude' in God toward the non-elect or reprobate."

After pointing out how this "strange attitude" is quite contrary to the Scriptures and the Westminster Confessions, the Rev. MacKay proceeds to attack the doctrine of Professors Murray and Stonehouse as set forth in a pamphlet entitled: "The Free Offer of the Gospel," as well as the declaration of the Synod of the Chr. Ref. Church in 1924 as formulated in *The Three Points*. He considers this "strange attitude" to be more subtle and dangerous than the out in the open battle against avowed Arminianism and Modernism. He does not hesitate to say that those who have this "strange attitude" have their "sympathies with Arminianism, even though they are within the Reformed 'fold' and claim to believe in the decrees of predestination and reprobation. It is this which makes the struggle so subtle, difficult and dangerous. It is this which may well explain why so many 'Reformed' men for a long time have been praising out-and-out Arminians as 'fine, earnest Christians.' It is this which may well explain why so very few 'Reformed' ministers have been willing to take a real stand against Arminianism. It is this which may well indicate that those who actually hold the true Reformed faith are only a fraction of those who profess to hold it."

We must stop here because our space is filled. But let me say in closing that our hat goes off to this "Contender" for the truth way up there in the North East extremity of this hemisphere. We love every word he has written, and we say "Amen."

Next time, the Lord willing, we will tell you what he has to say about Common Grace expressed in *The Three Points*, and his judgment of "A Triple Breach" written by Rev. Hoeksema.

M.S.

### Announcement

Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Churches will meet, D.V., in the Fourth Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, on Wednesday, April 4th, at 9 a.m. The delegates to this meeting will consider this a reminder.

Rev. M. Schipper, Stated Clerk.

"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: We are not of the night, nor of darkness." I Thess: 5:4, 5.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

### Missionary Notes

It is now some nine months ago that we started our labors in the Reformed Hope Church of Loveland, Colorado. From time to time we have written of these labors and attempted to give a glimpse of the life of that church.

At the present time I am in Grand Rapids, Michigan, enjoying a few days with my family. The Lord willing, I will again have been in Colorado for a couple weeks when this appears in the *Standard Bearer*. Instead of staying at the Pine Motel I will be living at the Corner of Grant and Third in a two room apartment. However, my mailing address will continue to be Box 363, Loveland, Colorado.

Our people in Loveland are at the present time looking forward to hearing the Reformed Witness Hour over KLIR, Denver, Colorado, 990 Klc. each Sunday afternoon at 3:30 to 4 o'clock. Fact is, that our people in Loveland feel it a duty and a privilege to aid in the proclamation of the Reformed truth, and had given a substantial collection as a "gift" for this Radio ministry of the Reformed faith.

Denver is a city of some 600,000 inhabitants. About 25 miles to the north west lies the city of Boulder of about 15,000 where the University of Colorado is situated. Approximately 60 miles to the north lies the city of Cheyenne, Wyoming, and 80 miles to the east is Fort Morgan, Colorado. Notices were run for two weeks in all of these cities in the leading daily papers, such as The Denver Post, etc. And KLIR is also giving us some free advertizing on the air. It stands to reason that KLIR has quite a potential audience.

May the Lord of harvest richly bless this ministry of the Word. May the ministers of the Word, the Radio Choir and all busy in this work be found faithful in their holy calling, indeed, to be fervent in spirit! And let us remember also this cause of our preaching mission in the world in our prayers.

It may interest our readers to know that at the present time the Reformed Witness Hour is aired in Sioux Falls So. Dakota, Oskaloosa, Iowa, Hammond, Indiana as well as on WFUR, Grand Rapids, Michigan. All told we may under God, broadcast from 5 Radio Stations at the present time. Truly, here too we may see that the Lord opens the way for us, and gives us the means and the desire to proclaim the faith. And, let it not be forgotten what a good brother told me lately, that there "is no other truth." Only the Reformed Faith can be preached with full assurance as being the preaching of the full counsel of God.

It is with this conviction in my soul that I boldly and joyfully proclaim the Scriptures according to the Reformed Faith.

Remember me and all of our ministers, that boldness may be given to us thus to preach the Word, never departing from the same!

G.L.

### Announcement

#### CALL TO ASPIRANTS TO THE MINISTRY.

All young men desiring to study for the Ministry of the Word kindly appear at the next meeting of the Theological School Committee which will be held D.V., on Thursday evening, May 10th, at 7:30 P. M. in the Hudsonville Prot. Ref. Church, Hudsonville, Michigan.

The qualifications requisite to enrollment in our Seminary are the following:

1. You must be a graduate from High School and have a knowledge of the following College subjects: Latin, Greek, Philosophy, Psychology, History General and Church History.

2. You must have a certificate from your local Consistory signifying that you are upright in walk and pure in doctrine.

3. You must have a certificate of health signed by a reputable physician.

All correspondence relative to the above announcement should be sent to the undersigned.

Secretary of The Theol. School Comm.  
Rev. M. Schipper,  
1636 Martindale Ave., S. W.,  
Grand Rapids 9, Michigan.

Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night."

I Thess. 5:6, 7

"And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you." I Thess. 5:12.

"Likewise you younger, submit yourselves unto the elder, yea, all of you be subject one to another, and gird yourselves with humility to serve one another: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." I Peter 5:5.