

# THE STANDARD

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## MEDITATION

### COUNTERFEITS OF THE KINGDOM

*"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men."*

Romans 14:17, 18

Because of outward, external, unessential things, brother would destroy brother at Rome (Romans 14).

All because they did not fully understand, that God beholdeth the heart and not the face.

God is God. He cannot be pleased with rivers of oil, ten thousands of rams, nice, pious faces, while the heart of man is far from thoughts of the Almighty. David lifts up his voice and weeps: Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it.

Ah, if God only would desire sacrifice, that is, money, bodily movements, the keeping of the assemblies, new moons and sabbaths: how pleasurable for the flesh would then religion be! Then we could be an object of God's loving-kindness and at the same time we might safely murder the brother! How exceedingly nice that would be! We then might safely damn him and curse him and rail at him, or rather, behind his back so that we reduce his name and repute to frazzlings — and then turn in our prayer-chamber and with honey-sweet words approach the Almighty and sing, ever so sweetly: Oh, how love I thy law.

With the face of an angel and the heart of the devil himself before the great white Throne! Ah, a Paradise for the detestable hypocrite! "I thank Thee, God, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican!" Of course, we all have our publican judging eye. Not only do we reckon ourselves to be better than the rest, on whom we may pour out the vials of our scorn, condemnation and damnation. "Or even this publican!" But I, oh, God! I am much better. Thy heaven will be heaven

only because I adorn it. Art Thou not pleased at the acquisition of my glittering self?

All because it is so difficult to learn the first lesson in the art of pleasing God.

We will keep days and months and years; we will drink and eat the spiritual food; we will hasten our footsteps and keep our face from smiling, while the noisy laughter be damned! We will do all this and at the completion of the day ask the Lord of the heavens and the earth: Am I not nice? And is the rest not abominable? And preening and strutting and glittering in tinsel of selfpraise we continue on our sojourn.

That is the man who pockets the counterfeits of the Kingdom, while the waters of Life eternal flow away under the icy surface of his Pharisaical selfrighteousness. O, God, how long suffering and forbearing Thou art with us!

And yet we say sometimes: If it lay with me, I would save the entire world and not only the elect. The liars. If it lay with me, I would only save me, for I love only me. The age-old sin: Ye shall be as gods. That is, selfsufficient and allsufficient. Are we not? Another word for it is selfishness, that is, when the creature attempts to clothe himself with Divine virtue.

We might as well admit it: we are all abominable sinners in this respect, and no one is without this pharisaical selfrighteousness, while damning the brother.

Nay, the Kingdom is not meat and drink. Perish the thought. God has something better in store for us.

\* \* \* \*

What then is it? What are the things of the Kingdom?

Turn to Romans 14:17, 18 and there we read the definition of the things of the Kingdom: They are: righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Sang the poet: "Hoe zult gij rechtvaardig verschijnen voor God?"

Ah, that is the question! How shall I appear righteous before God's throne?

Nay, there is not a speck of this righteousness with you

or with me, brother. We are unrighteous. Hence, the question, the wailing cry: How shall I appear righteous while I am crooked and perverse?

We are crooked. In thought, word and deed. In all the issues of the heart. For the heart itself is: "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who shall know it?" Jer. 17:9.

And the most abominable picture of such a state is when our flesh comes in contact with the Kingdom; and we try to acquire righteousness by the deeds of the flesh. Abhorrent counterfeits! Then the face, bodily movements, deeds of the body and honeyed words form a terrible antithesis to the heart that is like a den of grasping, ravening wolves.

And God's Son utters the indescribable curse on it: Woe, woe unto you!

Righteousness: how different it is from our counterfeits!

It is the will that wills the highest Good!

That is the reason why God is righteous. He wills only the Highest Good, that is, Himself. In all the willing and loving and praising, God is ever directed to Himself. Hence all His ways are righteous: just and right is He.

Nothing can ever come into that path of the Almighty to obstruct it. His eternal will it is to save His own church so that she might be to the praise of His glory. But that church is in the depth of hell! Never mind. But in order to save her, God must come Himself to save her and that through the untold humiliation of the Son! Never mind. But that means that God will have to shed His own blood on the Cross in the nature of man! Never mind, I am RIGHT-EOUSNESS. Hence, the Cross, where the everblessed Jesus becomes a curse for His bride, she who became a whore historically.

It is the righteousness of God revealed in history.

And that righteousness of God that shines in the death and resurrection of the Christ, becomes our own in the way of faith.

Then we draw as it were that righteousness in us, then the Lord imputes that right thinking, willing and desiring before the face of God unto us and we are righteous before Him. Fulfilling His immutable decree where we were righteous in Christ before the world began. Oh, blessed thought.

And on the basis of that justification we become righteous.

Right thinking.

\* \* \* \*

Will you notice, my brother, how it acts? Come then with me and we will go to the temple. Behold that wretch! His name is publican. He is the offscouring of respectable (sic!) society. All but the lowest rascals shun him. But listen, nay, look. He remains in obscurity as much as pos-

sible. Yonder stands the glory of Israel's commonwealth: the Pharisee. But my publican stands in the shadows. Also, mark you well: he smites his breast which is the outward token of inward penitence. And now listen: Oh, God, be merciful unto me, the sinner!

It is the first inkling of the righteousness of God.

Oh, show me a man or woman who is justified before the throne of God and I will show you a person that is meek and lowly. I will show you that justification before God and His holy angels goes hand in hand with the right evaluation of self and the brother. Ah, then the brotherhood and sisterhood is far superior than I am. I am so wicked. That is the speech. And they are much better than I am. I am the chief of sinners.

Nor could it ever be any different. Of course, I will admit that we see one another's sins. And they grieve us too. But, here is the point: We see our own heart and we cannot see the hearts of our brethren. Therefore the justified soul is much more grieved about himself than about the brother. He leaves the brother to God and hastens to upbraid himself. Oh, God, be merciful to, THE SINNER. That is: the sinner above all sinners.

All because right thinking and right willing has descended through the Holy Ghost into his inmost heart. And by the lovable light of such life he beheld the movements of sin.

And following it he would cleanse himself. In a word: he hungers for more righteousness. He wants to be acceptable to God, nay, not through his own works but through the life and walk of sanctification that is the gift of God and the handiwork of Christ's Spirit.

\* \* \* \*

And as a first corollary heavenly peace descends into his turbulent soul.

Peace, how wonderful a boon!

Three things ought to be remembered when we are discussing this wonderful gift of God, this fruit of righteousness.

Firstly, that it is harmony with God. And that ought to be clear. When a soul does the same thing God does, that is, seek God as the highest good as to his willing, thinking, loving and praising, then it must follow that he is in step with God's own life, for God does the very same thing eternally. When my regenerated and justified sinner sings: Oh, God, how good Thou art! then it constitutes the echo of the same speech of the Triune Covenant life. For that is also the recurrent theme in the eternal Song of God's love and friendship. Such is peace, wonderful peace.

And secondly, because such life of harmony with God's own life is ordained by God, is ordered by Him for the rational creature, such peace is the life that is lived according to the Law of God. It is the continuous life of the justified

sinner to be in conformity to the Law of the ten commandments. It is his rule of life, his only rule.

And, thirdly, such life springs from the love of God. The same Spirit that justified him spread abroad that love in his heart, causing it to be the mainspring of all his thinking, speaking and acting. His life becomes more and more the manifestation of the love of God.

We sing of all three in one solitary line: "Great peace have they that love Thy law!"

\* \* \* \*

Small wonder that such a soul is joyous in the Holy Ghost.

It is the second corollary to the righteousness of God which is his portion.

He is the only one who has the right and the fitting wherewithal to be glad.

No, it is not the boisterous laughing of the worldlings. It is far from the insane yelling of godless glee.

It is the feel of the well-being before the eyes of God and His angels. It is the cause of his song: It is well with my soul. He realizes that all things are for him, because God is for him in Christ. He is joyous because he knows that his indwelling righteousness, wrought by Christ's Spirit is the firstfruits of a wonderful harvest, against the time when he shall dwell in a world and in the midst of a commonwealth that shall abound in this same righteousness.

The firstfruits of more than angelic joy. "They shout for joy, they also sing!" G.V.

#### IN MEMORIAM

The Consistory of the Loveland Protestant Reformed Church hereby expresses its sincere sympathy with elder Fritz Schwarz in the loss of his sister

MRS. ERNA NUSS

and with our beloved pastor Rev. H. H. Kuiper, in the loss of his father

HENRY KUIPER Sr.

We trust that the Word preached at both occasions of burial may be the source of rich comfort to all the bereaved and we all may rest in the assurance that also thru these events our covenant God is realizing his Kingdom.

The Consistory of the Loveland  
Protestant Reformed Church  
Wm. A. Griess, Clerk

#### IN MEMORIAM

The Ladies' Aid, "Ruth," herewith expresses its sympathy to one of its members, Mrs. Gerald Korhorn, in the loss of her brother,

MR. SIDNEY KORHORN

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Phil. 1:21.

Rev. H. Hanko, President  
Mrs. Jay Bomers, Secretary

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#### CONTENTS

##### MEDITATION —

Counterfeits of the Kingdom.....337  
Rev. G. Vos

##### EDITORIALS —

Schism and Schismatic.....340  
The Importance of Discipline.....340  
Rev. H. Hoeksema

##### OUR DOCTRINE —

The Book of Revelation.....342  
Rev. H. Hoeksema

##### A CLOUD OF WITNESSES —

Further Signs In Egypt.....345  
Rev. B. Woudenberg

##### FROM HOLY WRIT —

Exposition of I Timothy.....347  
Rev. G. Lubbers

##### IN HIS FEAR —

God's Royal Priesthood (5).....349  
Rev. J. A. Heys

##### CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH —

The Church and the Sacraments.....351  
Rev. H. Veldman

##### THE VOICE OF OUR FATHERS —

The Belgic Confession.....353  
Rev. H. C. Hoeksema

##### DECENCY AND ORDER —

Adult Baptism .....355  
Baptismal Records .....356  
Rev. G. Vanden Berg

##### ALL AROUND US —

Quotes from The Banner.....357  
Religious Life in Great Britain.....357  
Presbyterian Realignment .....358  
Rev. H. Hanko

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES.....359

Mr. J. M. Faber

## EDITORIALS

### Schism and Schismatic

Someone asked me the question what is the meaning of the term schism and why I usually called those that, in 1953, left our churches schismatics.

My answer to the latter part of this question is that it is the simple truth.

Schism, according to the dictionary, is derived from the Greek word *schisma* which, in turn, comes from the verb *schidzein* which means to split. The term is most generally used in the ecclesiastical sense of the word and signifies a split in the church or to cause such a split. Again, according to Webster's Dictionary, it is "the offense of seeking to produce division in a church without justifiable cause."

A schismatic, therefore, is one who causes a schism or who commits the offense above named.

Such a schism in the church may be caused on either doctrinal or church-political grounds.

Those who departed from the Protestant Reformed Churches in 1953 did cause a split in our churches, both with regard to doctrine and respect to the church-political way in which they caused the division.

As to the latter, it is a well-known fact, that some of the delegates to Classis East, when a certain serious matter was decided by that Classis contrary to their wishes, they simply left the Classis instead of appealing the matter to Synod. This act was schismatic because it was a violation of the Church Order to which they had subscribed. And when, shortly afterwards, they organized a new so-called Classis East, they performed another schismatic act for the same reason as mentioned above. Moreover, when their so-called Synod recognized the schismatic Classis East by receiving their delegates, that so-called Synod proved that it was itself schismatic.

As to the former, namely, that they caused a split in the Protestant Reformed Churches with respect to doctrine is, by this time, very evident to all that can read for they, the schismatics, are more and more repudiating the stand taken by the Protestant Reformed Churches in 1924 with regard to the "Three Points" and join the Christian Reformed Church.

This, then, is in brief my answer to the question.

And this is also the answer of history. For, who ever saw a church disintegrate so fast as that of the schismatics? In about seven or eight years they are virtually lost and are willing to admit that the "Three Points" are Reformed, at least, that they are not Pelagian or Arminian, which means the same thing.

Our Protestant Reformed Churches still stand on the basis of the same principle on which they always stood, i.e.

negatively on the denial of the "Three Points"; and, positively, on the basis of the Three Forms of Unity.

But the schismatics do not stand on the basis of any principle at all; and this is the fundamental reason why they seek to be swallowed up by the Christian Reformed Church.

Without a distinctive principle a church has no right to or basis for a separate existence.

H.H.

### The Importance of Discipline

In connection with our discussion of the *Presbyterian Laymen* and of the trouble in the Southern Presbyterian, we repeatedly noted the importance of Christian discipline. If a church fails to exercise discipline over its members and over its office-bearers, it cannot expect to remain pure in doctrine. No protests or anything else can take the place of the key-power which Christ has bestowed upon His Church in the world.

We pointed out that also the Westminster Confession has a separate chapter on this subject.

Our own Three forms of Unity speak repeatedly of the key-power. Thus the Heidelberg Catechism devotes an entire Lord's Day, with three questions and answers to this important subject. According to it, the key-power consists of the preaching of the holy gospel and Christian discipline (Lord's Day XXXI, question 83). Then, in question 84 it first treats of the key-power of the holy gospel and then, in question and answer 85, it speaks more particularly of Christian discipline as follows:

"How is the kingdom of heaven shut and opened by christian discipline?"

"Thus: when according to the command of Christ, those, who under the name of christians, maintain doctrines, or practices inconsistent therewith, and will not, after having been often brotherly admonished, renounce their errors and wicked course of life, are complained of to the church, or to those who are thereunto appointed by the church; and if they despise their admonition, are by them forbidden the use of the sacraments; whereby they are excluded from the christian church, and by God Himself from the kingdom of Christ; and when they promise and show real amendment, are again received as members of Christ and his church."

It is evident that in this answer the Catechism speaks especially of private sins which "are complained of to the church, or to those who are thereunto appointed by the church." This is in accordance with Matt. 18:15ff: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto

thee as a heathen man and publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

However, there are also public sins. These the consistory must treat immediately.

Also the Netherland or Belgic Confession has an article on Christian discipline which reads as follows:

"In the meantime we believe, though it is useful and beneficial, that those who are rulers of the Church, institute and establish certain ordinances among themselves for maintaining the body of the Church; yet they ought studiously to take care, that they not depart from those things which Christ, our only Master, hath instituted. And therefore, we reject all human inventions, and all laws, which man would introduce into the worship of God, thereby to bind and compel the conscience in any manner whatever. Therefore we admit only of that which tends to nourish and preserve concord, and unity, and to keep all men in obedience to God. For this purpose excommunication or church discipline is requisite, with the several circumstances belonging to it, according to the Word of God."

The "several circumstances belonging to it" refers, of course, to the way in which discipline is to be applied. Excommunication from the church is the final step in discipline, but can never be applied immediately; several steps precede and must precede that final excommunication. There is what is called silent censure which is not announced to the congregation, then there are the first and the second step of censure which are both announced to the church, the latter with the name of the offender and after advice from the classis. This advice from the classis does not mean that the classis can exercise discipline as was done in 1924. Only the consistory may do this. If there should be difference of opinion between the consistory and the classis, and the former does not heed the advice of the latter, appeal can be made to Synod and the latter should decide against the consistory and in favor of the classis and the former still insists that it is right, all the broader gathering can do is to declare such a consistory and the Church which it represents outside of the denomination. But the broader gathering, classis and synod may never exercise discipline. This belongs only to the consistory.

Discipline is also mentioned in the questions that are asked of those that make public confession of their faith. The third of these questions reads as follows: "Will you submit to church government, and in case you should become delinquent (which God may graciously forbid) to church discipline?"

There is, perhaps, no promise that is more often violated than the one that is expressed in this third question asked of those that make confession of faith. In my ministry I very seldom have excommunicated a member. Usually, when a

member is about to be excommunicated, he asks for a certificate of membership. Of course, the consistory, in that case, may not give him clean papers, may even write on his certificate of membership that he (or she) was on the verge of excommunication; nevertheless, such a member escapes excommunication. He (or she) violates the vow made at the occasion of public confession of faith.

Also in the Form for the Administration of the Lord's Supper excommunication is mentioned in the following paragraph:

"Therefore, we also according to the command of Christ and the Apostle Paul, admonish all those who are defiled with the following sins, to keep themselves from the table of the Lord, and declare to them that they have no part in the kingdom of Christ; such as all idolaters, all those who invoke deceased saints, angels, or other creatures; all those who worship images; all enchanters, diviners, charmers, and those who confide in such enchantments; all despisers of God, and of his word, and of the holy sacraments; all blasphemers; all those who are given to raise discord, sects and mutiny in church or state; all perjured persons; all those who are disobedient to their parents and superiors; all murderers, contentious persons, and those who live in hatred and envy against their neighbors; all adulterers, whoremongers, drunkards, thieves, usurers, robbers, gamesters, covetous, and all who lead offensive lives.

"All those, while they continue in such sins, shall abstain from this meat (which Christ has ordained only for the faithful), lest their judgment and condemnation be made the heavier."

This is virtually a form of excommunication, for to be barred from the Lord's table is the first step of discipline and leads to excommunication unless the guilty ones repent of their sin and amend their lives.

It stands to reason that also the Form of Excommunication speaks of discipline. But this Form emphasizes the seriousness of discipline and of excommunication in the following words:

"Therefore we, the ministers and rulers of the church, being here assembled in the name and authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, declare before you all, that for the aforesaid reasons we have excommunicated, and by these, do excommunicate N. from the church of God, and from the fellowship with Christ, and the holy sacraments, and from all the spiritual blessings and benefits, which God promiseth and bestows upon his church, so long as he obstinately and impenitently persists in his sins, and is therefore to be accounted by you as a heathen man and a publican, according to the command of Christ (Matt. 18), who saith, that whatsoever his ministers bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven."

Lack of space forbids me to continue. I hope to do so in our next issue.

H.H.

# OUR DOCTRINE

## THE BOOK OF REVELATION

### PART TWO

#### CHAPTER XIX

Revelation 20:1-10

#### *The Binding of Satan With a View to Gog and Magog*

The devil, therefore, is very securely bound. And he is bound with respect to these heathen nations as such in the passage we are now discussing. The passage teaches, therefore, that the devil is bound in such a way that he cannot marshal the nations of Gog and Magog to battle against the church, the beloved city, or, if you please, against the Christian nations. He may in this very period of his restraint do many things, both among the nominally Christian nations and the people that are called Gog and Magog. He may go about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, as he actually does also. But he is prevented from deceiving those nations so as to gather them to battle. And the period of this restraint is designated as a thousand years. Again, it would be very arbitrary to interpret this number in its literal sense. For, in the first place, all Scripture attaches a symbolical significance to numbers, as it also does to colors and dimensions. Numbers such as one, three, four, six, seven, ten, and twelve, and their combinations and products, represent certain realities of the kingdom of God. The earthly relations are also in their numbers the picture of the heavenly and spiritual realities of God's covenant. That this is true is evident as soon as we call to mind that, for instance, in our weekly period of time there is a combination of six plus one, labor and rest, time and the eternal sabbath, the completion of the kingdom of God; that seven in Scripture, and especially in the book of Revelation, occurs evidently as the combination of three and four, the Triune God and the world, the perfection of God's covenant. Besides, the number twelve occurs as the product of three and four, which is evidently the number of the elect—reason why there are twelve tribes, twelve apostles, twelve times twelve thousand servants of God that are sealed, twelve plus twelve elders around the throne of God and of the Lamb. These numbers abound in Scripture, and more emphatically in their symbolical significance in the book of Revelation. The whole book is based on the scheme of the number seven. There are seven seals to the book that is opened by the Lamb. The seventh seal dissolves itself into seven trumpets. And the seventh trumpet reveals itself as comprehending seven vials. There are seven golden candlesticks, even as the complete picture of the church in the world is represented by the seven churches of Asia. But this is equally true of the number ten and its products, especially in

the thousands. The days of tribulation for the church of Smyrna are ten. The number of the servants of God that are sealed are ten times ten times ten, multiplied by one hundred forty-four. The number of those that appear on Mt. Zion with the Lamb, that have His Father's name written on their foreheads, is one thousand times one hundred forty-four. Cf. Rev. 14. The antichristian beast appears with ten horns. The length and breadth and height of the New Jerusalem are twelve times a thousand furlongs. In the light of all these facts, as well as in connection with the apocalyptic character of the book of Revelation in general, we are certainly justified in saying that it would be arbitrary to insist that the thousand years of Revelation 20 must be understood in the literal sense of the word.

Now, the number itself suggests completeness, a fulness of measure. It is a round number. All the instances in Scripture where this number occurs, denote the same idea. There are ten plagues upon Egypt, indicating the fulness of the wrath of God upon Pharaoh and his people. There are ten commandments, expressing the fulness of God's ethical will for men. We feel, as it were, spontaneously that there could not be either nine or eleven commandments. There are one hundred and forty-four thousand people of God according to the election of grace, i.e. ten times ten times ten times one hundred and forty-four. Thus there are ten virgins, ten talents, and ten days of tribulation for the church of Smyrna. In all these instances the number ten, evidently, expresses the idea of fulness or completeness. It represents the idea of completeness determined by the will and counsel of God. Now, the number thousand in the text is the number ten in the third power. Besides, it does not speak of days or even of hours, but of years and, therefore, it suggests the idea of a long period. On all these grounds we interpret the text as indicating a long period of time, fully determined by the will and counsel of God, a period which must be fulfilled before the devil can be permitted to deceive the nations that live on the four corners of the earth.

The above interpretation is based on the text. This is fully justified by the entire character of the book of Revelation. It is also in harmony with the line of Scripture in general. Of all this there can be no doubt. Besides, this explanation is capable of application to history itself and to actually existing conditions in the world of today. The period of the thousand years is to be applied to this entire dispensation until the time shortly before the second coming of the Lord on the clouds of heaven. The fact that the vision in the passage we are now discussing follows the vision of the second coming of Christ mentioned in chapter 19 cannot be adduced as an objection against this view for the simple reason that the order of the book of Revelation is not chronological but rather idealogical. Repeatedly the book follows the development of the world to its very end from a certain point of view in order then to resume the drawing of the same picture from a different viewpoint. Thus, for instance in chapter 6:12-16; 11:15-19; 14:17-20; 16:17-21; 18; 19:11-



21. In the chapter we are now discussing we have the same phenomenon, now from the viewpoint of the history and end of Gog and Magog. The nations of Gog and Magog that live on the four corners of the earth, I would identify as the peoples, that in the New Dispensation never played a part in the history of the world, but that, in our very day are waking up. I refer to the overwhelmingly strong heathen world, the nations of China and Japan, the great and strong multitudes in India, the followers of Confucius and Buddha, of Islam and Brahminism, the millions of Africa and of the islands of the sea. What it would mean if these nations were permitted to unite and marshal their tremendous forces against the nominally Christian nations can easily be surmised. The Church would have no place in the world, no nor room for development. But the devil is bound with respect to them. In the old dispensation he might repeatedly deceive the nations to come against Israel. Egypt and Assyria, Babylonia and Persia, Greece and Rome, all had a controlling influence in the history of the world. In the new dispensation, however, this relation is exactly the opposite. The Christian are historical powers: Gog and Magog were hitherto apparently asleep. The prince of this world is restrained from employing these forces against the church, the beloved city, the camp of the saints. The devil is bound, as we said, in regard to the nations of Gog and Magog.

And now the vision changes. For John tells us that he "saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them." This part of the picture evidently represents a people that reign, a royal people. For such is the meaning of their sitting on thrones, as well as of the statement that judgment was given unto them. For to judge is a function of royalty, impiles authority to rule. The question, however, is: who are these royal people? Directly the text does not answer this question, does not inform us who they are, nor where we must look for their thrones. But in the latter part of verse 4 John plainly describes these same people, as he continues: "and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." That the thousand years refer to the same period as that in which the devil is bound with respect to Gog and Magog is self-evident. In that entire period these people reign with Christ. And they are saints in glory before the final resurrection, the resurrection of the body. For the expression "souls of them that were beheaded" permits no other interpretation. The Chiliast denies this in order to be able to save his theory of an earthly millenium and of a separate resurrection of the saints. But the denial is without support in Scripture. It is rather strange that he who always would insist on a literal interpretation of Holy Writ in this case looks about for a figurative explanation. Yet so he does. It is essential to his theory of the millennium

that these "souls of them that were beheaded" should be transformed into the resurrected saints in their glorified bodies. If he does not succeed in this, his interpretation of the entire passage must needs be regarded as false. Hence, he argues that in this expression we have an illustration of the figure called synecdoche, according to which a part must be taken for the whole. As we speak of so many sails, meaning ships, as we speak of a hundred head, meaning cattle, so the Scripture speaks of souls, signifying persons. All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt were threescore and ten. In the ark few, that is, eight souls, were saved. On the day of Pentecost about three thousand souls were added to the church. And there were in all two hundred threescore and sixteen souls with Paul in the ship. Gen. 46:27; I Peter 3:20; Acts 2:41; Acts 27:37. Hence, the Chiliast argues that we must interpret the expression "the souls of them that were beheaded" in the same figurative way, as referring to resurrected persons.

There are, however, two weighty objections against this mode of interpretation, which prove it false beyond a shadow of doubt. The first objection is that whenever the above-mentioned figure is employed, whether in our daily language and secular literature or in Holy Writ, uniformly a numeral is used in connection with it. We can speak of a hundred head and fifty sails; but we do not merely speak of head and of sails. And in all the instances quoted the Bible follows the same rule. Seventy souls came with Jacob into Egypt. Eight souls were in the ark. Three thousand souls were added to the church. Two hundred seventy-six souls were in the ship. But in Revelation 20:4 we simply read, "And I saw the souls." John does not employ the figure in this instance. And the second objection is in the addition "of them that were beheaded." What a strange way of referring to persons in the body, whether corruptible or resurrected, it would be to speak of the souls of them that were beheaded. The Chiliast must admit this. He must relinquish the attempt to save his theory of the earthly millennium by thus imposing his interpretation upon the simple and strange words of Scripture.

And surely, the statement in verse 5 that "this is the first resurrection" does not change matters whatsoever. The Chiliast indeed adduces this clause in support of his contention that verse 4 refers to risen saints. Nevertheless, he is mistaken. The text plainly says: "*This* is the first resurrection." And the pronoun "this" refers back to the statement in verse 4 concerning the souls that reign with Christ. In answer to the question, therefore, what is the first resurrection, we cannot introduce our own preconceived notion; but we are bound to the text, and are therefore constrained to say: *The reign of the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus is the first resurrection.* Scripture speaks of the resurrection of the dead in more than one sense. It refers to regeneration in John 5:25: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear

shall live." The same resurrection is meant in Ephesians 5:14: "Wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." In Revelation 20:5, however, the first resurrection refers to the state of the saints in glory immediately after death. They are delivered from battle and from persecution and from the suffering inflicted on them by the antichristian forces that are always in the world throughout this dispensation, and they reign with the Lord. The expression "the first resurrection," therefore, does not refer to a separate group of saints that are raised first, in distinction from the raising of the wicked a thousand years later as the second resurrection, but to a state or degree in the resurrection of the saints. That this is the correct interpretation a comparison with the similar expression "the second death" corroborates. For "the second death" refers to the ultimate state of death in hell. Rev. 20:14. First and second death, therefore, are different stages of death, and not different groups of dead people. But surely, this establishes beyond any reasonable doubt that the first resurrection also refers to a stage in life and glorification. If we may complete the parallel, we would say that even as the first death is physical death, so the first resurrection is the glory that follows immediately upon physical death, so the first resurrection is the glory that follows immediately upon physical death; and even as the second death is the state of perdition of body and soul in hell, so the second resurrection is the final state of glory after the resurrection in the glory of the body. Hence, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Finally, as an objection against this interpretation the millennialist cannot adduce the first part of verse 5, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Certainly, the rest of the dead are the ungodly dead. And it may be frankly admitted that the form of the expression would almost invite us to complete it as follows: "Then they also shall live again." But it must be remembered that the text does not say this and that we have no authority to add to Scripture. Besides, even the millennialist would not venture to finish the expression in that fashion. For although also the wicked shall have a certain rising from their graves and receive their bodies again, it cannot be said of them that they shall "live" again. Their resurrection will be a resurrection to eternal perdition. And Scripture clearly teaches that this going forth out of the grave unto perdition will take place at the same time, as in one hour, with the resurrection of the righteous unto glory. Cf. John 5:29. So, then, the text in Revelation 20:5 can only mean that while the souls of the righteous were seen as living in glory and in power, the rest of the dead had no place in this picture at all, and did not live again. And when they do appear once more, it will be to be sent into perdition, to be cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death.

These blessed and glorified saints, then, reign with Christ. On earth they endured suffering for Christ's sake. It was given them of grace to have the testimony of Jesus and the word of God in their hearts and in their mouths. And therefore, it was given them also in the cause of Christ to suffer with Him. Cf. Phil. 1:29. For they had this testimony in the midst of an antichristian world. That the antichristian power is here described as it will manifest itself in its ultimate realization and consummation does not signify that only the saints that shall live and suffer in the last days, shortly before the coming of Christ, are included in these saints that reign with Christ. Essentially the power of Antichrist, the beast and his image, are always in the world. And always the believers have the testimony of Jesus and the Word of God. And they always refuse to worship the beast and his image, and refuse to receive his sign in their right hand or in their forehead. And therefore the entire church triumphant in heaven is meant by these reigning saints. They reign and judge the world with Christ. Now they are in glory with Him and are free from all suffering and persecution. It is a reign which commenced in heaven with the exaltation of their Lord at the right hand of God. That the saints who overcome and endure unto the end shall reign with the Lord in glory is a common idea in Scripture. "And he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father." Rev. 2:26, 27. And again: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Rev. 3:21. Concerning this reign with Christ, it is evident that centrally and essentially it is a reign of the exalted Lord, to Whom is given all power in heaven and on earth, a name that is above all names. But even as the saints while they are still in this world and must suffer in the cause of Christ nevertheless have the victory and overcome and judge the world by faith in Christ, so they shall participate in His glorious reign in heaven, when they shall be completely delivered from all the power of the enemy and be with Him forever and ever. And thy shall be given to know His works with regard to the final realization of the kingdom of God, even as He knows the Father's counsel and is found worthy to open the book with its seven seals. They shall perfectly know the mind of Christ, and He shall have no secrets for them. They shall concur in His judgments of the world, and thus shall partake in them. And they shall rejoice in the full realization of His perfect victory. And, finally, this reign of Christ with respect to the world is such, that almost until the very end the devil shall be bound with respect to Gog and Magog, so that he cannot deceive them and gather them for battle against the camp of the saints.

H.H.



## A CLOUD OF WITNESSES

### Further Signs In Egypt

*And the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him:*

*And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my vigor which I have done among them; that ye may know that I am the Lord.* Exodus 10:1, 2

The land of Egypt lay desolate; the people were dismayed; the servants of the palace were apprehensive; and Pharaoh was distraught. Six times devastation had swept through the country, and everyone knew in his heart that there was more yet to come. War had been declared against Egypt by Israel's God. In pride Pharaoh had said, "I know no Jehovah." Now he was being shown; and the more Pharaoh saw, the more he rebelled.

A third series of three plagues was beginning, and God said again unto Moses, "Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth. For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go? Behold, to morrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now. Send therefore now, and gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field; for upon every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them and they shall die."

Once again as Pharaoh stood by the river bank vainly offering oblations to his god, Moses appeared and brought the message of Jehovah. Pharaoh knew by now that the God of Moses was a terrible enemy. He had learned to hate and even fear these visits from Moses. Never had an enemy behaved like this. He announced to Pharaoh each step of the way just exactly what He was going to do; He told Pharaoh why He was doing it; and He warned him what the results would be. This very fact infuriated Pharaoh. The God of Israel was treating him as a potter might treat his clay. The fact that he was the king of Egypt seemed to make no difference at all. And yet a new feeling was beginning to find its way into his life. Even as Moses said these plagues were beginning to touch his heart; his courage was beginning to

waver; he, Pharaoh, was becoming afraid. Both to maintain his pride and to hide his fear, Pharaoh did not as much as answer Moses. In stubborn determination he would not as much as take his cattle from the field even though within his heart he knew that it was best. In all of Egypt there were but a few who would listen to the warning of Moses because they had learned to fear the word of Israel's God.

Once again Moses raised his rod, this time toward the heavens. On the horizon the storm clouds gathered, strangely foreboding in a land of few storms. Swiftly it advanced to overshadow the land, and the earth shook with the roll of its thunder. Lightning like fire lashed forth from the clouds, running across the ground and striking out this way and that, much too swiftly for any to escape. And then came the hail, large like rocks, able to bruise, able to hurt, able to kill; and they did. Animals and men lay dead in the fields; trees and plants hung broken and limp, stripped of their vegetation; but none dared go out to investigate. Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, did the land and the people remain untouched.

In the palace even Pharaoh crouched and trembled while the hail drummed on the ground and roofs like the hoof beats of thousands of horses. He was beginning to know what it was to taste fear. How was he to resist this power? In desperation he called for Moses; and Moses came through the midst of the storm unscathed, as though overshadowed by the hand of the Lord. While anxiety contorted his face, Pharaoh blurted out, "I have sinned this time; Jehovah is righteous, and I and my people are wicked." Were these the words of Pharaoh? What was it that he wanted? forgiveness? salvation? peace with God? No, "Intreat Jehovah that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer." That the thunder and hail should stop, that was all he wanted.

Calmly Moses answered, "As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto Jehovah; and the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that thou mayest know how that the earth is Jehovah's. But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear Jehovah God."

Soon all was silent again; the thunder and hail had ceased; even the rain no longer fell. With a sigh of relief, Pharaoh returned to his normal self. He dared ask of himself the old question again, "Who is Jehovah that I should let Israel go?" With boldness he issued the order that the Israelites should continue their work.

It was then that God came to Moses and said, "Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him: and that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my vigor which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I am Jehovah." This gave the basic reason for the plagues. They were a means of revealing the power of God; they were a means of hardening the heart of Pharaoh and

thus revealing the power of God; they were a means of bringing about the deliverance of Israel from Egypt; but more than anything else they were a testimony of God's righteousness and mercy which would work in the hearts of His people through all generations.

Once again Moses appeared before Pharaoh and said, "Thus saith Jehovah God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? let my people go, that they may serve me. Else, if thou refuse to let my people go, behold, to morrow will I bring the locust into thy coast: and they shall cover the face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth; and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field: and they shall fill thy houses, and the houses of thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians; which neither thy fathers, nor thy fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were upon the earth unto this day."

Furious with indignation, Pharaoh remained sullenly silent until Moses turned and left. It was in the servants that stood by that the misgivings arose. Could their country endure any more destruction? Carefully formulating their words so as not to offend, they said to Pharaoh, "How long shall this man be a snare unto us? let the men go, that they may serve Jehovah their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?" Bitterly they laid all of the blame at the feet of Moses; but the fact could not be escaped that they were afraid.

It was in the mind of Pharaoh that this remark gave rise to a new thought, a new compromise that he could seek to negotiate with Moses. Quickly he commanded that Moses and Aaron should be called back into his presence. Almost triumphantly he spoke as soon as they entered, "Go, serve Jehovah your God: but who are they that shall go?"

Sensing the deception that hung heavy upon Pharaoh's words, Moses answered positively and with care. "We will go with our young men and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast unto Jehovah."

Taken back by the finality of Moses' answer, Pharaoh nonetheless could not resist expressing the compromise that would be acceptable to him. "Let Jehovah be so with you, as I will let you go. And your little ones, look to it, for evil is before you. Not so: go now ye that are men, and serve Jehovah; for that ye did desire." Israel might go but only on Pharaoh's terms. As though concerned for the women and children, he would not allow them to go out into the evils of the wilderness. Only the men might go. But this was quite unacceptable to Moses and Aaron, and in rage Pharaoh drove them from his presence.

Moses raised his rod, and immediately a strong wind sprang up from the east. The next day the locusts appeared. As a black cloud they came in the East blotting out the rays of the morning sun. Their approaching wings beat a deafening roar until they settled like a smothering blanket over

the earth. Soon all that could be heard was the crunching of thousands of jaws consuming the land. No piece of green vegetation was safe; they devoured it all. Even the roofs of the palace afforded no sanctuary from this. The locusts poured in upon Pharaoh in his privacy until once again he knew the choking grip of fear even stronger than before. No matter where he fled the grizzled faces of the insects were there to remind him of his sin. To them his pride could no longer provide an answer.

At last in haste he sent for Moses and Aaron, and he fairly shouted at them when they appeared, "I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you. Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and intreat Jehovah your God, that he may take away from me this death only." Even the colossal pride of Pharaoh was being bowed before the judgment of God. Not that there was any repentance. The similar prayer of a few weeks earlier was already forgotten. But even a heart of solid wickedness could no longer deny the power of Israel's God. It was not really the forgiveness that he wanted; it was deliverance from those insect jaws of death.

Without as much as honoring this hypocritical prayer with an answer, Moses went out again. Soon there came a West wind to cast the locusts into the sea. But Pharaoh's pride was still there. With resilience, it sprang back as soon as the plague was lifted. He would not let Israel go.

The answer of the Lord was swift. He commanded Moses, "Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt."

Without warning to Pharaoh it came, but he knew full well from whence. Such darkness had never been known before. It was more than an absence of light. In this darkness a fire was of no use, and a lamp could not penetrate its depths. This darkness could be felt. For three days not an Egyptian dared stir from his place. The land was shrouded in an earthly figure of their obdurate hearts.

Torn between fear and resentment, Pharaoh decided to make one more attempt to negotiate with Israel's God. He called Moses to him and spoke through the darkness, "Go ye, serve Jehovah; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you."

Patiently Moses answered, "Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto Jehovah our God. Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve Jehovah our God; and we know not with what we must serve Jehovah until we come hither." He demanded of Pharaoh a complete surrender.

It was too much. Pharaoh's pride would not surrender. Screaming with fury he cried out, "Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die."

There was somber warning in Moses' answer, "Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more." B.W.

## FROM HOLY WRIT

## Exposition of I Timothy

(I Timothy 1:12-17)

b.

The truth that Paul received mercy from Christ, being counted faithful unto the ministry, certainly supports the thesis that salvation is not of works of law which we perform, but is simply a matter of sovereign grace and mercy. This is abundantly evident from Paul's calling unto the ministry. According to the rule of the works of the law Paul could never rate. He was not simply not faithful, but he was a blasphemer, a persecutor of the church, and an injurious person.

But Paul has one more arrow in his quiver which he will place upon his bow. He will show that also in his personal life it is exemplified that salvation is from mercy and the love and the longsuffering of God in Christ.

For the word of the Gospel is true.

Paul writes the very beautiful and instructive polemic in the verses 15-17 which read as follows: *"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should afterward believe on him to everlasting life. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen."*

The great and all-important fact is "that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"!

It is of importance, first of all, to notice the implication of a few of the elements here in this gospel fact, this great mystery of godliness.

We would then ascertain just what Paul has in mind with the term "world" here in the text. The term world in the King James Version of the Bible is the translation of two or more different words in the Greek text of the New Testament. There is first the term in the Greek, translated "world" but which could better be translated "age." It refers to the entire creation, the life of men and angels and all things, from the view-point of *time*, succession of events, ages and definite periods in the history of the world. Now it is a peculiar and revealing fact that while we do read of the "end of the ages" in the Bible (Matt. 13:39, I Cor. 10:11) we do not ever read of the end of the world in the sense of the end of all things, the entire Cosmos. For the term Cosmos (Kosmos) is the term which Paul employs here in the Greek. Cosmos refers to the entire universe from the view-point of

space, heaven and earth. One is either in the Kosmos, and then a creature. Outside of the Kosmos there is no creature. Above and beyond the Kosmos is God. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. That is above, beyond and "before" the creation of the Kosmos, heaven and earth. He who dwells there beyond and above the Kosmos is God. And beyond this Kosmos is also the Son, the Christ in the bosom of the Father. John 1:1-3, 18.

To this preexistence Paul refers when he says, "Christ Jesus *came* into this world."

This world, this cosmos, is referred to in Scripture from more than one point of view. In the first place this term cosmos often refers to the entirety of God's creation, heaven and earth from the viewpoint of Satan, the prince of this world, and as he rules in the demon world and also in the world of evil men. John 14:29. This is the world spoken of in I John 2:15-17 which we are admonished not to love. It is the entire creation as in its totality it is harnessed against God, Christ, His Church. The kingdoms of this world it is!

This world is also looked at as the object of God's love. John 3:16. In this passage from John 3:15 the term world is "cosmos" in the Greek. Here it is the entirety of the creation, heaven and earth, created by God in the beginning as it presently shall be made new. We look for a new heaven and new earth where righteousness dwells.

Now Christ came into *this* world. And He *came into* this world. Christ came into this world which is under the dominion of sin in its totality. Everything is affected by sin. Also the heavens above. In this world men and women live who are elected unto everlasting life. However, they are, as far as the Christ came into *this* world to save them, sinners! And let it also be underscored that he *came into* this world. He was preexistent to it. We did not come into this world. We were never outside of and above the cosmos. We were made in Adam from the dust of the ground. We were simply born, and formed in our mother's womb in a most wonderful way. But we were not such that we "came into this world." The very expression is so unique and meaningful as to fit only the coming of the Son of God in flesh.

Besides, it must not be overlooked that the Son was *sent into* the world, when he came into the world. He is the anointed of God. He is the Christ, who is our chief prophet who is come to reveal to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption; He is our only High-priest who came to give His life for us as a ransom for our sins; He is our eternal King, who rules by His Word and Spirit. His name is Christ.

And historically He is Jesus, Jehovah saves, or Jehovah is salvation. He is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace.

His coming into this world was to save sinners.

And His entire coming into this world, at every step of the way, and in every moment shows this *design* of saving sinners.

For when the text speaks of Christ Jesus coming into this world this does not merely refer to the *point of entrance*, but refers to the entire way of Christ from the incarnation unto his sitting at the right hand of God, Lord over all things. Heb. 1:1-4. It refers to Christ's incarnation, and the entire history leading up to it, as told in Matt. 1:1-8, where we are shown the "becoming (genesis) of Jesus Christ," the Son of God. One can see that even in the generations from which He came there were great "sinners." We read of Tamar (Judah), Rahab the harlot, Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. The coming into the world of Jesus Christ was thus. He came to save sinners. Even the sinners of the generations from which, according to the flesh, He was born.

We said that Christ's coming into this world did not merely refer to His point of entrance.

It refers, therefore, to Christ's suffering under Pontius Pilate, His death, His resurrection, His ascension at the right hand of God. And always in each step is this saving design evident. In each step an element of our salvation is made secure. He is delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification. Rom. 4:25, Is. 53:4, 5. If we are saved through His death we shall *much more* be saved through His life. Rom. 5:9-11. Or as we read in Rom. 8:31-34: "What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that did not spare his own Son but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also freely give us all things with him? . . . It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ who died, yea, rather who is risen, who is even at the right hand of God; who ever liveth to pray for us."

Thus Christ came into this world to save sinners.

He saved us on the Cross and in His resurrection.

He saves us now in His state of glory at God's right hand.

He came into this world, this cosmos, and He will never leave it.

And when the last "sinner" is saved, the elect are gathered and called, then shall also the entire "cosmos" be made new. Now it still "waits for" the final adoption of the children of God. Rom. 8:23.

Now this word of the Cross is really worthy of all acceptance. Says Paul, referring to the coming of Christ Jesus into the world to save sinners, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance."

It is entirely possible that this was a "saying" among the churches of Christ; a kind of holy slogan; the gospel in a nutshell. Be this as it may.

That Paul says it is *worthy* of acceptance calls for a bit of explanation. The term in the Greek for worthy is "Axios," and comes from the verb agoo, axoo: drawing down the scale,

having the weight of, weighing as much as. It is a comparison of values of some sort. To that the term often refers. Thus in Romans 8:18 we read that Paul does not account the sufferings of this present time to be worthy to be compared with the glory which is about to be revealed in us. The values of the one and the other are compared. All the sufferings of this present time of the church for righteousness' sake, all the tears, the heartaches of the saints under the altar, who cry: "How long, O Lord, and let it repent thee concerning thy servants." And when all the measure of the sufferings of Christ are filled up, then their value and meaning are so insignificant that they cannot be worthily compared with the glory which shall be revealed.

Here in this passage Paul is speaking of the needs of the poor sinner on the one hand, the superabundance of sin, the exceeding sinfulness of sin. On the other hand, there is that great fact of Christ coming into the world to save sinners. And the latter fact is wholly "worthy" in the light of all the sin. Where sin abounds, grace did much more abound, Rom. 5:20. The sin of the sinner, whom Christ came to save, is never as great as the love of God! This grace is infinite, this love is great, and this mercy is rich.

And, therefore, one may very well cling to this saying as to the Rock of ages in the sea of his troubled soul and conscience overagainst all the wiles of the Devil. All the assaults of Satan must be so much fruitlessness in the light of the "worthiness" of this saying.

Wherefore this saying is also said to be "faithful." Something is faithful when it fulfills its assigned commitment. The Bible speaks of a faithful servant, and minister of the gospel. See I Cor. 1:9; 10:13, where God is called the faithful God, who hath promised. It is the anchor of the soul within the holy place that God is faithful. Heb. 10:23.

Repeatedly Paul used this phrase "Faithful is the word"! No less than five times, and all in the pastoral letters.

It is a faithful word and worthy of all acceptance that he who desireth the office of a Bishop desireth a good work. It is a faithful saying that if we die with Christ we shall also live with him. I Tim. 3:1; 4:9; II Tim. 3:8, and see also Titus 3:8.

How Paul rejoices in the faithfulness of God, and that, too, as this faithfulness is expressed in this faithful word concerning the coming of Christ to save sinners!

Of this we hope to see more in the next issue.

G.L.

#### IN MEMORIAM

The consistory of the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church herewith expresses its sincere sympathy to our fellow consistory member, Elder Gilbert Van Baren, in the sudden bereavement of his wife,

MRS. ANNA VAN BAREN

May the God of all grace and mercy comfort him with the truth that all things work together for the good of those that love God. Romans 8:28.

Rev. John A. Heys, Pres  
John Flikkema, Clerk

## IN HIS FEAR

### God's Royal Priesthood

(5)

Silence does not always mean consent.

A man who votes neither for nor against a matter in effect does give consent by his silence. At any rate he does not register a vote against the matter and does not prevent it from taking place.

However there are times when silence is entirely wrong, yea the revelation of great wickedness.

How wicked when the prophet of God keeps silent!

It lies in the very nature of the case that the prophet of God must speak. His mind is a precious gift of God, so that he may receive from God the revelation He is pleased to give. And his tongue belongs to that mind to give utterance to the praise of God which that mind has received. We said, last time, What if Moses did not at God's command climb up Mt. Sinai to receive that revelation which God intended to give? But we can add the new question, "What if he kept silent after he had been on that mount for forty days? Would God not smite him to the ground in His hot displeasure?"

Zacharias would not believe the word of the angel that he and his aged wife were to have a son. That means that he would not listen to what God had to reveal to him. Therefore, as a fit sign, he was struck with dumbness; and though he desired greatly to do so, he was utterly unable to speak of that wonderful truth that God had revealed to him in the temple. But to be able to speak, to have the truth and then to keep silent in regard to it is a great evil. And there is all too much of it to be seen today.

To be sure the minister of the Word, the official prophet on the pulpit of today's church must speak. And be sure that you do not ask him to keep still! God has given us a whole day for our Sabbath, and the whole period of twenty-four hours are His day. And yet how we clamor for a half hour, a twenty minute, perhaps even a ten minute sermon! Shame, double shame on God's royal priesthood that does that. Shame, a hundred times shame to the minister who makes a farce of the things spiritual, who will devote hours and hours to recreation and entertainment but cries for shorter and shorter divine worship services, whose sermons become shorter and shorter, because he will not spend the time during the week on the mountaintop of revelation! You can say it all in ten minutes? Brother, you have not been listening to God during the week! He spoke for forty days on the mount to Moses. Your congregation grows weary, and the whole service has to be concluded in less than an hour? Come, come, observe them before their TV sets, at

public programs and sports. But listen, we will meet you on that ground to show you that you are not sincere. A ten minute sermon is all your people can take and all you can dish up after a week of "strenuous" and faithful work as God's prophet in your study? We will concede that your ability to make more than a ten minute talk about a text is the controlling factor and that your people cannot sit any longer than an hour at the very most. It still is God's day. Remember that. Well now then, make arrangements to have three services a day instead of two. Your sheep will at least get three — we will not say square meals of spiritual food that day, but then three — portions of spiritual food instead of the starvation rations of but two very brief contacts with the Word of God. What? You have only one service, and that service is all over in an hour? We have heard of the wicked idea that the days of creation-week were billions of years long; but this is a new one that the present-day Sabbath is one hour long! We have heard of reader's digests and of condensed books, we have heard of shortened work-weeks and of shorter forms for filing income tax returns, but we want to hear nothing of shorter Sabbaths. Presently there comes the eternal Sabbath. Can the man who longs for it, sincerely longs for it, clamor for twenty-three hours for the flesh on our present-day Sabbath and grudgingly concede one miserable little hour to divine worship services? Show me a prophet of God, and I will show you a man who condemns all this carnality! The prophet of God wants to speak His Word. He is eager to teach God's people and to train them for the praise of Him from Whom all blessings flow. And he will also desire to listen that he may learn more of this God to praise Him more fully.

But there is another side. Ye all are partakers of Christ's anointing. We all stand in the office of all believers. And then indeed silence is not consent. How is it that we can speak so fluently and even forcefully about natural things? It is hard to get a word in edgewise when it comes to politics, cooking, farming, business and entertainment. But when it comes to speak about spiritual things, we have no words to utter. Why? Why does the church member have nothing to say as God's prophet? Why does he not have the truth to speak and confess? He has not listened to God's revelation. We have nothing to say of ourselves. And what we would say of ourselves in the sphere of the spiritual things would be the lie and foolishness; but only as we listen to God, only as we live in His Word, only as we seek it as a lamp for our feet and a light upon our path will we have something to say. Then we will confess God before men, and we will not be silent.

Let man speak his philosophy, let him utter forth his foolishness, let him try to spread his false doctrines; the prophet of God in the new dispensation will speak up and declare his "Thus saith the Lord." He will be a witness of his God. Let the wicked blaspheme His name, let them curse and swear, let them heap ridicule upon the Church of God,

God's royal priesthood will continue to praise Him and rebuke those who take His name in vain. Of that you may be sure. And you? You are God's prophet? You are a partaker of Christ's anointing? It will be seen in your walk of life.

Then, too, there is such a spirit of indifference today in regard to the revelation of God, that one does begin to repeat the words of Jesus, "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8. Faith, Paul says in Romans 10:17, "cometh by hearing." And of course that means also that by reading it is strengthened, and we are edified. But reading, that is, reading the things that are spiritually good, is becoming a lost art. There was a time when every home had its own library of books on doctrinal matters, and religious magazines were read faithfully and eagerly. The family had a time for discussion of the things spiritual. The sermon was discussed when the family came home. A lecture on some spiritual subject was a treat and not a chore. Men looked forward to it and attended with a capacity audience.

But look about you today. Where is there interest in such things? It is so easy to sit home in your most comfortable chair and watch the world entertain you and feed your lust. The world is so very close to us today. Instead of being upon the mountaintop of revelation, so that we may be able to show forth God's praises, we prefer to stay down in the valley where before our TV set we may watch the things that come up out of the abyss. Children have no time to memorize a few texts from Holy Writ. The answers they are to learn to the questions prepared to lead them step by step into the truth are considered of minor importance. And you must not insist that they know many facts of truth recorded in God's Word. Parents will defend their children and quickly rush to their side to agree that it is expecting too much of a child. And yet these same children will reveal that they can learn and memorize facts of the godless entertainment world in a matter of moments. That wonderful mind, that incomparable intellect which God has given to man, that with it he might praise God and learn to know Him as God, we press into the service of our own lusts. The revealed Word of God is covered with dust. The Word of God is not precious to us anymore.

And is it any wonder then that there is so little confession of God's name in this world? Men are silent. And a silent prophet is a sinful prophet. Yea, when we keep silence we cease to function as God's prophets. And if it is because we will not turn to the Word of God wherein He reveals the truth to His prophets in this present dispensation, then we likewise do wickedly and despise the very thing we need most of all in this life. A deaf prophet will indeed be a dumb prophet. Yea rather, he who turns a deaf ear to God's Word can never, never serve as a prophet of God. He will never praise God from Whom all blessings flow. But his very turning away from that Word of God, or if you will, his very failure to turn to it, indicates that he hates God.

I can turn away from the writings of ungodly men. I can refuse to read their evil philosophies and foolish theories. I can even say to my brother in the Church of God that I do not have time to read the book he has written on a particular subject. I may even tell him that I cannot afford to purchase all the books he has written. And I can say this to the worldly author or to my brother in Christ without hating him. Indeed I do hate those wicked philosophies of the world. But I do not hate the man. I may not hate him. But the point is that I am not called to listen to him. I am under no obligation even to my brother in Christ to purchase and read all the books which he has written. But when the Living God speaks, as He does in His written Word, and as He is pleased to do so through His servant upon the pulpit on the Sabbath, I reveal nothing less than hatred against the God Who commands me to listen, when I turn away and satisfy my flesh.

Prophet of God, take inventory!

Compare the number of worldly magazines to which you subscribe with the number of those that contain spiritual food for the souls of God's people. Contrast the time spent on your newspaper and worldly magazines with the time spent in contact with the Word of God itself or discussions and essays based upon that Word. While you are at it, you might also check the amount of money paid for each and ask yourself why there should be such a great difference. Compare the hours spent before the TV and radio with the minutes spent before the Word of God. Contrast the hours spent each week listening to the news from the four corners of the earth with the minutes spent listening to the Good News, the Gospel, from heaven itself.

And you still say you are a prophet of God?

Be careful lest it become necessary for men then to say that you are a false prophet. If you listened to God, you would condemn your carnality and never defend it. No prophet of God ever defended evil in Israel. Always they condemned it in no uncertain terms.

J.A.H.

### Christian School Teachers and Teachers-To-Be:

Whereas the Loveland Prot. Ref. Christian School Society plans, D.V., to open its own school in Sept. of 1961, the Board encourages ALL interested teachers and teachers-to-be to inquire for further details. It is requested that applicants include name, credits or degree, experience, if any, and expected salary. Contact:

Gilbert Griess, Secretary  
Route 1, Box 282  
Loveland, Colorado



## Contending For The Faith

### The Church and the Sacraments

#### THE TIME OF THE REFORMATION

#### VIEWS ON THE CHURCH

#### MATERIAL PRINCIPLE

(continued)

We will now continue with our quotation of Chapter VII of the Sixth Session of the Roman Catholic Council of Trent, devoted to the subject of Justification: "Of this Justification the causes are these: the final cause indeed is the glory of God and of Jesus Christ, and life everlasting; while the efficient cause is a merciful God who *washes and sanctifies gratuitously, signing, and anointing with the holy Spirit of promise, who is the pledge of our inheritance*; but the meritorious cause is his most beloved only-begotten, our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when we were enemies, *for the exceeding charity wherewith he loved us*, merited Justification for us by his most holy Passion on the wood of the cross, and made satisfaction for us unto God the Father; the instrumental cause is the sacrament of baptism, which is the sacrament of faith, without which (faith) no man was ever justified; lastly, the alone formal cause is the justice of God, not that whereby he himself is just, but that whereby he maketh us just, that, to wit, with which *we*, being endowed by him, *are renewed in the spirit of our mind*, and we are not only reputed, but are truly called, and are just, receiving justice within us, each one according to his own measure, *which the Holy Ghost distributed to every one as he wills*, and according to each one's proper disposition and co-operation. For, although no one can be just, but he to whom the merits of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ are communicated, yet is this done in the said justification of the impious, when by the merit of that same most holy Passion, *the charity of God is poured forth*, by the Holy Spirit, *in the hearts* of those that are justified, and is inherent therein: whence, man, through Jesus Christ, in whom he is ingrafted, received, in the said justification, together with the remission of sins, all these (gifts) infused at once, faith, hope, and charity. For faith, unless hope and charity be added thereto, neither unites man perfectly with Christ, nor makes him a living member of his body. For which reason it is most truly said, that *Faith without works is dead and profitless*; and, *In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by charity*. This faith, Catechumens beg of the Church—agreeably to a tradition of the apostles—previously to the sacrament of Baptism; when they beg for the faith which bestows life everlasting, which, without hope and charity, faith can not bestow: whence also do they immediately hear that word of Christ: *If thou wilt enter into*

*life, keep the commandments*. Wherefore, when receiving true and Christian justice, they are bidden, immediately on being born again, to preserve it pure and spotless, as the *first robe* given them through Jesus Christ in lieu of that which Adam, by his disobedience, lost for himself and for us, that so they may bear it before the judgment-seat of our Lord Jesus Christ, and may have life eternal."

In this article the Roman Catholic Church sets forth what Justification is. Besides speaking of the final cause, efficient cause, and the meritorious cause of this justification, that Church also speaks of its instrumental cause: the sacrament of baptism. And that the Lord justifies us, through the sacrament of baptism, means that we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and that we receive, in this justification, together with the remission of sins, all these gifts infused at once, faith, hope, and charity. And then this article declares that faith, without hope and charity, means nothing, does not make one a living member of the body of Christ. And it quotes the passage from the epistle of James, which, we understand, does not speak of faith but of a faith without works, and therefore of a dead faith.

#### CHAPTER VIII

##### *In What Manner It Is To Be Understood, That The Impious Is Justified By Faith, And Gratuitously*

"And whereas the Aopstle saith, that man is *justified by faith* and freely, those words are to be understood in that sense which the perpetual consent of the Catholic Church hath held and expressed; to wit, that we are therefore said to be *justified by faith*, because faith is the beginning of human salvation, the foundation, and the root of all Justification; *without which it is impossible to please God*, and to come unto the fellowship of his sons: but we are therefore said to be justified *freely*, because that none of those things which precede justification—whether faith or works—merit the grace itself of justification. For, *if it be a grace, it is not now by works*, otherwise, as the same Apostle says, *grace is no more grace*."

In this article the Romish Church attempts to explain the words of Scripture that we are justified by faith and freely. And, to be justified by faith simply means that faith is the beginning of human salvation, thereby allowing for the possibility that what follows is not by faith but by works. And that we are justified freely simply means that none of the things that *precede* this justification merits the grace itself of justification. This, we understand, according to Rome, does not apply to that which follows, our works by which we merit and can merit eternal salvation.

#### CHAPTER IX

##### *Against The Vain Confidence Of Heretics*

Notice, please, how the Roman Catholic Church denies in this article that we are justified by faith alone, and that the child of God can enjoy perfect and complete assurance

of his justification and the forgiveness of his sins while in this life. The Romish Church teaches in this article that the child of God, when he regards himself and his own weakness and indisposition, may have fear and apprehension touching his own grace and also that he cannot know with a certainty of faith. But, we may now quote this article: "But, although it is necessary to believe that sins neither are remitted, nor ever were remitted save gratuitously by the mercy of God for Christ's sake; yet is it not to be said, that sins are forgiven, or have been forgiven, to any one who boasts of his confidence and certainty of the remission of his sins, and rests on that alone; seeing that it may exist, yea does in our day exist, amongst heretics and schismatics; and with great vehemence is this vain confidence, and one alien from all godliness, preached up in opposition to the Catholic Church. But neither is this to be asserted — that they who are truly justified must needs, without any doubting whatever, settle within themselves that they are justified, and that no one is absolved from sins and justified, but he that believes for certain that he is absolved and justified; and that absolution and justification are effected by this faith alone: as though whoso has not this belief, doubts of the promises of God, and of the efficacy of the death and resurrection of Christ. For even as no pious person ought to doubt of the mercy of God, of the merit of Christ, and of the virtue and efficacy of the sacraments, even so each one, when he regards himself, and his own weakness and indisposition, may have fear and apprehension touching his own grace; seeing that no one can know with a certainty of faith, which can not be subject to error, that he has obtained the grace of God."

## CHAPTER X

*On The Increase Of Justification Received*

In this article the Romish Church declares that we can increase in that justification which we have received through the grace of Christ, and that this increase is effected by the cooperation of our faith with good works. We quote: "Having, therefore, been thus justified, and made the friends and "domestics of God," advancing "from virtue to virtue," they are "renewed," as the Apostle says, "day by day;" that is, "by mortifying the members "of their own flesh, and by "presenting them as instruments of justice unto sanctification," they, through the observance of the commandments of God and of the Church, faith co-operating with good works, increase in that justice which they have received through the grace of Christ, and are still further justified, as it is written: "He that is just, let him be justified still;" and again, "Be not afraid to be justified even to death," and also, "Do you see that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." And this increase of justification the holy Church begs, when she prays, "Give unto us, O Lord, increase of faith, hope, and charity." The reader will notice that we, when quoting these quotations, place those expressions in quotation marks which appear in the original quotations in italics, and are quotations from Holy Writ.

## CHAPTER XII

In Article XI, which we will not quote, the Council of Trent sets forth its doctrine on the necessity and possibility of keeping the commandments of God. Now we understand, of course, that the Reformation did not deny the necessity or possibility of the keeping of the commandments of the Lord. This is simply camouflage on the part of the Church of Rome. But that Church also declares in this eleventh article that they are opposed to the orthodox doctrine of religion who assert that the just man sins if, in his good works, he performs them as having in view the eternal reward in order to excite their sloth, and to encourage themselves to run in the course. However, we surely perform good works as having our eye upon the eternal reward. This is surely Scriptural. But this is far different than to assert that we, by our good works, also merit that eternal reward. In Article XII the Romish Church calls attention to a rash presumptuousness in the matter of predestination which is to be avoided. And now we quote this brief article: "No one, moreover, so long as he is in this mortal life, ought so far to presume as regards the secret mystery of divine predestination, as to determine for certain that he is assuredly in the number of the predestinate; as if it were true, that he that is justified, either can not sin any more, or, if he do sin, that he ought to promise himself an assured repentance; for except by special revelation, it can not be known whom God hath chosen unto himself."

In this article the Romish Church denies the personal assurance of a child of God is his eternal election. Now we must bear in mind that the Romish Church, although maintaining, in its own way, the doctrine of election, denies the doctrine of reprobation. This can be verified by quotes of Roman Catholic authors and writers. But, in this article the Romish Church surely contradicts the Holy Scriptures when they assert that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, even as we read it in Romans 8:38-39: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come. Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." And it also denied the word of God in I Thess. 1:4: "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God."

H.V.

## IN MEMORIAM

The Ladies Society of the Protestant Reformed Church of South Holland, Ill., mourns the loss of one of its members whom the Lord suddenly translated out of this life and hereby expresses heartfelt sympathy to the husband and children of

MRS. GILBERT VAN BAREN, SR.

May they experience in their deep sorrow that the grace of God is sufficient for every need and that all things work together for good unto the salvation of His people.

Rev. John Heys, President  
Mrs. P. A. Poortenga, Vicar

## The Voice of Our Fathers

### The Belgic Confession

#### ARTICLE I

(continued)

#### *God-centered Confession*

The chief subject of this first article is God, His Being and His attributes. This is uniquely Reformed, and it is indeed important. It means that the entire outlook of our confession is theological; our faith and our confession is theocentric, God-centered. And this is characteristically Reformed. Lutheranism has always been rather anthropological and soteriological in its outlook. It is concerned mainly with the question of man and his salvation: how is man saved? The Reformed faith considers the doctrine of God all-important. The glory of God, not the salvation of man, is the purpose of all things. This has been historically the case from the outset of the Reformation and its two main streams, Lutheranism and Calvinism. As we well know, Luther himself was concerned about the question of his justification. And this affected the entire direction of the Lutheran Reformation. Calvin, however, from the outset had a deeper insight, and saw the glory of God as all-important. Accordingly, the chief emphasis of the Reformed faith has always been on God, His Being, His attributes, His Persons, His decrees, His works of creation and salvation. This difference is reflected in the respective confessions of these two branches of the Reformation. And especially in our *Belgic Confession* the theological outlook of the Reformed faith is evident from its very first article.

Let us understand what this means. It does not imply merely that the doctrine of God is first and foremost, and that all other branches or departments of doctrine are more or less secondary and coordinate. But it means that the doctrine of God stands at the head, and all the rest of doctrine — or, if you will, of our confession — is subordinate to our conception of God. Our conception of God is determinative with respect to our entire view of reality and our entire religion. A correct conception of God, therefore, is of fundamental importance. Without it one cannot maintain a correct conception of any doctrine at all. It is evident, first of all, that such a correct conception of God is necessary with relation to Himself, His Being, His attributes, His Persons, His immanent works. In this respect there is Polytheism (belief in many gods) over against Monotheism (belief in the one God), and Unitarianism (the error that God is only one) over against Trinitarianism (the faith that God is one in Being and three in Persons). Such a correct theology is necessary, in the second place, with relation to one's conception of God and the world. In this respect there

are over against Theism (the belief in the immanent-transcendent God) Pantheism, which identifies God and the world, Deism, which places God entirely outside the world, Evolutionism, which teaches that the world is self-originating and self-developing, and related errors. In the third place, one's conception of the relation of God and man is necessarily dependent upon his conception of God. One's view of the nature of man, of God's image in man, of sin, of Christ, of salvation, of the church, of the end of all things — these all have to do with a correct conception of God. In this respect, as is plain also from the fact that our *Belgic Confession* deals with this subject immediately *after* this article concerning God and *before* all other doctrines, there is the position of *Faith and Revelation* over against Agnosticism, which maintains that God cannot be known, Skepticism, which says, "I doubt whether God is," Atheism, which says, "There is no God," and Relativism, which says, "What is truth?" and which denies all real and objective difference between the truth and the lie.

By the same token, all of doctrine becomes in a very real and practical sense of the word *theology*. In other words, not only is it true that your conception of God will necessarily affect your conception of all other things; it is also true that in the deepest sense of the word you cannot say anything about the universe or about man without at the same time saying something of your God. This relationship is sometimes transparently clear. To mention but one example, think of the fact that you cannot deny the divinity of Christ without at the same time denying the Second Person of the Trinity. In other cases, the relationship may not be so obvious. But always it exists: ultimately you can make no doctrinal pronouncement on anything without saying something about God. And this becomes of immense practical and spiritual significance the moment you think not in terms of mere academic doctrine, but in terms of faith and confession. Then it becomes clear that the most serious aspect of any error or heresy anywhere along the whole rank of Christian doctrine is that it involves God! The Christian's faith concerning creation and man, concerning sin and the fall, concerning Christ and redemption, concerning salvation and grace, concerning the church, concerning the end of all things, is always in the deepest sense faith in God; and his confession about all these is his confession of faith in God. The name and honor and glory of his God are at stake, therefore. That is why it is so tremendously important a spiritual exercise to maintain and confess the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Because of this relationship, in the second place, it is also true — and true not merely theoretically, but historically — that an at first small and apparently rather insignificant departure from the truth results, in the course of years and generations, in a complete denial of the truth and modernism's unbelief. That complete denial is implicit in the slight departure. When you stand in the railroad switch-yard in Chicago, the separation between the track to New York and the track to San Francisco

is at first but a fraction of an inch. But the cleavage becomes wider and wider, until finally the two tracks run in opposite directions. Thus it is with our confession. When error is first introduced, it may appear very insignificant, and men will urge this insignificance upon you, telling you not to make an issue of it, assuring you that they are still Reformed, that "we are all Christians," that "we all believe in the same God," that "we all are going to the same heaven." If you insist upon the truth, you may be dubbed a troubler of Israel, a fanatic, a separatist. But observe the course of that error in the generations to come, in your children and your children's children: as a rule, you will find that it has gained in significance. Trace it farther in the course of church history, and you will find that it has become very fundamental, that it has indeed affected the faith and the life of the church. And follow it to the terminal, and you will discover that it has ended in the camp of unbelief and of the Antichrist. The implicit denial has become explicit!

Hence, "We all believe with the heart and confess with the mouth . . . God!" The church, and the individual believer that is a member of that church, believes in God — the God of the Scriptures, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the true and living God, Who is GOD. Not a mere belief in some god, some deity, is meant here. Not a mere belief that there is a god, a supreme being, is intended. All this has nothing to do with faith. Not even a mere certainty that God exists is expressed here: in this sense also the devils believe, and tremble. But by faith we know and confess the only true and living God as He has revealed Himself in our Lord Jesus Christ, His revelation being contained in the Holy Scriptures, know and confess Him as the overflowing fountain of all good, Whom to know is life eternal! Moreover, we believe in Him with the heart. We do not prove or attempt to prove, and we have no necessity of proving, that He is and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Faith needs no proof; and God cannot be proved. He can only be the object of faith. Furthermore, we "call" Him God, not because we have discovered Him and searched out His Being and virtues, but because He has revealed Himself and made known to us His Name, in order that we might speak of Him and to Him, and drink from the overflowing fountain of all good, unto the praise of His glory.

And knowing Him, we are able to confess His perfections.

### *The Perfections of God's Being*

"We all believe with the heart and confess with the mouth that there is *one only simple and spiritual Being* . . ."

With striking brevity and succinctness the church confesses its faith concerning God's Being. Do not mistake the intent of this statement. It does not attempt the impossible, namely, to define God. For "to whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." Isaiah 40:25. To

define God would be to include Him in a certain class of objects and then to distinguish Him from other objects in that same class or category by mentioning His distinguishing characteristics. And this is impossible. There cannot be any higher concept than our idea of God. There is no category in which God can be placed and classified. The very statement of our confession precludes this: He is the one only Being. Nor does the Confession attempt such a definition, or even attempt to set forth all the implications of the perfections of God that are mentioned here. In fact, one could even specify the attributes of God more narrowly than is done in our Confession, and mention more of them. But here we have the most direct and simple expression not of dogmatical constructions, but of the faith of the church, an expression which any believing child of God can grasp and go along with: one only simple and spiritual Being . . . God.

Let us briefly take note of these attributes and their significance.

#### 1. God is One.

So abundantly do the Scriptures reveal this oneness of God that it is hardly necessary to mention specific passages. So inherent is this perfection in God's Self-revelation that we frequently pass it by in our reading of the Scriptures without special notice. It is revealed, for example, every time the Lord addresses us and says, "I . . ." But let us nevertheless cite some proof-texts, so that it may be plain that our Confession is directly based on Scripture. In Deuteronomy 6:4 we find the well-known words: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord." In Deuteronomy 32:39 we read: "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God." Isaiah 44:6. And to Cyrus the Lord says, Isaiah 45:5, 6: "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else." The New Testament speaks the same language very directly. In I Corinthians 8:5, 6 we read: "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many), But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." Galatians 3:20 teaches us: "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one." And in Ephesians 4:6 the apostle speaks of "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

Very obviously, therefore, the truth of the oneness of God stands on the foreground in Holy Writ, and it is to be

(Continued on page 356)

## DECENCY and ORDER

### Adult Baptism

A practical problem that arises in connection with the administration of adult baptism concerns the age limit where infant baptism ceases and the subject of baptism must be treated as an adult. A very significant difference in infant and adult baptism lies in the fact that in the former the *parents* assume the responsibility for the covenant instruction and training of the child that is baptized while in the latter the subject of baptism *himself* assumes these baptismal obligations. His baptism follows upon his confession of faith. In his confession he not only expresses agreement with the articles of the Christian religion but he promises to live a Christian life as is becoming a member of the church of Jesus Christ. All this is plain from the questions which are put to him and which he answers affirmatively. These questions are:

First: Do you believe in the only true God, distinct in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Who has made heaven and earth, and all that in them is, of nothing, and still maintains and governs them, insomuch that nothing comes to pass, either in heaven or on earth, without His divine will?

Second: Do you believe that thou art conceived and born in sin, and therefore art a child of wrath by nature, wholly incapable of doing any good, and prone to all evil; and that thou hast frequently, in thought, word and deed, transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and whether thou art heartily sorry for these sins?

Third: Do you believe that Christ, Who is the true and eternal God, and very man, took His human nature on Him out of the flesh and blood of the Virgin Mary, is given thee of God to be thy Savior, and that thou dost receive by this faith, remission of sins in His blood, and that thou art made by the power of the Holy Ghost, a member of Jesus Christ and His church?

Fourth: Do you assent to all the articles of the Christian religion, as they are taught here, in this Christian church, according to the Word of God; and purpose steadfastly to continue in the same doctrine to the end of thy life; and also dost thou reject all heresies and schisms, repugnant to this doctrine, and promise to persevere in the communion of the Christian Church, not only in the hearing of the Word, but also in the use of the Lord's Supper?

Fifth: Have you taken a firm resolution always to lead a Christian life; to forsake the world and its evil lusts, as is becoming the members of Christ and His church; and to submit thyself to all Christian admonitions?

Now all of these questions reveal very clearly that one is

not able to assume the obligations involved without a measure of intellectual and spiritual maturity. Questions of this nature cannot intelligently be put to small children for they are not able to give a responsible answer. Specifically then the question is: "At what age does one attain unto this maturity so that he can receive baptism as an adult?"

To this question different answers have been given. Some would set the age at twelve years because it was at this age that children were taken to participate in the Passover in the Old Dispensation. By the same token, it is reasoned, children of this age should be admitted to the Lord's Supper and, therefore, if they have not received baptism in their infancy they should be regarded as adults after they have reached the age of twelve.

Although no binding rule has ever been adopted, the Reformed fathers generally agreed on the age limit of fourteen or fifteen years. According to Joh. Jansen the years of youth leading to full manhood or womanhood are generally agreed to divide themselves into three equal periods of seven years. During the first period, ages one through seven, all are agreed that these, as far as their years are concerned, are rightful subjects of infant baptism. By common consent it is also agreed that those belonging to the last period, ages fifteen through twenty-one, are to be admitted into the church only through adult baptism. The difficulty arises with the middle group and especially those of the ages twelve through fourteen. As far as their years are concerned, children of that age could have a basic understanding of the fundamental truths of the Word of God but it is questionable whether they are sufficiently matured intellectually and spiritually to competently assume the obligations implicit in confession. Then there is the added factor to be considered that all children are not the same. Some develop more rapidly than others. Some are matured at an earlier age than others.

No fixed rule, therefore, can be established. It must be left to the judgment and determination of the consistory to decide in each individual case. The consistory would have to interrogate the individual to determine his extent of knowledge, ability, attitude toward God and His church, and in general his spirituality. If they found him to be mentally and spiritually sufficiently matured they would receive him into the church through baptism as an adult. If they found this not to be the case they must insist that the parents have the child baptized as an infant. In either case the parents of such a child should be willing to submit to the judgment of the consistory.

\* \* \* \*

When an adult is baptized, he promises (see the fourth question above) and is obliged to partake of the Lord's Supper. Although it is certainly true that participation at the table of the Lord is a blessing and privilege which is given to God's people, it is viewed here as an obligation. This responsibility rests upon those who confess Christ Jesus their

Savior and testify of the experience of His grace and salvation because that life of regeneration in them must be nourished by the use of the means of grace. In their baptism they receive the sign of their being incorporated into Christ and through their constant and faithful participation in the Lord's Supper they have signified to them and sealed upon their faith the sign of His saving fellowship. To neglect this obligation is to make their own confession false and this is a sin of no small consequence.

Now it seems that this was not always understood. In the Netherlands, for example, where we find the State church, it was not uncommon that one would apply for full membership in the church only because church membership was required to hold certain positions in the government. They had no care for the Lord's Supper but simply sought to use the church for their own secular advancement. Sometimes membership in the church is sought because one married a young man or woman from the Reformed Church and no ecclesiastical confirmation of such marriage could be obtained if one of the parties to the marriage was outside of the church. And again, sometimes persons were very young who sought full membership in the church and these were often hesitant to come to the Lord's table. Although these same circumstances may not exist any more today, it may be said that our age is not entirely free from wrong motives and practices that bring people to seek membership in the church and the result is that when these are followed it is usually not very long before it becomes evident that such people's attitude toward participation in the Lord's Supper is a very careless and sinful one. All of this is very wrong and entirely contrary to the Church Order. Young people must be impressed with the fact that when they make confession of faith and are admitted into full membership in the church, this confession and membership imposes upon them the *obligation* to use the means of grace faithfully.

A word might be said yet in this connection about some who are very remiss about coming to the table of the Lord because of a sickly and altogether mystical conception of salvation. They base their whole conception upon subjective experience rather than upon the objective testimony of the Word of God. They feel that virtually perfect holiness must be felt before one is worthy to eat and drink at the Supper of the Lord and since they can readily find many things in themselves that fall short of that holiness, they absent themselves from communion. When and if they make confession of faith they understand that to simply mean that they make an objective profession of the truth rather than a profession of the experience of their salvation in Christ Jesus, the Lord. They mean that they simply acknowledge the truth of the Word of God or express agreement with the Reformed Confessions but they do not confess thereby any personal appropriation or experience of that truth. Such should be instructed with persistency and patience. Through the means of such instruction they will be led to recognize the need of the sacrament or their insincerity will become manifest. If the

latter should be the case, such members must be cut off from the church. The principle must be maintained that those who are baptized and by confession are members of the church of Christ must faithfully use the sacraments. Failure to do so is a serious offense.

### Baptismal Records

*"The names of those baptized, together with those of the parents and likewise the date of birth and baptism, shall be recorded."*

Article 60, D.K.O.

On the surface it would seem that the intent of this article is so evident that it would be quite unnecessary to say anything more about the matter of maintaining good baptismal records in the church. However, there are some matters here to which we will come back, D.V., in our next article. For the present it may be sufficient to notice that this article requires the recording of four things. Each of these is important for, as Rev. G. M. Ophoff points out: "Should the date of birth be omitted, the records would not show whether the one baptized was baptized in his infancy or as an adult. Should the date of baptism be lacking, the record would fail to show that he was baptized at all. Should his name be omitted, it could not be learned who the baptized one was. And the recording of the name of the parents is necessary to show to whom the child that was baptized belonged."

Although it is important that records be kept and in spite of the provisions of this article it sometimes happens that churches are not faithful in fully observing the requirements of this article, yet there are other things connected with this article that the parents as well as the consistories should observe. The intent of the Church Order is not to lay down rules by which the consistories alone are to act but the Church Order is designed for every member of the church. It may seem that this rule of Article 60 concerns only the consistory and the common member of the church has nothing to do with it but this is not so. It is true that the consistory must record these things and preserve these records carefully in a safe place but this task of the consistory, unimportant though it may seem, is of significance to every member of the church. This we shall try to make plain the next time.

G.V.d.B.

### THE VOICE OF OUR FATHERS

(Continued from page 354)

maintained over against all Polytheism and Dualism. The latter, which is after all but a form of polytheism, teaches that there are two eternal beings, or powers, or principles. God and the devil, light and darkness, good and evil, spirit and matter. It has assumed various forms not only in pagan philosophy, but also in Christendom, which in early church history borrowed it from paganism. And even today dualistic tendencies intrude themselves into the doctrine of the church. Not infrequently, for example, the truth of the antithesis is mistakenly changed into a form of dualism which is contrary to this perfection of God's oneness.

H.C.H.



## ALL AROUND US

### QUOTES FROM THE BANNER

It is with great joy that the consistories of the Calvin Chr. Ref. Church and the First Chr. Ref. Church of Rock Valley make the following announcement.

During the course of the past few months we have been privileged to receive into our respective fellowships the families of the Rock Valley Prot. Ref. Church (De Wolf group). The congregation held a final communion service on January 22, 1961. Since then they have disbanded and the majority of these families have united with the Chr. Ref. church of their choice in Rock Valley. We are indeed thankful to our God that the breach which has existed for many years has been healed. We heartily welcome the brethren back into our fellowship with the prayer that we may be a blessing to them and that together we may build and promote the kingdom of Christ to his glory.

A special meeting of Classis Sioux Center was held at the Inwood Christian Reformed Church, Inwood, Iowa, on January 11 for the purpose of considering the request of the Hull Protestant Reformed Church to be admitted as a congregation together with its pastor in the Christian Reformed Church.

After due deliberation on all the matters concerning this reunion, classis adopted a resolution to receive this congregation into the fellowship of the classis and denomination. A resolution was adopted to appoint the Classical Committee to supervise the reception of this congregation into our denomination with the understanding that the classis would be free as soon as feasible, but no later than at the September classis, to reorganize this congregation if that is deemed for the best interest of the congregation. Rev. John De Jong then will be released from this congregation and will be declared eligible for a call to other churches in our denomination.

A colloquium doctum was conducted by Rev. Henry Petersen. With the concurring advice of the synodical examiners present, Mr. De Jong was admitted to the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church. The congregation has decided to call itself the Hope Christian Reformed Church of Hull, Iowa.

From a report of Classis Grand Rapids East:

The requested and recommended colloquium doctum with Rev. L. Doezeema of the local Protestant Reformed Church (De Wolf group) was scheduled for next May.

### RELIGIOUS LIFE IN GREAT BRITAIN

There is a considerable interest in our churches as there ought to be concerning the spiritual and doctrinal strength of denominations other than our own. This interest extends not only to various denominations in our own country, but to churches in other countries as well. Recently, our Mission Committee has begun a broadcast in Europe which is transmitted from Monaco and is beamed particularly to the British Isles. No doubt our people have wondered somewhat concerning the church life of the people across the sea — whether there is yet a Reformed Church movement in Britain and whether there is spiritual interest in the truth of Scripture.

In the last issue of *Christianity Today* there is a rather

extensive report concerning religious life in the British Isles written by Gilbert W. Kirby, General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance with headquarters in London.

In the first part of his article Mr. Kirby weighs the relative strengths and weaknesses of the church life in Britain as a whole. In doing this the report is very pessimistic. There is mostly bad news to report.

There were many in England who had hoped that the crusades of Billy Graham held in 1954 and 1955 would result in a religious awakening. But this did not happen. And, although other crusades followed those of Graham conducted by other evangelists, nevertheless they have had little effect on Britain's spiritual life. Mr. Kirby writes:

The nation as a whole remains indifferent to spiritual things. Nearly 99 percent of London's teen-agers and more than 90 percent of all British people do not regularly attend any place of worship. In many areas there is virtually no effective evangelical witness. It is not uncommon to see places of worship shut or used for other purposes. One can enter churches with a seating capacity of 1,000 and find a dozen in attendance.

... In many churches a spirit of apathy accompanies the work of the Gospel, while in others worldliness cripples their spiritual impact. One is conscious of growing disregard of the Lord's Day. Excursions and special outings more and more commonly are arranged on Sunday, and parents tend to motor their families to the coast week after week during the summer. To meet this situation many churches have transferred Sunday schools from afternoon to morning hours.

... Probably the most tragic factor of all is that the churches of Britain have lost their touch for the most part with the industrial classes. Those who do go to church are largely drawn from the professional classes. There is a noticeable preponderance of womenfolk in most churches. It is not difficult to find packed congregations here and there, but almost invariably these are in better-class neighborhoods. Churches in the industrial areas are for the most part virtually empty.

There is one good entry on the other side of the ledger according to Mr. Kirby:

Probably the most encouraging feature of the post-war era has been the growth of Christian youth movements in various churches. The number of young people who spend their summer holidays in camps and houseparties where they receive not only physical and mental relaxation but real spiritual blessing is phenomenal. Christian Unions at the major universities have grown numerically in the post-war years. Furthermore, there has been a remarkable increase in the number of Christian Unions attached to factories and offices, and in schools.

Mr. Kirby then goes on to discuss in a little more detail the strength of various denominations. His attention is first of all occupied with the Anglican Church or the state church of England. Within this denomination there can be found, says he, two distinct factions. On the one hand there are those who have drifted farther and farther away from the heritage of the Reformation in the direction of the Roman Catholic Church. These are extreme Anglo-Catholics who

emphasize liturgy, hierarchy in church government, sacerdotalism and closer ties with Rome.

There is, however, also a strong evangelical movement. What is meant by evangelicalism is something difficult to say exactly, for the term is quite broad. Although Mr. Kirby himself does not define the term, it usually refers to any church or denomination that stands in the tradition of the Reformation, with strong maintenance of the cardinal doctrines of Scripture such as the infallibility of Scripture, the vicarious atonement of Christ, the Virgin birth, etc. Its worship services are usually stripped of the pomp and ceremony of Roman Catholicism, and it emphasizes the preaching of the Word as central to worship. It claims missionary work among its chief callings, if not its only calling. It is usually considered to be the opposite of both modernism which denies the cardinal truths of Scripture, and Roman Catholicism with its emphasis on liturgy and sacerdotalism. However, as commendable as all this may seem, evangelicalism is also on the whole thoroughly Arminian. It, as a rule, favors the general atonement of Christ, the universal offer of the gospel, the invitation to arouse a decision in favor of Christ, the corresponding down-play of predestination and the truth of sovereign grace. It will often emphasize the social aspects of the gospel rather than the truth as such. It is, so to speak, somewhere between modernism and the Reformed Churches that maintain the fundamental truths of the sovereignty of God.

Mr. Kirby sees signs of the growing strength of evangelicals in the church of England.

He next turns his attention to what he calls "Free Churches," meaning various other denominations such as the Baptist, Congregational and Methodist churches. While there is a certain hard core of evangelical men within these Free Churches, there are grave dangers as well. The two gravest dangers are, according to the reporter, the danger of all out enthusiasm for the ecumenical movements, and the strong tendencies towards liberalism in theology.

After discussing several other churches of minor importance and far from the main line of Reformed thought, the reporter calls attention to a rather interesting debate that is presently going on among evangelicals. He writes:

A controversy which is currently the talking point among many evangelical leaders is the Arminian-Calvinist debate. In the last six years or so there has been a definite swing to Calvinism and an increasing interest in the writings of the Puritans. Some leaders who supported Dr. Graham's campaigns in 1954-1955 now seem reluctant to pledge their support. It is doubtful as to how far this discussion has percolated through to the man in the pew, and the general feeling is that when Dr. Graham comes to Manchester (in a few weeks, HH), the weight of evangelicals will be solidly behind him . . .

He closes his report with the hope that Great Britain may experience a spiritual revival as this is the only real answer to the needs of the country.

All of this does not sound very encouraging for the strength of the church in Great Britain. There does seem to be an element, extremely small, no doubt, which still clings to the Reformed faith that once was predominant in England. It is certainly to be hoped that our radio broadcast there can reach those few who still maintain the truth, that it can be a means of strengthening them and encouraging them to be faithful even overagainst much of evangelicalism that is also a corruption of the gospel of Christ.

If the hopes for a revival are pinned on Billy Graham's crusades, we hope that there are those who will not support him. It is highly dubious whether the preaching of Dr. Graham can ever save anyone, for, on the one hand, he is not sent out by any church institute whatsoever; and, on the other hand, he certainly does not preach the gospel.

### PRESBYTERIAN REALIGNMENT

There has been a novel reaction to the proposal of Dr. Eugene Blake. This proposal, formerly discussed in this column, was to unite the United Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ into one super denomination. The reaction was found in the editorial column of the *Presbyterian Guardian* and reported in *Christianity Today*. The reaction is in the form of a counter proposal in which the author suggests that if this merger would go through, Presbyterianism would vanish from America swallowed up in superficial ecumenicism. The solution lies in forming a new Southern Presbyterian Church. Those leaders and people in the United Presbyterian Church and in the Southern Presbyterian Church who favor the Blake proposal could join in the merger. Those conservatives in the United Presbyterian Church who oppose the Blake proposal could affiliate instead with the Southern Presbyterian Church, where they would find a welcome home. In this way all who are in favor of the union can have their way, while those who are opposed to it will continue to preserve and perhaps even recover the Presbyterian and Reformed faith with increased vigor and a purer testimony.

We have heard recently from our editorial columns in *The Standard Bearer* that there is a strong conservative element present in the Southern Presbyterian Church. It would seem as if this is a good solution to the vexing problem of modernism in that church which threatens to destroy it. Our editor pointed out that the chief evil of the Southern Presbyterian Church was their laxity in discipline. Perhaps the church could purge itself in this way and restore once again also discipline to its proper place.

H. Hanko

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Among the nations, Lord,  
To Thee my song shall rise;  
Thy truth is great above the heavens,  
Thy mercies reach the skies.

## NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

"All the saints salute thee . . ." PHIL. 4:21

April 20, 1961

*Report of Classis East* held April 5, 1961, at Hope Church: Rev. M. Schipper, chairman of the January Classis, led in opening devotions, and declared the Classis properly constituted after all the Credentials were received. All the Churches were represented by two delegates, except Grand Haven. Rev. R. Veldman served as chairman for this session. Most of the work of Classis was routine, and handled with dispatch. Classis adopted the following schedule for Classical appointments: *Creston*, April 23—G. Vos, April 30—H. Hanko, May 14—C. Hanko, May 28—G. Lanting, June 11—M. Schipper, June 18—G. Vos, July 2—R. Veldman. *Grand Haven*, April 16—C. Hanko, April 30—M. Schipper, May 7—R. Veldman, May 21—G. Vos, June 4—A. Mulder, June 25—G. Lanting, July 9—H. Hanko. *Randolph*, April 23—G. Lanting, May 7—A. Mulder, May 28—C. Hanko, June 4—H. Hanko, June 11—R. Veldman, June 25—A. Mulder, July 9—M. Schipper. Classis West requested that the ministers of Classis East supply them with sermons. This was granted. The Consistory of Creston presented an overture to Synod in which request was made to appeal to the authorities to eliminate Sunday drill for our men in the military reserve or National Guard. Classis sent this overture on to Synod with approval. Revs. C. Hanko and G. Vos were chosen Church Visitors and Rev. M. Schipper alternate for both. Rev. G. Vos thanked the ladies of Hope Church for their excellent catering. Classis decided to meet next time, D.V., on July 5 at Hudsonville. Questions on Art. 41 of the Church Order were asked and answered satisfactorily. Brother J. Meninga of Kalamazoo closed the meeting with thanksgiving.

M. Schipper, Stated Clerk

The Men's League held their Spring meeting April 13 at Southwest Church. The meeting was opened by Mr. G. Bylsma, vice-president of the League. He read Eph. 4 and led in opening prayer. The Hope Heralds sang two numbers which was followed with a lecture by the Rev. H. Hoeksema. The topic was, "Sanctification" which the speaker defined as "that work of God according to which, in Christ Jesus, by the spirit of Christ, through the Word, he delivers his people from all spiritual pollution, and gives them power to walk in all good works." The speaker examined the subject by way of eight propositions, and, after recess, answered questions regarding his subject. In the short business meeting minutes were read, the treasurer's report was read, and a decision was reached to disburse \$75.00 to *The Standard Bearer* and \$25.00 to *Beacon Lights*. The meeting was closed with prayer by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema.

News from the Mission Field in Tripp, S. Dak., tells us

that Rev. Lubbers is conducting preaching services each Wednesday evening and each Sunday evening. The mid-week services are expositions of the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Sunday evening services in April were on the appearances of the Risen Lord. Another pamphlet was distributed in the area, this one by Rev. B. Woudenberg on the Bible, developing the theme that the Scriptures cannot be broken. The author closes the pamphlet with this paragraph: "True faith must come to the Scriptures in humble reverence. It is not for man to add to, or subtract from, or misconstrue. The closing words of John in the Book of Revelation may be applied equally well to all of Scripture. 'And if any man shall take away from the words of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the book of life' (Rev. 22:19)."

From *Lynden* comes this contribution: "In our Adult Bible Class we are studying the Book of Genesis and are now in our fourth year of study. The class makes use of mimeographed material containing expositional, doctrinal and homiletical notes. As each chapter is completed, the notes are sent to subscribers, fifteen in all, in Mass., N. J., N. C., Ariz., Kan., Ia., and Cal. The subscribers include four ministers; one a professor at the Reformed Episcopal Seminary; one seminary student (Westminster), one a former airline hostess, another a converted Russian Orthodox Catholic and another a former Roman Catholic. These studies now consist of one volume of nearly 200 pp., which means over 5000 sheets of notes have been distributed among our 14 members and the correspondents. From time to time we receive mail from our interested subscribers, sometimes with small gifts, assuring us of the blessing they receive in this communion of saints. We have also sent these contacts our Prot. Ref. tracts, *Beacon Lights*, etc. It is a blessing to us to be instruments in God's hands for the spreading of His truth!"

The *Reformed Witness Hour* schedule for May: Rev. C. Hanko, of First Church, the speaker; topics, May 7—Christ Gone Into Heaven, May 14—Christ in Heaven, May 21—Christ In Our Hearts, May 28—Christ Preserving Us By His Power.

April 11 the Senior Y.P. Society of First Church invited the congregation to take a trip with them behind the Iron Curtain—by means of an illustrated lecture. At this Travlogue an offering was taken for our Foreign Mission Fund.

The Reformed Action Committee, of Hull, Doon, and Edgerton churches, is busy printing and distributing pamphlets, 2500 of each issue. Besides the one mentioned above by Rev. Woudenberg, Rev. Van Baren wrote one on "Hold Fast To The Truth," and the third will be off the press in May on "Every Tongue Should Confess" by Rev. Kortering.

A late Spring snowstorm caused the cancellation of Grand Haven's evening service April 16 because the hazardous driving conditions prohibited their supply, Rev. C. Hanko, from attending. The program by the Hope Heralds scheduled to be given in Southeast Church was also cancelled that evening.

. . . see you in church.

J.M.F.

### CALL TO SYNOD

According to the decision of the last Synod, the Consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, notifies the churches that the 1961 Synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches will convene on Wednesday, June 7, D.V., at 9:00 A. M. in the above mentioned church.

The Pre-synodical service will be held on Tuesday evening, June 6, at 8:00 P. M. at First Church. The Rev. C. Hanko is scheduled to preach at this service.

Synodical delegates are requested to gather with the Consistory before the service.

Those in need of lodging are to contact Mr. P. Decker, 108 Mayfield Ave., N. E., Grand Rapids 3, Michigan.

P. DECKER, *Secretary*

### Call to Aspirants to the Ministry

All young men desiring to study for the ministry of the Word in the Protestant Reformed Churches kindly appear at the next meeting of the Theological School Committee which will be held, the Lord willing, on Thursday, May 18, 1961 at 8:00 P. M. in the parsonage of the Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church, Hudsonville, Michigan.

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

1. You must present a letter from your local consistory certifying that you are upright in walk and pure in doctrine.
2. You must have a certificate of health signed by a reputable physician.
3. You must be a graduate from High School and show evidence that you have completed a one-year course in High School in History General and Church History; and have also completed the following College courses: Latin—two years, Greek—two years, German—two years, Philosophy—one year, Psychology—one year, Logic—one semester.

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

*Secretary of the Theological School Committee.*  
REV. M. SCHIPPER.  
1636 Martindale Ave., S. W.  
Wyoming 9, Michigan

### IN MEMORIAM

The Board of the Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School hereby extends its sincere sympathy to its office secretary, Mrs. Gerald Korhorn, in the death of her brother,

SIDNEY KORHORN

May the testimony of the Spirit of Christ, through His Word, impart comfort and peace to her and her family.

Dewey Engelsma, President  
Richard Bloem, Secretary

Grand Rapids, Michigan

### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The Lord God Jehovah has been with us. It is therefore with gratitude and praise to our covenant God that our beloved parents,

MR. AND MRS. RALPH VAN SPYKER

may commemorate their 45th wedding anniversary on May 4, 1961.

Innumerable are the joys and blessings which God showered upon them. And though grievous trials came and went, the Lord proved faithful and merciful. May the Lord continue to be with them in grace and loving-kindness. This is the prayer and wish of their grateful children.

Evelyn Van Spyker  
Mr. and Mrs. Henry Vander Kolk  
Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Van Spyker  
Mrs. Alvin Schreur  
10 Grandchildren

R.R. 3, Zeeland, Michigan

### IN MEMORIAM

Hereby, the Board of the Protestant Reformed Christian School Society of Loveland, Colorado, expresses its sympathy on behalf of the Society to all the relative members of our departed sister

ERNA NUSS

And to its fellow member and advisor, Rev. H. H. Kuiper, and family, in the passing of his father,

HENRY KUIPER, SR.

May the comfort be theirs that these pilgrims have completed their earthly journey and arrived in the realm of eternal peace.

Gilbert Griess, Secretary of the Board

### IN MEMORIAM

The Board of the Association for Protestant Reformed Education wishes to extend its sympathy to two of its members, Mr. G. Van Baren in the loss of his Wife and to Mr. A. Zandstra in the loss of his mother-in-law

MRS. ANNA VAN BAREN

whom the Lord took unto Himself at the age of 60 years. We pray that our Covenant God may comfort and sustain the bereaved in their sorrow.

Psalm 116:15, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

South Holland  
Oak Lawn

Louis R. Regnerus, Pres.  
William Buiter, Sec'y.

### IN MEMORIAM

The undersigned hereby express their Christian sympathy with the relatives of our departed sister

ERNA NUSS

as well as with Rev. H. H. Kuiper and family in the passing of their father

HENRY KUIPER, SR.

May also these events increase the desire to taste the final "power of His resurrection" so that thereby our hearts may attain unto wisdom.

Prot. Reformed Adult Bible Class of Denver  
Prot. Reformed Adult Bible Class of Loveland