

The
Standard
Bearer

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Meditation: Christ's Mock Coronation

**Editorial: "Report of the Doctrine Committee"
—a Critical Study**

The Task of the Ministry

Doing Good Unto Our Enemies

The Significance of the Races in the World

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THE STANDARD BEARER

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Rev. D. J. Engelsma, Stated Clerk

MEDITATION—

Christ's Mock Coronation

by Rev. M. Schipper

"Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, and said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands. Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!"

John 19:1-5

Will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

That was Pilate's question!

Indicative it was of Pilate's weak position! Should he not rather have said, I will release unto you the King of the Jews? Was he not convinced of Jesus'

innocency? Had he not again and again confessed that he knew of no fault in Him, and that he knew the Jews had no real accusation, but only for envy they had delivered Him up? And did not Pilate himself say, that he had power to kill and to release? And if he wanted to be a just judge in the matter, after

acknowledging Jesus' innocence, have released Him? And if he did not care for justice, which evidently he did not, should he not for pragmatic reasons have released Jesus because he was afraid of Him? That Pilate's position was very weak becomes still more evident when we consider Matthew's interpretation of it. Matthew tells us that Pilate asked: What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? Imagine a judge asking the accusers to express the verdict! Should he not rather have asked himself: What ought I to do with Jesus? And without hesitation should he not have replied: I ought to release Him at once, on the grounds that He is perfectly innocent, and there is no cause of death in Him!

Barabbas or Jesus!

Once before the Roman judge had attempted to evade any judgment of the Lord, when he had sent Jesus to Herod, the fox. But when Herod had ascertained that Jesus was not John the Baptist risen from the dead, and that he therefore had nothing to fear of this Jesus, and after He had vented his mockery upon Jesus, he sent Him back again to Pilate. Now Pilate tries for the second time to get rid of the responsibility of judging Jesus by placing a proposition, a choice before the people; the choice, namely, between Barabbas and Jesus. It was his hope that the people's choice would be Jesus Who should be released unto them at the feast.

Not this man, but Barabbas!

That is the people's choice!

* * *

Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged Him!

Though scourging was customary, it opened to Pilate another possible avenue of escape. He hoped that when the people would see His emaciated, beaten, bloody form, they would be satisfied to let Him go. Especially had he hoped for this when he allowed Jesus to appear before them as a poor imitation of a king whom the soldiers had mockingly dressed up in the scourging room.

In the scourging room!

The soldier's hangout! The place where they spent their leisure moments to chat and visit between the scenes of trial. Where now, you may imagine they had more to talk and frolic about than usual. In this room were also all the weapons of torture kept. There was the flogging pole. And on the wall, each in its proper place, were the lashes used in flogging. In another area, row upon row, were pitched their spears and shields which they could pick up at a moment's notice when they would be ordered out to use them. Only he who was a Roman citizen could be spared the ordeal of flogging. All the rest, whether guilty or innocent, were beaten to draw out of them innocence or guilt. And usually when one was sentenced to be crucified, he was first stripped to the waist or made entirely naked, then tied with his hands to the flogging pole with his head bent forward and with his back arched in such a way that the skin was stretched tightly. Then with the powerful hand of one of the soldiers the victim was severely beaten with leather strips

affixed on the one end to a wooden handle, and on the other were attached metal pellets or pieces of bone. By such scourging the victim's back was cut to pieces.

They ploughed deeply upon His back!

They made long their furrows!

Yes, verily, the Prince of Israel shows His people how to endure the whip lashes of the wicked, of the wicked of whom the Psalmist declared (129:3) that the enemies had played hard upon Israel's back, that by His stripes they might be healed!

And they platted a crown of thorns, and pressed it on His head!

The soldiers will have their fun today!

They cover His bleeding body with a faded purple soldier's robe, and placed a flimsy reed in His hand for a sceptre, a symbol of mock authority.

And they make mock obeisance! They bow down before Him, false worshippers as they are! And they exclaim: Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote Him with their hands!

What awful mockery!

What awful depravity!

Such ridicule of His Kingly office! As a King, He must have a crown. But why such a crown? As King He must have a royal robe. But why such a robe? As King He must also have a sceptre. But why such a sceptre? Here is evidenced man's total depravity! And lest we should conclude that the soldiers were wicked beasts, vile men whom we would have stopped had we been there; let us understand it well, this is every natural man apart from the grace of God! This is what every man by nature is capable of doing and actually does when God allows Himself to be taken with wicked hands, and He does not fight back!

* * *

Devilish purpose!

It was Pilate's purpose to use this caricature to finally persuade the people to let Jesus go. There is no indication that Pilate did not condone this vile treatment of the Saviour. He does not remonstrate against the evil abuse of the soldiers, but he uses the mock image they built in one last effort to have Jesus discharged.

"Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!"

Ecce homo!

Behold the man!

See what I have done to Him! You say that He made Himself a King? Well, witness what I think of His kingship! Notice that I have made it so that there is hardly anything left of Him. You say, He has power? If you will look at Him closely you will see that He has no power at all! You say, He is a threat to Caesar? Well, I have thoroughly interrogated Him on that point also. O, yes, He admitted under questioning that He is a king! But listen to me closely, He has shown to me that His kingdom is of another world. All that Caesar and I, and also you, have to be con-

cerned about is this world. So, I ask you, what is there to be alarmed about? Look at Him! Does He look like a king? Look at that crown! That crown that fits so tightly that there are lines of blood streaming from His brow! Look at that robe! Don't you recognize it? Do you see any semblance of royalty in it? Behold the man!

Mind you, all the while this fiend of injustice knows that Jesus is perfectly innocent. Hear him speak: I find no fault, no cause for punishment in Him!

How devilish! What miscarriage of justice!

To knowingly scourge an innocent man! To allow the King to be so ridiculously mocked! And then to present Him as innocent and harmless! Indeed, his was a devilish purpose!

* * *

Strange paradox!

Apparently utterly helpless He stands!

Behold the man! He does not look like a king at all! Much less like the King!

Only once during the awful episode before Pilate does He open His mouth in defense of His kingship! Says He: "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence . . . Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice." That is all He said! For the rest He was dumb, and opened not His mouth.

While actually He is the King of kings!

O, to be sure, not as though He stands at the end of a long line of kings, as if He was just another among the kings of the earth! His kingship is not one to be learned by comparison. Rather, the eternal idea of

kingship is in Him, while all other kings are mere earthly, sinful, faulty types of Him!

He is God's anointed King!

Appointed is He to do battle with all the powers of evil and to overcome them; not with the show of physical and material strength, but by allowing the world and Satan to draw His blood, whereby He must save His people from their sin and guilt. Therefore He has no armies at present to do battle for Him. That is why He refuses a crown of gold upon His head. For the moment the only crown that befits Him is one of suffering of which the thorns are a fit picture. The only royal robe that is His is the one that shall be laid upon His shoulders after He rises from the dead and is ascended to glory. For the present the only attire that befits Him is the soldier's faded robe that can only bring upon Him ridicule and shame. O, yes, His is the sceptre of Judah's tribe which He shall wave in His hand when He is seated at Father's right hand. But for now, let it be the flimsy reed, until one can be forged for Him to wield when He shall come in the power of His Father and with all the holy angels to set up His kingdom, of which there shall be no end!

Yes, Pilate, for the moment you may mock with Him Whom you allowed to be so maliciously and mockingly crowned!

But, behold, the day comes, and even now is, when the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father and His kingdom, when every eye shall see Him, even they that pierced Him!

Then shall they call to the mountains and the rocks to annihilate them from before the face of Him with Whom they shall have to do! Then shall He destroy all His and our enemies, and settle His kingdom which shall embrace heaven and earth, and wherein only righteousness shall forever dwell!

EDITORIAL—

Report Of The Doctrinal Committee

A Critical Study (1)

by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

A WORD OF INTRODUCTION

The report referred to in the above caption is, of course, the report of the study committee appointed in the so-called "Dekker Case" by the Christian Reformed Synod of 1964. This committee, you will recall, submitted its report after two years to the 1966 Synod. The Synod postponed consideration, at the same

time referring the report to the churches for study (results of which study were to be sent to the Study Committee by the end of January, 1967) and posing some additional questions, or problems, in connection with the report.

Some months ago I wrote that I would offer criticism of that report, and this I now begin to do.

There is ample justification for this critical study by an "outsider". One reason lies, of course, in the fact that the *Standard Bearer* has been following the "Dekker Case" from the beginning, particularly because of its roots in 1924. Another reason lies in the fact that the *Standard Bearer* is, and always has been, vitally concerned and interested in any matter which concerns our Reformed heritage, and is especially interested in this matter, which lies so close to the very heart of that heritage. From this point of view, this study may also serve for the instruction of our Protestant Reformed people, in order that they not only may be kept informed about what is being done with our Reformed heritage in other circles, but also may learn anew how vital it is to maintain the Reformed faith in all of its precision and to guard against every departure therefrom. Another important reason lies in the fact that the *Standard Bearer* continues to count it an ongoing duty to testify and to warn our Christian Reformed brethren concerning the dangerous consequences of the doctrinal position adopted in 1924. It is also our hope and prayer that there are those who will heed the *Standard Bearer's* witness in this regard.

It is not the intention of this study to follow the Doctrinal Report step by step from the beginning to the end. For one thing, the Report is too lengthy for this. But more than this, the Report is altogether too confused to allow for such a method. I have seldom seen such a piece of confusion. The Janus-head is made to spin so rapidly by the committee that the reader of the report has difficulty in determining which face of Janus he is beholding at any given moment. The basic reason for this confusion, of course, is the fact that throughout the 70 pages of the Report the study committee is striving mightily to do the impossible, namely, to condemn the position of Professor Dekker and to uphold the First Point of 1924 and its well-meant offer of the gospel. In the course of this study, this most basic failure of the Report, I trust, will become abundantly evident. And if the Christian Reformed Church ever hopes to succeed in effectively shutting the door on Arminianism and universalism, they must first honestly face up to the fact that in the First Point they have hand-cuffed themselves with a doctrinal position which makes it doctrinally and morally impossible for them to do this.

Hence, rather than to attempt a paragraph-by-paragraph treatment of the Report, this critical study will attempt to draw some definite lines and to call attention to the fundamental failings and errors of the Report and its conclusions, referring to and quoting from the Report as necessary.

THE PRACTICAL FAILURE OF THE REPORT

One feature of this Doctrinal Report which, it seems to me, all should note is the fact that the very real and practical problem involved is not actually touched. That very real and practical problem is the fact that a seminary professor publicly propagated the heresy of Arminian universalism in the religious press, undoubtedly also taught it in his seminary courses, continued to maintain it publicly in the churches, and, presumably, is continuing to maintain this position today.

The committee obviously recognizes this fact in the body of its report. For they repeatedly criticize the doctrinal position of Professor Dekker on confessional and Scriptural grounds. Yet the conclusions and recommendations of the Report contain not a single word of condemnation of this action of violating the Formula of Subscription, not a single charge of heresy, — in fact, not a single word of any kind about what the churches should do about the fact that ever since 1962 their seminary professor has been teaching doctrines in conflict with the adopted doctrinal position of the Christian Reformed Church and has been inculcating these doctrines into their future ministers. Even apart from any proposing of disciplinary measures, the Report does not utter a direct word of condemnation. Throughout its recommendations the report speaks impersonally and abstractly, as though it were merely making some recommendations on an academic theological question.

This is a sad thing.

For when all is said and done, the simple fact remains that the CRC was and is faced by the intensely practical problem of a seminary professor flagrantly violating the Formula of Subscription and the problem of what to do about it. That problem was not faced when it first arose in 1962, and it has not been faced to this very day. And the Report of the Doctrinal Committee does not face it.

It might be objected at this point that no proper protest against Prof. Dekker's doctrine has ever been received by the Synod, that he has not been formally charged under the Formula of Subscription. It might be objected, too, that all that Synod had before it in 1964 was an overture requesting a doctrinal study. It might also be objected that the Doctrinal Study Committee was not instructed by Synod to pass any judgment or recommend any judgment of this kind, but simply to make a doctrinal study. Moreover, — looking at it from Prof. Dekker's viewpoint, — I would have serious church political objections against the commencement of some kind of heresy trial in this fashion and at this date.

Nevertheless, the fact as such remains that rank Arminianism has been publicly taught by a seminary professor. What is the Christian Reformed Church going to do about it, if anything? Nothing more than adopt some doctrinal propositions which propose absolutely nothing new?

Still more.

The Study Committee had the mandate "to evaluate its findings and study." When this part of the mandate is put in connection with the first part of the mandate, namely, "To study in the light of Scripture and the Creeds the doctrine of limited atonement as it relates to the love of God, the doctrinal expressions of Professor H. Dekker....and other related questions...." it might well be argued that the Christian Reformed Church might expect some direct and pointed and concrete recommendations as to the heretical or non-heretical character of Professor Dekker's teachings. But the propositions which the committee recommends are merely the kind of propositions one might expect

a debating society or a ministerial or theological conference to adopt.

Still more.

A reading of the introductory paragraphs of the "Conclusion and Recommendation" of the Report leave the distinct impression that the Committee intentionally follows this course, hopes that its recommendations will serve as oil upon the troubled waters, and for the rest wishes to let the past be forgotten and allow for future theological reflection and dialogue. The paragraphs which leave this irenic and compromising impression are the following:

By way of conclusion we wish to state that in the pursuit of the assigned study the committee has consulted frequently with Prof. Dekker and with the professors in the departments of Dogmatics and Exegesis at Calvin Seminary; and we feel that a sincere expression of appreciation is due them for their willing and enlightened assistance.

As we noted in our preliminary observations, all must remember that in connection with the matters touched upon by Prof. Dekker we meet with great difficulties. No one is able to give a completely satisfactory solution of the problems which they raise. There will always be mysteries that will baffle our finite minds. And, since we desire to fully recognize these mysteries and paradoxes, we are of the opinion that no undue and artificial restrictions should be placed upon those who wish to take part in the theological reflection and dialogue in which the Reformed community is presently engaged.

There are, however, certain affirmations which must be made in connection with these theological discussions so that we may avoid both, the Scylla of undue universalism which repudiates definite atonement and leads into Arminianism and the Charybdis of an undue particularism whereby mission ardor and zeal would be stymied or curtailed. Therefore, in order that these theological discussions may be carried on in the proper scriptural and creedal framework, we recommend that Synod adopt the following propositions....

This very serious failure of the Report is intensified by the fact that in the course of his contacts with the study committee Professor Dekker made his doctrinal position more explicit and made statements to the committee which give adequate reason to charge him with further error. These matters are referred to in the body of the report, but they are not directly referred to and condemned in the "Conclusion and Recommendation." These I shall enumerate under the next heading.

COMPOUNDING OF ERROR

In more than one way Prof. Dekker clarified his doctrinal position in his correspondence with the committee, and, at the same time, either made his errors more explicit and intense or added to them. Let me mention the following and prove them by quotations:

1. Prof. Dekker has abandoned all distinctions in the love of God and maintains in the most absolute sense that God's love is one and universal. It is simply a redemptive love of all men. Previously, you will recall, he attempted to distinguish between a redemptive love and a redeeming love. Now he no

longer makes that distinction. This is plain from the following paragraph of the committee's report in which a letter from Prof. Dekker is quoted: (Acts of Synod of the CRC, 1966, p. 448)

In his articles, published in *The Reformed Journal*, Prof. Dekker tried to point up this difference by the use of such terms: *redemptive* and *redeeming love*. However, in a later statement to our committee he admitted that this distinction was ineffectual in expressing his real meaning, "because of semantic confusion between the two terms and because of its suggestion of two qualitatively different loves." Therefore he now prefers "to speak simply of the one love of God as redemptive to all men." But he adds, "I recognize, of course, that this one love of God is experienced differently by the redeemed. This was my intent in using the term 'redeeming love.'" Yet, after he writes this, he still adds another sentence in which he states: "another consideration which favors abandoning the distinction of redemptive and redeeming love is that, strictly speaking, it is not the *love* of God as such which redeems. Rather it is God Himself who redeems through His Word and Spirit."

We understood, of course, that the redemptive-redeeming distinction never did hold. But now Prof. Dekker clearly abandons it. According to him, God's love is universal, and His love for elect and reprobate is exactly the same.

This not only makes the professor's position in regard to the alleged universal love of God very explicit, but it also necessarily involves him in the error that God's love (which he equates with God's grace) is resistible. For the simple fact is that also in Professor Dekker's view that same redemptive love does not redeem all men.

2. Prof. Dekker not only teaches that God's alleged universal love is redemptive, but also that God actually performs redemptive acts in behalf of the reprobate. This is plain from the following statement of Dekker quoted by the committee (page 449):

....In my view God does perform redemptive acts on behalf of the non-elect. Such redemptive acts must then belong to His intent, for nothing that God does is excluded from His intent. What are these redemptive acts? They are the same, it seems to me, as those which He performs for all men, for example, the restraint of sin, the giving of His Word, the incarnation and the atonement of Christ, and the preaching of the gospel. It remains to answer the first part of the question. I would say that the universal love of God does not include any ultimate intent to bring about the eternal salvation of the non-elect. On the other hand, it remains true that Christ is the Savior of all men (I Timothy 4:10) and that all men experience salvation in certain proximate ways, e.g., the continuation of life and wellbeing, the conquest of evils such as sickness which result from sin, social order, peace, and justice, and physical resurrection.

Now there is a goodly measure of theological double-talk in the above quotation and the same plaguing lack of definition of such concepts as atonement, redemption, and salvation. The committee is almost as guilty of this as Prof. Dekker is, — as will become

evident later. It is sheer nonsense, for example, to speak of "experiencing salvation in certain proximate ways." And it is also sheer nonsense to speak of the restraint of sin, the giving of His Word, and the preaching of the gospel as a redemptive act. But note that Prof. Dekker states in plain words that God performs redemptive acts on behalf of the non-elect (reprobate). Note, too, that he includes in these redemptive acts of God *both the incarnation and the atonement*.

3. Professor Dekker abandons completely any idea of an atonement that is limited in any way, and with this abandons the idea of efficacy in the atonement. You will recall that formerly he made a four-fold distinction in the atonement: as to sufficiency, availability, divine desire, and efficacy. And he taught that the atonement was universal in the first three senses, but limited in the last sense. Now he abandons the idea of efficacy. I will simply quote without comment his own words, as quoted by the Report (page 463):

Further study and reflection have led me to see that the atonement as such has no *efficacy* (the sense in which I previously said it is limited). Redeeming efficacy lies neither in the love of God as such nor in the atonement as such but rather in the redeeming work of the Holy Spirit. Here too is the sovereign freedom of divine grace (cf. John 3:3-8, 16-18). The atonement itself is inherently universal, as both the Scriptures and the Confessions it seem to me, teach (cf. Canons II, 8 and Catechism Q. 37). Moreover, the Canons speak only once of the atonement itself as being efficacious (II, 8) and this statement must be seen in its immediate and larger contexts. It seems to me that there is neither need nor warrant for retaining the concept of limited atonement, as it has been traditionally used among us. At the same time I recognize, of course, that the redeeming work of the Spirit is a fruit of and is dependent upon Christ's atonement.

At the same time, Prof. Dekker insists that this universality of the atonement and especially the universal availability of the atonement is not merely a matter of what the committee calls "the concrete presentation of the gospel." Here he gets down to the important question which we have often asked concerning the theory of a general, well-meant offer of salvation, namely: if Christ did not atone for all, how can God offer salvation to all graciously? Prof. Dekker insists that this question can only be answered by maintaining that Christ in objective reality atoned for all men. Here are his own words, quoted by the committee, p. 464:

....Surely, as the committee suggests, the factor of availability is involved in the offer of the gospel. However, it is then also necessarily involved in the atonement which is revealed by the gospel. May we separate between what is *revealed* in the gospel and what actually *exists*, in a way to eliminate the latter? If the notion of availability is limited to 'the concrete presentation of the gospel,' without some objective reality behind it, does not the gospel offer itself become unreal? It seems to me that the integrity of God and the sincerity of the offer of the gospel are at stake here.

4. Prof. Dekker gives serious reason to doubt whether he actually believes that the atonement is expiatory in nature. He seems to insist that it is, but only on the basis of his own definition and qualification of atonement and expiation. If one considers his view in the light of the Reformed confession of these truths, then one must come to the conclusion that he denies the expiatory nature of the atonement. Here are his own words again, quoted by the Report, p. 464:

When I say, 'Christ died for you' to any man, I mean to say that Christ has actually suffered for his sins and has in that sense expiated his guilt. If, however, the word 'expiate' is intended by definition to include the idea of *effectuation*, which to my mind it need not include, I would not want to use the word *expiation* to describe what Christ has done for all men.

The facts, however, are these: 1) According to the Reformed faith, the atonement is efficacious. 2) This efficaciousness of the atonement is the basis of what Dekker calls the effectuation of the atonement (This effectuation is the application of the atonement and its benefits to the heart and life of the elect sinner by the Spirit of Christ. HCH). This effectuation is inseparable from the efficacy of the atonement, and it follows from the latter necessarily. 3) When Prof. Dekker, therefore, excludes this idea of effectuation, and therefore the idea of efficacy, he by his own expressed qualification denies and is compelled to deny that the atonement is expiatory.

This is indeed a serious error. But let me remind the reader that in my still unfinished series on The Nature of the Atonement, I insisted that the choice was between a universal atonement which was not expiatory, i.e., was not satisfaction for sin, or a definite atonement which was expiatory, i.e., was satisfaction for sin. Prof. Dekker has not literally chosen the former; but he has done so by clear implication.

* * *

Now what is the conclusion from the above?

Yes, faith is by grace; it is the gift of God!it is not superfluous to accentuate this truth. How often this truth is distorted in our day! How many there are who, even though they do not literally preach that faith is the work of man, leave the impression by their way of preaching, their pleading and begging, that it is in the power of any sinner to believe in Christ whenever he pleases, and to reject Him as he pleases!And so they change the wonderwork of God into an arbitrary whim of the sinner's will! But it is not so. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.

— H. Hoeksema, "The Wonder of Grace"

Note, in the first place, that Prof. Dekker's errors are very, very plain. Any Reformed man will recognize them spontaneously.

In the second place, we must remember that the committee had all this material before them. They treated it; they analyzed it. They quoted it and to an extent criticized it in the body of their Report.

In this light, it is simply inconceivable to me that the "Conclusion and Recommendation" of the Report says not a single word directly about Prof. Dekker's errors, fails to condemn them as heresy, fails to reckon with the fact that he has gone on teaching those errors for more than four years, and fails to breathe a word concerning any disciplinary action. There really is not even so much as a word of warning in the committee's "Conclusion and Recommendation."

It might be objected that the committee had no mandate to do the above. I doubt this. But even if it were true, I cannot understand how a committee can have knowledge of such obvious and such serious and explicit errors, errors more explicit and serious than originally appeared in Prof. Dekker's writings, and then fail completely to do anything about it. In fact, they apparently failed even to warn the Synod of 1966 that postponement of consideration of the report would result in allowing their seminary professor to continue promulgating these errors for another year.

No one sounded an alarm!

No one preferred formal charges!

If any in the Christian Reformed Church are in dead earnest about trying to remain at all Reformed, they had better wake up and act!

TRYING THE SPIRITS—

Dispensationalism A Carnalizing System

by Rev. R. C. Harbach

God's plan of the ages is not the mere unfolding of the eras of time until the last when eternity is ushered in. The periods of the world are directed in the providence of God through their beginning, continuance and end according to the will of God for all things. Each period is marked by a particular progressive development of the divine purpose to the end that the promise gradually revealed be seen in ever clearer light until it is realized in its most comprehensive fulfilment. The dispensations begin then with not man, but the promise. They are all unfoldings and increasingly fuller revelations of the promise of God. The promise is the promise of the covenant. It is the covenant which is at the bottom of all. The various dispensations are but dispensations of the covenant. The one great aim God has in mind is covenant friendship and fellowship with His people. All things else are means unto the execution and securing of that end. The glorification of a people in covenant friendship with God triune was ordained from eternity. Man's redemption was ordained in order to that glorification. Man's sin was ordained with a view to his redemption. The creation of heaven was decreed with a view to the eternal dwelling-place of the redeemed. The creation of the heavens and the earth was ordained as the way to God's heavenly tabernacle. The works of providence were ordained to secure the revolutions of the universe unto the

manifestation of the Sons of God. The center of His providential workings is the glorified Mediator dwelling in the midst of a glorified people chosen in Him before the foundation of the universe.

Dispensationalism has no such solid foundation. It is based on a test of *man* and his obedience to a specific revelation of the will of God, which test and revelation in each succeeding age may be antithetical to any former or following test and revelation. Thus, there is not so much development in the movement from one dispensation to another as there is contrast. For example, in the dispensation of law, man was tested according to works. Before that, he was tested according to promise, a rather evangelical dispensation. Now he is being tested, not by law, but by grace. Thus a false antithesis is made between law and grace. For the scriptural antithesis is between sin and grace. Dispensationalism, then, produces a view of history which is man-centered and, for its several parts, without connection and development. The system constantly emphasizes that each dispensation ends in failure. In fact, the teaching is, each dispensation begins with man. The Dispensation of Innocence began with Adam, Conscience with fallen Adam, Human Government with Noah, Promise with Abraham and Law with Moses. This emphasis on man is offensive enough, but that "the age of *grace*" and the "kingdom age" begin with *man* is especially offensive. For grace

is sovereign, not the will of man, and Christ's reign is supreme, not man. But since each dispensation begins with man, each closes with the failure of man. This leaves a further offense in that "man fails under grace." What hope is there, then, for man, if he fails even under grace? What will keep him from failing and falling if grace does not? True, every man, including the elect man, will fall under grace and from grace as long as grace reigns merely over him and around him. But when sovereign, irresistible grace reigns *in* him, he cannot and shall not fail nor fall. But Dispensationalism does not go very far with respect to sin and grace in the plan of God.

Nevertheless, the entrance of sin was ordained and planned in order to effectuate the work of redemption. Just as the glory of the sun, moon and stars is especially appreciated upon the background of the black curtain of night, so sin was needed as a black background to put into sharper relief the glories of God's grace in the redemption of His people. How could grace be appreciated without sin? How could mercy be known without misery? How could God's almighty power be seen without humanly insurmountable obstacles to be overcome? God ordained sin, its entrance into the world, its operations and effect, in order to more grandly reveal His wonderful attributes — which all add up to one, glory!

The government of this world in the providence of God is ordered and controlled for the sake of the work of redemption. We know that *all things* work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to His purpose. To illustrate: this magazine is published in the interest of that system of doctrine found in Scripture called the Reformed Truth. There are many providences of God which make this possible. Trees grow for more years than generations of man, to be cut down, made into pulp and then to paper. Steel was manufactured for machines to linotype, print, cut and fold. Ink is necessary. So the postal system, the railway system and ships at sea, to transport these magazines to places of distribution throughout foreign countries. Little do captain or crew, traveling to a remote island of the sea, believe they are instruments of God to place a copy of this publication in the hands of one of His elect there.

No, in God's plan of the ages, the starting point is not man, nor even the creation of the world. His plan does not begin in time, but in eternity. True, the Bible begins with the Book of Genesis, and so may be said to begin with the Adamic dispensation, but not really. True, Scripture begins with the creation, including the creation of man as made in the image of God. Yet we are not told in Genesis what the image of God is. We turn to the Book of Ephesians for that (4:24). We also turn to the very same book in its first chapter for the foundation of our study and thinking, for the key to God's plan of the ages. For the character and content of God's eternal plan realized throughout the periods of history, we must turn to Ephesians One. Not in Genesis, but in Ephesians, by which we interpret Genesis, do we learn that the center of God's counsel is His glory in Christ through the redemption of His

chosen and purchased possession. Therefore we read, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ, according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him" (Eph. 1:3,4). The foundation of all God's dealings with men is found not in man, nor in time, nor in the scene of man's activities, but in what is affirmed in the above Scripture. Nor may this truth be limited to New Testament saints, for it applies to the whole election of grace.

Dispensationalism will, of course, object, on this point, that the Old Testament saints were not blessed with *spiritual* blessings in the *heavenlies*, but rather with *temporal* things on *earth*. They had a *material* inheritance and an *earthly* welfare promised them. But the Gospel will not bear this out, for according to it, in Abraham and his seed God would bless not only Israel but all the nations (Gentiles) of the earth. This blessing that would come alike on Jew and Gentile was a *spiritual* one, as Paul taught when he said "that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ: that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal. 3,8,9,14). What blessing was to come on the Gentiles — (and, mind you, Gentiles which had no promise of a geographical Canaan)? The same promised the Jews, namely, the promise of the Spirit through faith! The promise of the Spirit is the essence of all spiritual blessings in Christ. When we have the Spirit given us, then we have all spiritual blessings brought us. You will see that this is so by a comparison of Lk. 11:13 with Mt. 7:11. In the one place, Christ speaks of the Father giving "the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him," while in the other, this is explained as "giving good things to them that ask Him." Furthermore, it is not Old Testament point of view to teach that the blessed man was one whose possessions were great, whose lands, flocks and herds were fabulously increased. No, rather David insisted, and Paul agreed with him, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Ro. 4:7f)

At the beginning of the New Testament dispensation Peter stood up and preached to his brethren the Jews. He and they were still very much used to thinking according to Old Testament concepts. At the temple he remarked in his address to them, "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, 'And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth *be blessed*'" (Ac. 3:25). Now, aside from what the people themselves might have supposed that blessing to be, what did Peter conceive it to be? Did he explain it to them as consisting in an earthly kingdom, with temporal blessings and material pomp and power? Not so, but he expounded in the words, "Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to *bless* you *in* turning away every one of you from his iniquities." (v.26) Peter, in introducing the new

dispensation to Jews emerging from the old, puts forth to them, as a sample of what they may expect to find in the new, but one single blessing which stands for all the rest in the new covenant. The one blessing which he introduced is fundamental and a foretaste of all the others. Peter in this way revealed himself well taught of his Master. For at the beginning of His ministry, He proclaimed the blessings of the kingdom of heaven, which were given not in earthly offices and benefits, but in the "poor in spirit," the "meek" and the "pure in heart."

The charge of Dispensationalism against us is that we *spiritualize* the promises of God. Well; we certainly do not do as Dispensationalists, and *carnalize*

the Scriptures. The Word of God itself has a spiritual outlook. Jerusalem is "*spiritually* called Sodom and Egypt." (Rev. 11:8) The history of Israel, e.g., under Joshua, has a *spiritual* meaning. Certainly the Psalms are full of *spiritual* meaning. The "blessed" man is the one whose delight is in the law (teaching) of the Lord. (Psm. 1) The "green pastures" and "still waters" represent not natural, but spiritual realities. Then let not carnalizers of Holy Writ ridicule a *spiritual* interpretation of "Mount Zion," the "cedars of Lebanon," the "dew of Hermon" and the ox which "treadeth out the corn." Spiritual things can only be spiritually discerned. Purely natural things are nothing but chaff.

THE CHURCH AT WORSHIP—

The Task Of The Ministry

by Rev. G. Vanden Berg

We concluded our previous article with the observation that to the task of the ministry of the Word belongs the labor of publicly calling upon the name of the Lord in behalf of the whole congregation. The minister is also a priest. He must carry the needs and the burdens, as well as the thanksgivings, of the congregation to the throne of grace. Continuous prayers and intercessions must be made, for, as we saw, this task is not an occasional one but a perpetual one. The minister of the Word carries the church in his heart, and, seeking her welfare, brings her continuously to God.

The passage of the Word of God that is cited in this connection in the Form of Ordination of Ministers of the Word is I Timothy 2:1, 2. In this passage Paul exhorts Timothy to make "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." Not infrequently this passage is used in an attempt to induce ministers of the Word to do what is directly contrary to their office and calling when they lead the congregation in public prayer. However, before we are ready to condemn the preacher for failing to mention the civic authorities, from the municipal to the national level, in the congregational prayer, let us be sure that we understand this passage of the Word of God.

We will not at this time attempt to explain all that is involved in this highly controversial passage. The following observations will suffice to make clear the specific charge given here to Timothy and to the ministers of the Word of God.

1) Let us keep in mind that whatever interpretation may be given to this text, the apostle Paul could not and does not enjoin ministers to do what is directly in conflict with the fundamental principle of prayer set forth by the Lord Himself in His prayer recorded in John 17 when He said: "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine." (vs. 17) No minister of the Word of God has the right to lead a congregation of God's people in prayer contrary to this directive. This then positively excludes here a prayer for the reprobate world.

2) Those who would insist upon a *literal* interpretation of Paul's words must also remember that they may not then limit the "all men" and "kings" to the rulers of our own country and exclude from their prayers the "kings and rulers" of nations that are opposed to us. This is oftendone, and then the impression is left that God's blessing is sought upon American government while, by implication, His curse is invoked upon the government of other peoples. The evil of such a prayer ought to be evident to us.

3) If the limitation of the above paragraph is not made and the prayer is made for "all", a careful analysis of such a prayer will reveal that it is nothing more than a seeking of the realization of sinful man's idealism of a world-society in which all men coexist in a carnal peace and quietness. It denies the reality that God "has put enmity"; that He had made separation, and that, apart from the peace of the cross of Calvary, there is no peace. Ignoring the Scriptural truth that God never willed to save all men individually,

this prayer proceeds from a thoroughly wrong premise and can only be uttered in the service of the cause of the anti-christ. To God it is an abomination.

4) Let us remember that the injunction to pray for "all men, for kings and for all that are in authority," must be understood in connection with the phrase of verse 2, "that we (the church) may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty," and verse 4, "Who (God) will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." And do not overlook verse 3, which says, "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." What is good in God's sight? It is good that the church lives in all godliness and honesty. It is good that all men come to the knowledge of the truth; that all men be saved. Thus it is evident that Paul is not speaking of individuals but of classes of men that comprise the church of the living God. God has chosen His people from every station and calling in life, and for them (and not for the world) we must pray. But the question may be asked as to why the apostle singles out the particular class of "kings and those in authority?" Calvin, in reply to this question, says, "they were the classes that the church of that day under Roman persecution were most apt to hate and leave out of their prayers." The same author adds, "that they may begin to impart to us those benefits of which they formerly deprived us."

And so the minister of the Word must carry the church to God in prayer. He must lead the church, not to hate, but to pray for those that despitefully use them whether they are near or far, in positions of authority or in subjection, of whatever class they may be. Praying for the church, he is not to seek carnal objectives but the promotion of her godliness and honesty, for in this way the church prospers in the grace of God. This is good and acceptable to God.

The third aspect of the minister's calling delineated in the Form of Ordination is the task of administering the holy sacraments. We quote:

"Their office is to administer the sacraments, which the Lord hath instituted as seals of His grace: as is evident from the command given by Christ to the apostles, and in them to all pastors: 'Baptize them in the name of the Father, and, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' Likewise: 'for I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed, etc.'"

The Reformed position has always been that the administration of the sacraments belongs exclusively to the office of the ministry of the Word. We raise the question for sake of discussion whether this is necessarily the case? Are the Scriptural passages cited here conclusive proof for this contention? This would make an interesting and, I believe, profitable subject for discussion at an office-bearer's conference or in our Men's Societies. We might consider whether the command of Christ here is spoken to the apostles, "and in them to all pastors" or whether it is not proper to say that this command was given to the apostles, "and in them to the church." If the latter be accepted, the responsibility of administering the sacraments rests upon the church, the institute as repre-

sented by the office-bearers, and not solely upon the pastors. This I believe is correct, and then why cannot the consistory delegate the authority to administer the sacraments to one of its elders if need be?

The argument in favor of the position advocated in our Ordination Form is undoubtedly that the administration of the sacraments belongs to and is inseparable from the preaching of the Word. This is without question also true. We cannot have the administration of the sacraments without the preaching of the Word. The former depends upon the latter. However, is it not true that when a congregation is without a minister, the elders of the church lead the congregation in worship in a Reading Service? Is not this a form of the preaching of the Word? Or must we say that the congregation has had no preaching of the Word on that day? The same is true when Seminarians speak an edifying word in the congregations. It seems to me that if preaching the Word is construed as the official speaking of Christ Himself in the church through the office, we must also believe that Christ speaks through the elder who reads a sermon and through the Seminarian who "preaches" as well as through the ordained minister.

Furthermore, when a congregation is vacant, the elders are called up to perform other pastoral labor also. They must catechise the youth, call on the sick, do family-visitation, etc. Why then, if necessity dictates, can they not, by the authority of the church, administer the sacraments? We may also note here that in a certain sense there is an overlap in the three-fold office of the church. Strictly speaking, the elders represent the Kingship of Christ and are the rulers of the church. Yet the ministers, who in the narrow sense of the word represent the Prophetic office of Christ, together with the elders rule the church and form its Council. Then, too, the deacons are the ministers of mercy as representing Christ's priesthood, but the section of the Ordination Form for Ministers which we previously discussed indicates that the minister's task includes the priestly function of prayer. If this overlap is recognized, I do not think any injustice to the command of Christ is perpetrated if, in cases of necessity, the elders of the church would proceed in the ministerial function of administering the sacraments. It would, in my judgment, be better to have a child baptized by an elder (really by the church through the elder) than to leave the child unbaptized, and it would be better to celebrate the Lord's Supper with an elder officiating than to neglect the commemoration of His death by this sacrament which He has instituted for that purpose. If it can be shown that this "command of Christ" was given *exclusively* to the "apostles and pastors," the current practice in our churches has Scriptural support. Otherwise, though we have no objection to the continuance of this practice as something that is generally acceptable, we cannot say that it must be so.

The final aspect of the minister's calling deals with their duty to "keep the Church of God in good discipline, and to govern it in such a manner as the Lord hath ordained."

Before we proceed further to discuss this aspect of the minister's calling, we like to have it observed that no one would conclude from this description of the calling of the ministers that they are to exercise discipline in the church *alone*, that is to say, without the elders. Such would not be according to the ordination of Christ, for, as we will see later in connection with the form for the ordination of elders, this task belongs specifically to them. Yet, here it is also included as part of the task of the ministers of the Word.

The Form for Ordination bases this upon several considerations which we only mention here and will discuss, D.V., more fully in our next article. First,

there are the Words of Christ to His apostles that "whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." Next, the form says, "Paul will have the ministers to know how to rule their own house, since they otherwise neither can provide for nor rule the Church of God." Thirdly, pastors in Scripture are called "stewards of God, and bishops, that is, overseers and watchmen, for they have the oversight of the house of God, wherein they are conversant."

There is no question concerning the necessity of good order in the house of God. Paul says, "Let all things be done decently and in good order." However, the question arises, is this the task of the ministers of the Word or of the elders or both?

IN HIS FEAR—

Doing Good Unto Our Enemies

by Rev. J. A. Heys

Jesus said it.

He said it in Matthew 5:44. And He said it in slightly different language.

He had already given us the command, "Love your enemies." And therefore now He declares, "Do good to them that hate you."

We have enemies in that we have those who hate us. We have them because they hate us because of *who* we are. We have them because of *what* we are. In either instance we must do them good, even though there is a sense in which we must hate them. Yes, the Word of God does teach that. Does not the psalmist speak by infallible inspiration in Psalm 26:5 when he states, "I have hated the congregation of evil doers; and will not sit with the wicked." Do we not read in Psalm 31:6 "I have hated them that regard lying vanities; but I trust in the Lord?" In Psalm 139:21 the psalmist even dares to bring this matter before God's face and asks, "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against Thee?" And, indeed, we may ask here, Is it possible to love God and love those that hate Him? Is it possible to love those that hate God without hating God ourselves? And John tells us in I John 2:15 not to love the world. That he means men is evident from the addition "Neither the things of the world." And surely we must not forget Genesis 3:15.

The seed of the woman mentioned in Genesis 3:15 is certainly in the ultimate sense Christ, Who according to Galatians 3:16 is The Seed of Abraham. And the seed of the serpent ultimately is the Antichrist. But we dare

not limit the text so severely as to make Genesis 3:15 a prediction of nothing more than Christ's personal victory over the devil and the beast out of the sea, that red dragon that has waited from the very beginning to try to kill the Christ. Viewed from its positive point of view Genesis 3:15 means that God will put love in the hearts of the seed of the woman; and for that reason the unregenerated, who are the seed, the spiritual children of the devil, will hate the regenerated children of God, the members of His elect Church. Here is the answer of grace to all the momentary "victory" of Satan! Look! and see Adam and Eve cowering under the trees of the garden. Behold the man made in God's image to reflect His virtues of righteousness and holiness, of true knowledge and wisdom! See that spiritually perfect creature now a vicious rebel completely under the control of the evil spirit, who is Satan! What a tragedy, we would say. How pathetic Adam and Eve looked with fig-leaf aprons and cringing with fear under the trees. Where is the king and priest of God in that beautiful garden? Where is he around whom that whole earthly creation revolved and through whose mind and will and works every creature was to return to God in praise and thanksgiving and service? What shall we say to all these things?

There is an answer of grace. There is a word of God that brings back hope and cheer and joy and peace. This hatred the devil has wrought. Here he has brought the king and priest of God's earthly creation. His is the mastery over God's royal priesthood. But, listen! God will speak! This is not the end of the story. Man

cringes in fear. But the grace of God will give him another fear, one of reverence and awe before his Maker. This evil Satan has done; but God will overthrow all his works, for God will put His love back into the hearts of some, the seed of the woman, through Christ Whom the Church brings forth in the fulness of time. For this Seed of the woman will crush the head of the dragon and deliver His people fully from his power. They shall no longer love sin and the children of the devil in as far as they are enemies of the Living God, but they will have enmity in their hearts. They will love God and hate with a perfect hatred all those who are *God's enemies*. That is what the psalmist said in Psalm 139:21 after asking the question of God, "Do I not hate them that hate Thee?" He declares, "I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies." Are you one of those that hate God's enemies or of those that love them? How could you ever heed the Word of God to fight the good fight of faith, if you love God's enemies?

We said a moment ago that we have enemies because of who we are and because of what we are. God's enemies become our enemies because we are His children. Satan, the serpent and all his seed hates us because they see the life of Christ, the Seed of the woman, in us. When our covenant seed make confession of their faith, when they begin to take their places with us in the battle of faith and declare before the whole world that they belong to their faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ, the devil and his whole dominion manifest the hatred that they have for God. Because we are of the party of the Living God, we are hated; and an unchanging enmity is there towards us no matter how sweetly the adversary may smile. The God we love they hate, and therefore they hate us and will assault us either with persecution or temptation.

But, sad to say, we are also hated for what we are. And we are sinners. By nature we are haters of God and of the neighbour. Do not forget that by nature we are all the seed of the serpent. The wonder of salvation is not simply that there are seed of the serpent in this world since the fall and also seed of the woman. The blessedness of the cross of Christ and the power of His Spirit is not that since the fall there are Cains but also Abels, Esaus but also Jacobs, barbarians but also believers. No the wonder and the blessedness of it all is that we all come into this world as Cains and Esaus and unbelievers that the blood of Christ makes us to be besides this during this life Abels and Jacobs and believers and presently in glory delivers us completely from the Cain and Esau that is in us from birth. And do not forget that besides the enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, there is also an enmity between some of the seed of the serpent and other of the seed of the serpent. Unbeliever rises up against unbeliever, murderer against murderer, thief against thief. Yea the unbelieving thief and murderer rises up against other unbelievers who have not laid a finger on them or taken a penny from them. The heart that beats only with hatred towards God will also beat only with hatred against the neigh-

bour; and we are not to expect anything else in this world.

Often therefore we find ourselves hated by unbelievers because we are ourselves living as unbelievers, and we injure and torment, insult and irritate. We do not do good to the neighbour but evil. We do not seek his advantage but take advantage of him. We do not do unto him that which we would want him to do to us but that which we would severely condemn, if he did it to us. Because of what we are, impatient, hateful and hating, cruel and conniving sinners, we invite the wrath and enmity of our fellow men. Surely the demand of God in all this is that we love that neighbour instead and cease all our cruelty and abuse, hatred and enmity. We must do good to all men, and as the Heidelberg Catechism teaches us, "show patience, peace, meekness, mercy, and all kindness towards him, and prevent his hurt as much as in us lies."

It makes no difference actually why men hate us, as far as our calling is concerned to do them good. We must love them whether they hate us because we are God's people or because we have sinned against them. As *our* enemies we may never seek revenge upon them. Our calling is to be the meek, the peacemakers. Our calling, as far as our enemies is concerned, is to turn the other cheek. Returning blow for blow, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is out of place whether we have gotten the enmity of men because of our own evil works or whether it is because of the reproach of Christ to Whom we belong.

If we have gotten the enmity of men because we have broken one or the other of the ten commandments of our God, if it is because we have stolen his goods, slandered or insulted him with our tongues, dishonoured him in his office or the like, we certainly should not continue in our evil and injure him bodily or even kill him when he attacks us for our wickedness. Then we had better get down on our knees and confess our sin to God and to him and make restitution where we may for our evil. And here we may consider the fact of the awfulness of murder in that no restitution can ever be made either to those whom we have killed or those whose loved one we have killed. You can steal, and repenting you may give him twofold or even tenfold, and the man whom you robbed is better off financially than before your sin against him. You can confess your backbiting and slander, your libel and false witness; and you can befriend him so in years that follow that he has gotten a better friend than he ever had before. But when you take his life away, he is gone, and there is no possibility of ever confessing your sin to him. Never can you fill that void that you have made in his family and among his loved ones and friends. Death is so final. From it we can make no return. All violence against our personal enemies is also strongly condemned by the Word of God as an act of hatred against God Himself.

And if we have gotten the enmity of the world because we are the Church of God, and we must hate God's enemies with a perfect and complete hatred, even then we must love them as *our* enemies and do good to them as those who do evil against us. Paul feels the need in

Ephesians 6:11-16 of reminding us that we do not wrestle against flesh and blood even when the enemy comes against us with the arm of flesh and with a sword of steel and of fiery darts that burn the flesh. We have only one weapon wherewith we may fight. That weapon is not of steel. It is not fashioned by nuclear fission. It is not made in any of the armament plants of this world. It is the armour of God, the armour which He makes and supplies. And the only weapon of attack is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. With it you may fight. All other weapons and all the strength of your arm and tongue you must put away and lock in your closet.

What is more, Jesus' words are positive. He does not say, "Do not hate your enemies. Do not do evil to those that hate you." He tells us to do something rather than to refrain from doing something. Of course, by His creative command He causes His own to do that which He commands. But that does not take away the fact that He *commands*, and that He commands us to *do* something. His parable of The Merciful Samaritan (erroneously and usually called, The Good Samaritan) is a case in point. Here was indeed an "enemy," For the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, and that sinfully so. Jesus showed the sin of it by going through Samaria on his way from Judea to Galilee. He did not

practice these sinful taboos and segregations. And although the enmity was chiefly from the side of the Jews towards the Samaritans, because they were not of the seed of Abraham and still lived in Canaan, the Samaritan shows mercy and compassion on the wounded Jew near Jericho. His own fellowmen, the priest and the Levite satisfy only their curiosity and continue on their way. The Samaritan does good. Indeed, the priest and Levite did not do evil. They did not add to the injuries of that wounded Jew; but they did not show love and did not do good to him. The Samaritan did good to his enemy and thereby showed love.

Failing to do good to *our* enemies is failing to do the good God demands of us. And failing to do the good that God demands of us is saying by our deeds that He is not God. And so we have a god beside Him and break the whole law. In His fear we stand in awe before Him as God. In His fear, therefore, we seek to deal with the neighbour as before His face. And indeed, we always are before His face, and nothing is hid from His searching eyes. But living in His fear means that we are conscious of this fact and that we behave in the consciousness thereof and with the desire to be pleasing in His sight as the God of our salvation. In His fear is in the love of God. In His fear is doing good to our enemies in order to do the good that God demands.

A CLOUD OF WITNESSES—

David and Jonathan

by Rev. B. Woudenberg

*There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.
Proverbs 18:24*

Saul had thought that he would be able to rely upon the support of his children in his struggle with David. Through his years as king, he had developed the mind of a tyrant which could not really believe that anyone would dare not to do his bidding, particularly not someone of his own family. That was why he had consented to the friendship between Jonathan and David; that was why he consented to the marriage between David and Michal. Assuming the loyalty of his children, he was sure that through them he would gain an advantage in that struggle which had come to dominate his life completely.

It was not long, however, before Saul began to discover how wrong he had been. No sooner had he informed Jonathan of his intentions to destroy David than Jonathan took exception with it and argued against Saul's plan. But this was perhaps not too surprising

to Saul, for Jonathan had always been rather independent following, as he did, his firm dedication to the worship of Jehovah just as David did.

Still it had seemed that Michal would be different. She after all shared none of the religious fervor which David and Jonathan did. In fact, and this was something David himself didn't even know, she had gone so far as to experiment with the worshipping of teraphim and still kept them with her in her home. Saul himself had not particularly liked that, for he always had tried to maintain the appearance of religious purity even though he had no real feeling for it; but, in the way of a pampering father, he had allowed her to do what she chose as long as it did not become publicly known. Now it even afforded him a bit of assurance that Michal could never be really close to David even though they were married. Therefore, he felt, she at least would remain faithful to him.

But in this also, Saul was quite mistaken. It was true that the union between David and Michal was not a spiritual union and could never, therefore, develop into a truly successful marriage. At the same time though, Michal felt no real loyalty to her father. Rather, at the time, she was quite infatuated with her new husband, and when she found him threatened by her father, she was the first to urge David to flee from her father's wrath. Even more, once David had left, she did her utmost to prevent or at least delay Saul from discovering his absence. Taking her teraphim from its hiding place, she placed it in David's bed, she put some goat's hair about it and covered it all with a sheet so that it might appear that David was still lying there. The next morning, just as she had expected, messengers came from her father summoning David to the palace. She informed them, however, that he was sick and could not come, allowing them to look into the bedroom from the doorway.

But Saul was in no mood to be put off once again. His answer was curt, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him." Only in this way did they discover the subterfuge of Michal, for in the bed they found nothing but the image and the goat's hair.

When the message was brought to Saul he felt more hurt than anything else, betrayed by his own daughter. The next time he met Michal, his question to her reflected his disappointment, "Why hast thou deceived me so, and sent away mine enemy, that he is escaped?" Neither did her answer help for it was evidently not true. She said, "He said unto me, Let me go; why should I kill thee?" Not only was this quite out of character for David, it could not account for the image and the goat's hair. It only reflected the fact that Michal could not be trusted. She felt no loyalty to her father, and she felt no real loyalty to the reputation of her own husband. She was quite willing to present him as a violent and unprincipled man if only it served her immediate purpose.

Meanwhile, David had come to the home of Samuel in Ramah. There was no better place for him to be. He had at last come to the same conclusion as Samuel had many years before — that is, that King Saul was a wicked, proud and ungodly man. The fact hurt him and burdened his soul as nothing else could ever do. That was why it was good for him to be with Samuel, because Samuel had passed through the same experience in his day. One can well imagine the hours and days spent together by the two men, the one so young and the other so old but both sharing a common disappointment and a common consolation as no other two could. It may well be that here for the first time David discovered what it was that actually stood between him and Saul. Samuel had known it himself for many years, and the time was come when David should know also. Saul's kingdom was not to last. God had taken it away from him; and when Samuel had appeared to anoint him in his youth it had been so that he might someday take Saul's place. We may well imagine how profoundly David contemplated all that the old prophet had to say to him; and we may well imagine with what diligence Samuel sought to do all that he

could to prepare this innocent, trusting and brilliant young man for the great responsibilities that one day he would have to shoulder.

Undoubtedly David would have been satisfied to have remained with Samuel indefinitely. To him, everything that Samuel had to say was far more beautiful and important than anything that he could learn from anyone else. Besides this, Samuel met regularly with the schools of the prophets to teach and to worship with them. These schools were composed of groups of young men who met regularly with the old prophet so that they might learn from him and so that they might sing and dance in services of worship before God. With them David felt as fully at home as he ever had with any company of fighting men. He shared with them a common joy and faith.

It could not last, however, Saul was far too determined to have David out of the way. Soon the report returned to him as to where David was staying, and that was all he had to know. He called to himself a company of his most trusted servants and sent them to take David captive.

Little, though, did he realize the nature of David's defense. The messengers of Saul, ordinarily a hardened group of men, came upon him in Naioth of Ramah just as the school of the prophets was engaged in its service of worship. It was an embarrassing moment, for no one in Israel could lightly interfere with so deeply religious a ceremony, and so the men stopped and waited for the service to be ended. But then a strange thing happened. As the men listened they were themselves caught up into the spirit of the service until they danced and sang praises to God along with all the prophets. The result was that when the service was ended, it no longer seemed possible to them to lift a finger against one of the company, and surely not against one as well favored as David. Instead, they joined themselves to the company of the prophets and continued in the service of praise to God.

At first Saul must have wondered what delayed the return of his soldiers; but when the reason was brought to him, he was furious. Quickly he called together another group of soldiers and sent them to Ramah on the same mission. It made him even more furious when the message came back that the same thing had happened to them. A third group were summoned and sent after the first two; but when they too fell under the influence of the prophets, in utter exasperation Saul determined to go himself.

It all had seemed easy enough when Saul had set out on his way; but, the closer he came to Naioth the more uncertain Saul became. He was entering the territory of Samuel and that was enough to trouble him in itself. He had never felt really easy when near Samuel, and now he had not met the old prophet since their confrontation at Gilgal. It was a considerably less determined man who finally came to Naioth only to find the prophets once more engaged in their service of worship. It must surely have been a strange sight, the king in his royal robes standing sullenly, silently watching and waiting for the service to end while the prophets danced on in their service of worship

as though oblivious to his presence. To the king himself though it must have been even more strange. There before him was David and the men whom he had sent to take him all busily engaged in the service of the prophets, utterly indifferent to his presence, unfrightened and undismayed. But as he watched gradually something began to come over him too. Slowly the blanket of time seemed to roll back and he remembered how he had once danced with the prophets. It had been immediately after he was anointed king, when only he and Samuel as yet knew it. Overcome with joy and a strange feeling about God he had joined a company of prophets and danced along with them and spoke of the wonder of God. And so it was that Saul forgot himself and went out to dance once again and to prophesy and speak of the greatness of God. Wildly Saul danced, more so than all the rest, until he threw his clothes aside and fell in a deep swoon to the ground.

It was then that the dancing stopped. Sadly David looked upon the unconscious king. He knew why Saul had come, and so quietly he gathered his few possessions together and fled.

Never had David felt so much alone. Before he

had known that he could go to Samuel, but now where? He could think of only one other truly trustworthy friend — Jonathan. He would go to him.

So it was that David went back, back to where he had come from, back to the very shadow of the palace walls, back to the hiding place which he had shared so often with Jonathan in the fields surrounding the palace of Saul.

It was a tender, touching meeting that the two men had there. David was weary, tired from running, utterly dismayed. What was a man to do, where was he to go when the very king of Israel was determined to have his life? In anguish David threw himself upon the shoulders of Jonathan and cried, "What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?"

The answer to the question was one that neither Jonathan nor David wanted to admit. The anger of Saul had no rational explanation. It arose from the wickedness of a heart that could not endure the way of the Lord. It was the hatred with which the wicked have ever looked upon the righteous from the beginning of time.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH—

The Providence Of God Miracles

by Rev. H. Veldman

What is the Scriptural idea of the miracle, or wonder? We can understand that the miracle should be discussed in connection with the providence of God, and particularly with that aspect of God's providence which is known as Government. When discussing the providence of the Lord we distinguish between Preservation, Cooperation and Government. And Government stresses that aspect of God's providence whereby the Lord guides all things to their own determinate end, as willed by Him from before the foundations of the world. These miracles or works of God, we have noted, are often defined as events, in the external world, brought about by the immediate efficiency, or simple volition of God. Miracles, therefore, are immediate works of the Lord. A miracle is often viewed as an extraordinary work of God. We can then certainly understand the remark of Bretschneider: "The operations of God, when uniform, we call laws; when rare or isolated, we call them miracles."

The true significance of the miracles in Holy Writ can be understood only when we understand that the miracle belongs in the sphere of Divine grace. The miracles of Scripture are usually discussed in connection with God's Providence and then, as we have already noted, particularly with that aspect of the Lord's Providence which is known as Government. Only, we must have a clear conception of this phase of God's Providence. In our treatment of this operation of God, we emphasized that, from the beginning of the history of the world, God causes all things to work together unto the realization of His eternal counsel in the new heavens and upon the new earth. This includes the entrance of sin into the world. We must conceive of two spheres of life, a natural and earthly sphere and a spiritual and heavenly sphere. The former, the natural sphere, is then sustained by "Common Grace," whereas the latter is the sphere of God's Special Grace. When God created the heavens and the earth, He had in mind an original creation

ordinance, a development of the world and its powers from a natural point of view. Sindisturbed this original plan of the Lord. And now the Lord would maintain this original creation ordinance. He realizes this by His operation of "Common Grace." And the result is that a natural sphere is called into existence in which, apart from regeneration and salvation, the natural man can develop a worldly culture and life which is pleasing to God and acceptable in His sight.

In this conception of "Common Grace" the miracle of Holy Writ really has no place. This theory of "Common Grace" really has no place in it for the supernatural, the Lord's Divine and irresistible grace. To be sure, this theory speaks of a certain common grace. And this common grace checked the process of sin in Adam, so that he did not wholly corrupt, and it also enabled him and all mankind to do that which is good in the sight of God. However, in the first place, this applies to all mankind, and not only to the elect. In the second place, it is of effect only in the sphere of civic righteousness, in the sphere of this natural life. And, in the third place, it must not be confused with God's special grace, and must be divorced from Christ and from the cross of Calvary, although there are those who claim that the cross of Calvary is also the ground for this common grace. Be this all as it may, it is clear that this common grace renders man not wholly corrupt, enables him to retain glimmerings or remnants of his natural goodness and righteousness, so that he is able to do much good in the sight of God. And any theory of natural goodness, without redeeming and regenerating grace, renders in that measure the Lord's Divine and irresistible grace unnecessary. This is also verified in the early history of our Protestant Reformed Churches. This early history of our churches is inseparably connected with what is known in this history as the Dr. Jansen case. Dr. R. Jansen was a professor in Calvin Seminary during the years 1914-1922. He was deposed in 1922. He entertained and taught heretical views with respect to such doctrines as miracles and Divine inspiration. There were also other issues, but we need not call attention to them at this time. Dr. Jansen, however, attempted to answer and silence his accusers by calling attention to the fact that, whereas he believed in the doctrine of Common Grace, they (especially the Revs. H. Danhof and H. Hoeksema) did not understand him because of their denial of this doctrine. Neither is it difficult to understand this counter charge of the accused professor. The denial of Common Grace, of course, emphasizes the absolute antithesis between the church and the world. Denying Common Grace, we maintain that the Divine penalty of death was executed upon mankind when Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit, that the human race was wholly given over to sin and darkness, that man, created in the image of God, became the image of the devil, lost all his original spiritual gifts, became an enemy of God and a friend and ally of the devil in the all-comprehensive sense of the word. Dr. Jansen did not see the need of infallible inspiration, that Moses

received the law exclusively from the Lord, that the Church of God, in the Old Dispensation, was exclusively the product of Divine grace, or the wonder of Divine grace. And, why should he see this need in the light of the teaching of Common Grace? Is there not much good in the world? Why, then, should Moses borrow from heathen nations, as far as the law is concerned, and why should it be necessary for him to be dependent exclusively upon the Lord? Why, in the light of Common Grace, should there not be many sources from which the Mediator of the Old Dispensation would be able to draw? If, on the other hand, the absolute antithesis be maintained between the Church and the World, then we can understand that all revelation of the truth and salvation is exclusively Divine, and that the Church of God in the midst of the world is wholly a wonder of Divine grace.

Calling attention to the several words which are used in Scripture to express the idea of the miracle, Rev. Hoeksema writes in his *Dogmatics* as follows (Anthropology, Locus II):

Several words are used to express our idea of a miracle. There is first of all the Hebrew term *PELE'*, from the verb *PALA'*, which means "to separate, to distinguish, to make distinguished, to make wonderful, extraordinary." A miracle, therefore, is a work of God that strikes the attention by being extraordinary. This corresponds to the Greek word *thauma*, a marvelous work. Of course, all the works of God are marvels, whether we see a sunset or the raising of the dead: but our senses are so dulled that our special attention must be aroused to behold them as the works of the Almighty. A similar significance has the noun *MOPHETH*, often used in combination with the word *'OTHOTH* in the phrase *'OTHOTH UMPOPHeTHIM*, signs and wonders, like the Greek *semeia kai terata*. The *MOPHeTHIM*, or *terata*, are splendid works or deeds that stand out because of their manifestation of great power and wisdom. And signs are the visible tokens of the presence of the extraordinary and marvelous power of God. They are also called *GOBHUROTH*, mighty works, *dunameis*, *erga megaleia*.

Miracles have been defined as supernatural works of God. The distinction is made between the natural and the supernatural (above nature). What is really meant with this distinction? Supernatural works are works of God, in which the Lord, in a special sense, operates in the affairs of the children of men and causes His power to be known and displayed. But, is it possible for one who believes in the Scriptural doctrine of the providence of God to distinguish between the natural and the supernatural? This is fundamentally Deism. Deism is the conception which advocates that the world develops of itself. According to this heresy, the world is like a clock which the Lord winds up at the beginning of time and which is then left to run of itself. To the things natural, then, belong the so-called laws of nature. That the sun rises in the morning and sets in the evening, that "whatsoever goes up must come down," that the farmer sows his seed in the springtime and harvests his crop in the autumn, that food nourishes and strengthens and drink refreshes, — all these things are natural things, the

laws of nature. Miracles, then, are supernatural. The Lord, as it were, "steps in" and reveals His power in a special way. However, are not all things either "natural" or "supernatural"? These so-called "laws of nature" are surely nothing else than the Lord's orderly control over all things. Nature never operates of itself. Or, if we wish to speak of the "supernatural," is not everything supernatural? The Word of God surely does not distinguish between the natural and the supernatural. The things which we call natural are always works of God, manifestations of the omnipresent power of God by which He sustains and governs all things. The most common things, things that occur daily, are works of the Most High. It is for this reason that the Word of God calls the most common events the works of God, as in Ps. 107:23-32:

They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

Notice, please, that the psalmist in these verses speaks of the most ordinary things. He speaks of

them who go down in ships, that do business in great waters. And, as they traffic upon the seas, they encounter storms. The Lord makes them to reel to and fro and to stagger like a drunken man, and He also makes the storm a calm, so that the waves become still. We would surely call these things the most ordinary events in life, but the psalmist speaks of them as the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep. And this is the language of the Word of God throughout. Who pays any attention to a sparrow as it falls off the housetop, but the Word of God tells us that no sparrow falls off the housetop without the will of our heavenly Father. We behold the lilies of the field, see their beauty, and view these flowers as though they are the most natural things in the world. And yet we read in the Scriptures that it is the Lord Who clotheth them with this beauty; in fact, not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed with a beauty and glory as these lilies of the field. The sun rises in the morning and sets in the evening, and we think nothing of it. We simply take this for granted, and view this wonder as a "natural law." But the Word of God informs us that He causes His sun to rise upon the just and the unjust and also causes His rain to fall upon the evil and the good. So, the distinction between the "natural" and the "supernatural" hardly holds for the believing child of God who believes in the providence of the Lord. To him, everything speaks of the wonders and mighty works of the Lord. It is the Lord Who, by His almighty and omnipresent power, causes all things to be and to develop in the midst of the world. That we do not often see these wonders of the Lord is because of the dullness of our senses; our eyes are too often closed to behold these wonders of our God as they occur daily all around us.

ALL AROUND US—

What Chaplains Believe The 'God-Is-Dead' Men Are Serious Marriage Paving The Way To Unity

by Prof. H. Hanko

WHAT CHAPLAINS BELIEVE

One of our servicemen, now serving outside this country, recently sent me a small booklet entitled "Protestants Believe." It was published and copyrighted by the "General Commission on Chaplains," and is evidently intended to serve as a basis for the instruction of servicemen in the Protestant Faith. This appears from a statement found inside the back cover which reads:

MY PERSONAL COMMITMENT

In gratitude to God for His love and mercy, I do here and now receive Christ and profess the faith set forth in this pamphlet.

Signed:

Date:

It is an excellent example of the kind of religion to

which our service men are exposed in the chapel services which they attend.

In the introduction of the book entitled "Belief Is Power!" we read:

On the following pages of this pamphlet are set forth some of the great religious beliefs commonly held by Protestant Christians for many generations....

No statement of a Common Faith can be final, complete or fully satisfactory to everyone. These statements omit some beliefs accepted by many Protestants; they may be stated in a form different from that used by some. However, they do represent a solid ground of agreement on which most people who call themselves Protestants would be likely to agree....

It is no doubt true that this is accepted by most Protestants. But it only shows how far Protestants have drifted away from the Protestant Reformation. The statement of doctrine can serve as a basis for the whole ecumenical movement of our day—and is perhaps intended to do just this. It is extremely deceptive in that it makes abundant use of Scriptural terminology, but fills these terms with meanings foreign to the Word of God. It is so vague and general that anyone in the whole church world (including outright modernists and Roman Catholics) can accept it. It sounds very much like something drawn up under the auspices of the National Council of Churches.

We offer some partial quotations from it, admittedly taking those which strike us as being the most deceptive and false.

Under the general heading "One God", we read:

When Protestants say, "We believe in one God," they mean:

—that *back of all the mystery* of life and of the universe *is a power that created*, sustains and rules all things.

—that this *Power* knows, feels, loves and has purposes.

This *Power is a Personal Being*; and, as such, is the Father of all human beings.

Under the heading "Jesus Christ" we read:

When Protestants say, "We believe in Jesus Christ," they mean:

—that in *Jesus of Nazareth* God has revealed himself to men in understandable, human form.

—that *God was in Jesus* so completely that He was above all other men THE Son of God.

—that *Jesus was so completely human*, being tempted in all points as other men, yet without sin, that He was above all other men THE Son of Man.

—that Jesus, by His words and by His life, became *the highest Example and the greatest Teacher of men*.

—that *Jesus lived so perfectly* the life of THE Son of Man and THE Son of God that He is *Lord and Master* of human living at its best and highest.

—that, by His life, death, and resurrection Jesus is *the Redeemer* of Men and *the Savior* of the world.

—that the Jesus of history, is *the Living Christ* in the experience of all who accept Him.

Such a statement as this above could be received by any modernist in the world who denies the virgin birth, the atonement and the resurrection of Christ bodily from the grave.

One suspects, after reading the section on God and Christ that the author does not even believe in the trinity. This suspicion is strengthened by the statement on "The Holy Spirit."

When Protestants say, "We believe in the Holy Spirit," they mean:

—that *God is Spirit*.

—that *God is Holy*.

—that in human experience, *God is a Divine Presence, the Holy Spirit*.

—that, as Holy Spirit, God is continually *seeking to protect* the spirits of men from evil and destruction and *to bring them into happy fellowship* with Himself.

The shallow and superficial view of sin so commonly held today is also reflected in this brochure in what is found under the subject of "The forgiveness of sins."

—that man has abused the powers God gave him, especially the power to choose.

—that, through the abuse of his God-given power, man has often greatly wronged God and destroyed his fellowship with God—that is, he has sinned against God.

—that sin results in unhappiness and tragedy for men and in great sorrow for God.

—that whenever a man really wants to renew the fellowship, God is willing, and will no longer hold the wrong against the man; that is, if a man will sincerely confess his sin and turn away from it (repent) God will forgive him.

Forgiveness then does not come through the atonement of Christ, but only through being willing to confess that one has done wrong.

In the statement under the title "The Bible" the booklet uses an expression which has become the motto of those who deny that the Scriptures are the infallibly inspired Word of God. It says that "the Bible contains the Word of God for men." This expression is deliberately used to deny that the Bible *is* the Word of God. There is, according to those who make this statement, much in the Bible which is not the Word of God. But this Word of God is somewhere in the Bible. It remains for man to try to find it.

In the statement on "The Life Everlasting" no mention is made at all of heaven or the eternal perfection of God's covenant. It merely states:

—that man bears the image of God; that is, he shares with God His special powers of thinking, feeling and choosing.

—that, out of His great love and mercy, God seeks to give men a life that is lived eternally with Him.

—that, in the resurrection of Christ, we see both a sign and promise of God's redeeming purpose, and of His saving power.

I include this material in our *Standard Bearer* in order that our servicemen who read this may be warned of the insidious evils of false doctrine to which they are exposed by their chaplains. It all sounds so pious, so true, that it is quite conceivable that some of our servicemen will think this a statement worthy of their faith. This is especially a danger when our servicemen are far from their homes and the influence of their

church. Hence, this is intended to be a solemn warning to be on guard against this perversion of your faith.

THE "GOD-IS-DEAD" MEN ARE SERIOUS

The bold blasphemy of those who teach that God is dead is so utterly astonishing that sometimes we can scarcely imagine that they really teach these things. Yet they do. And they are serious about it to. Below are some quotes taken from a television interview with Dr. William Hamilton, a leading spokesman of this movement. These quotes originally appeared in a newspaper, *The Toronto Star*, and are taken from the *Christian Beacon*. Dr. Hamilton is quoted as saying among other things:

We are atheists, but *Christian* atheists.

We differ from classical atheism in that it says that there never was a God, whereas we say that there was a God but there isn't now.

We do not know, we do not adore, we do not believe in God.

What we have come up with is a new style of Christian theology. It is a breathtaking way of doing Christianity — without God.

We say that it is possible to live as Christians, in obedience to Jesus, without God.

God's death is not a sad thing, although there is this understandable nostalgia for the God who's gone.

It's not the occasion for a requiem but for a comedy. For me the death of God is a liberating experience, a highly moral experience. It frees me to be committed to the service of my neighbor, without God getting in the way.

Christianity is obedience to Christ and for that we don't need God.

Jesus was wrong about a lot of things, but he was still a great person.

Jesus is a way of being in the presence of others, He is a clue or model as to how we should act towards others.

I see no way of affirming the life of the human community after death. Nor can I affirm the existence of Jesus after death. He, too, has ceased to exist.

If prayer is construed as something addressed to a reality outside of oneself, then there is no place for it.

And yet, as great as the blasphemy is, it is only a forthright statement of what countless theologians actually believe but are hesitant to express because of their positions in the established church. Yet even their hesitancy is giving way to increased boldness.

MARRIAGE PAVING THE WAY TO UNITY

We are indebted to the *Presbyterian Journal* for a news item concerning a recent marriage between a man from the Roman Catholic Church and a woman who is a member of the United Presbyterian Church. We are not so much interested in the fact of the marriage as we are in the explanation offered by Dr. Scott Frances Brenner, secretary for fraternal relations with Catholics, Orthodox and Jews for the Board of Christian Education of the UPUSA Church. The girl was married in Rome and received permission from the Vatican to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist.

In justification for this conduct, Dr. Brenner is quoted as saying: the girl involved was required to make "an express act of belief in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and an act of obedience to the Pope." But Presbyterians

are as convinced of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist as are our Catholic brethren.

He pointed out that the Presbyterians are loyal to Calvin in maintaining a certain presence of Christ in the sacrament; only they call it "a spiritual presence" rather than a "real presence."

For a Christian, however, nothing is more real than the spiritual. Therefore I think the time has come to omit the adjective and join in one common confession of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

In other words, the difference between the Reformed view of the sacrament and the Roman Catholic view, so important to the Reformers, is no longer a barrier to unity. And we may well ask: if this is not a barrier, what is?

On the matter of pledging obedience to the pope, Dr. Brenner is quoted as saying:

I believe that most Presbyterians want to respect and obey the Holy Father insofar as their consciences let them do so.

It is apparent that the ecumenical movement is broad enough to bring all Protestants and Roman Catholics together across the chasm of the Reformation — even though this involves abject acceptance of Roman Catholic dogma.

No man is able or willing to convert himself, unless God converts him first. Nor does God's work of conversion leave the sinner inactive, like a "stock and block." In conversion God changes the mind, and the sinner sees all things in a new spiritual light; God turns the will, and the sinner begins to hate sin and long for righteousness; God works in the heart of the sinner true repentance, and the sinner repents; God draws and the sinner comes; God calls the sinner to turn from his wicked way, by His word of irresistible grace and power, and the sinner obeys, turns and finds that God is abundantly merciful.

— H. Hoeksema, "The Wonder of Grace"

FEATURE ARTICLE—

The Significance Of The Races In The World

by Rev. R. C. Harbach

(Editor's Note. Following is the substance of an address delivered by the Rev. R. C. Harbach for the League of Men's Societies at its fall meeting in 1966. Deeming this address instructive, the League asked that it be published in our magazine, and we gladly concur with this request. H.C.H.)

Prior to the Flood, we are unable to trace man's ancestry, except in the revelation of Scripture. There we learn that Jehovah created man in His image, in distinction from the animals, which were made "after their kind." Then the human race multiplied out of the family of Adam. Sin having sprung out of the individual first of all, it soon spread to the family, thence to society, and finally infected the race, which in turn became so corrupt that God destroyed it with a universal flood, except for a remnant of humanity, which preserved the human race. Science has no information relative to this period to offer, either to confirm or to deny the above biblical history.

Continuing, the human race multiplied, spreading throughout the earth as separate peoples, speaking diverse languages, a factor brought about by divine judgment. City life is evident in this period. Science has no information relative to this period, either, although philosophy inserts here in this era its hoaxes of the Cro-Magnon and Neanderthal man. All the races of the world are, according to Scripture, the descendants of Adam.

God "hath made of one blood all *nations* of men for to dwell on the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." (Acts 17:26) God made the race of men, not from a *similarity* of bloods (which is all the evolutionists are able to discover as to the relation of human to other bloods), but *out of one blood*, i.e., out of the blood of Adam ("Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?" (Mal. 2:10), and Eve ("because she was the mother of all living." (Gen. 3:20) Man's *racial* beginnings, then, go back to the time *before* Abraham and *after* Noah and the Tower of Babel.

But the point of view of Scripture is national, rather than racial. Abraham is the father of many *nations*; in him and in his Seed all the *nations* of the earth shall be blessed. The biblical word *goyim* used to designate the *nations* of the world is not a racial word, nor is it

a Jewish word; it is a Hebrew ethnological term. We find the word six times in Gen. 10 (5,20,31,32, twice) used to express certain divisions of mankind, but these divisions are not particularly racial. We read that the isles, i.e., the seacoasts (settlements would naturally follow the coasts first), the seacoasts of the Gentiles (*goyim*) were "divided in their lands, every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations (*goyim*)" (Gen. 10:5). Here is a fourfold division: geographical (isles), lingual (tongue), tribal (families) and ethnological (nations). The word *goyim* is translated *heathen* 148 times, *nations* 373 times and *people* 11 times. But not only are the Japhethites by this word said to be Gentiles (in v.5) and the Hamites are in v. 20 proved to be Gentiles, but verses 31 and 32 prove that the word applies likewise to the Shemites. They are *goyim* also!

Also in Scripture we find the word *people* sometimes used in relation to the word *nation*. "This *nation* (*goi*) is Thy *people* (*am*)." (Ex. 33:13) There is a word for *tribe*, which means *family*, not race. The N.T. has a word for *people* from which we get our word *laity*; it has a synonym from which we get our word *ethnic*, another from which we get our word *democrat*, another word which means *crowd*, and a word often translated *kindred*. But there is no word for *race* in the Bible. In order to express the idea of the whole human *race*, four of these words are used together in the same connection: *peoples*, *kindreds*, *tongues* and *nations*. Scripture does recognize the fact that there are races, but it knows no superior race. The Word of God does not teach the superiority, nor the inferiority, of Jew, Greek, Scythian, Barbarian, Cretians or Arabians. Neither does the Bible teach any racial equality or inequality. The idea of equality is a metric concept which is not applicable to organisms. Poodles are neither equal nor unequal to collies. Some poodles are all a man can handle on a leash. A large poodle and a shaven collie would look like "Mutt and Jeff." But poodles and collies are merely two different kinds of dogs. The idea of equality does not enter here. It is not to the point to speak of Japanese and Germans as equal or unequal. They are neither, but are two distinct races with different traits and characteristics. "Racial equality" is a political fiction which has no basis in reality.

But since the Bible does speak of Japhetic, Hamitic and Shemitic lands, countries, tongues, families and nations, then it does speak of races. We are especially interested in *The Significance of the Races in the World*, considering, I. Their Origin, II. Their Rise and III. Their Destinies.

The biblical account of the origin of the races of mankind is rejected by the modernistic thinkers of the public schools, colleges and universities, and, generally, by today's men of "science." Denying the inerrancy and inspiration of Scripture, they assume the hypothesis of evolution as the answer. S. R. Driver, professor of Hebrew at Oxford adequately represents the modern position. He states, "The first 11 chapters of Genesis, it may safely be assumed, report faithfully *what was currently believed among the Hebrews* respecting the early history of mankind; they contain no account of the *real* beginnings of man, or of human civilization, upon the earth." (HBD, IV, 792) The Genesis narrative is, accordingly, merely Hebrew folk-lore, with a conception of God which is naive and "imperfectly disengaged from polytheism," the latter supposed because of such plural references to God as "Let *us* go down, and there confound their language." (11:7) Chapter Eleven of Genesis only *ostensibly* accounts "for the distribution of man 'over the face of the whole earth.'" It does not *really* do so. For modernists, educational and ecclesiastical, contend that the Genesis account is deprived of all historical or scientific value. For to be truly historical, scientific and scholarly, the 'paleolithic' man and the 'neolithic' man must be taken into account. For they existed. But the biblical history does not go back that far; "and any explanation, purporting to account for the populations of the earth, and the diversity of languages spoken by them, can be no historically true account either of the diffusion of mankind, or of the diversity of speech," (ibid.) unless it takes cognizance of them!

According to the theory of evolution, besides the "paleolithic" man and the "neolithic" man there are also the so called "Ape Man of Java (Pithecanthropus Erectus)," the "Piltdown Man," the "Heidelberg Man," the "Neanderthal Man" and the "Cro-Magnon Man." These are claimed to be "men" which actually existed. As a matter of fact, we have only clay *models* of them, which are products of pure imagination. For there are by no means complete skeletal remains of these "men," but only fragments of skulls, a leg bone, and some teeth. From these smithereens, sculptured busts and artists' conceptions have been made and offered to a gullible public as proof of man's evolution from a low animal form.

Take first the Ape Man of Java (Pithecanthropus), so called, (but merely a piece of a skull cap), found by a man named Dubois on the bank of a river in Java in 1891. But he hid this 'man' (bone!) for 30 years from the public. Hence, scientific men could not verify or disprove his finding. Who will believe that after such a long period of seclusion, demonstrative proof was established? A plaster cast of this bone-fragment somehow came into the hands

of a Prof. Scott of Princeton University. Pictures of this facsimile were spread throughout the newspapers and magazines of the land in the name of science. Where is the real Mr. Pithecanthropus? Will he please stand up? The Christian, however, cannot moan the loss of a 'missing link' when, not just links, but whole chains are missing!

Second, the so called Piltdown *Man* is a collection of four skull fragments, a jaw fragment, and a tooth. There is no evidence, and therefore no certainty that the jaw fragment belongs to the skull fragments. The lower jaw of the Piltdown Man, therefore, may not be Piltdown's lower jaw; and his upper jaw is not! That is, it was never found; but in the reconstructed Piltdown Man the upper jaw is only a plaster of Paris filling to give some idea of what he might have looked like. Thus scientific (?) imagination again!

Third, the Man of Heidelberg is merely a jaw-bone found in 1907 near Mauer, Germany. It may have belonged to a man the size of Goliath, as it is unusually large, though there are similar structures found among negroes. This piece is no evidence of evolution. At best, it is evidence of a man possibly of giant proportions. But it is only a bony *part* of a *man*! The so called Cro-Magnon Man (a 'paleolithic' man) is only a skull of about the size and shape of Darwin's own skull capacity and profile.

On such suspicious and uncertain grounds the "scientific" (evolutionary) point of view rests. What is given as real evidence for this position is that which seems to lend support to evolutionism. But evidence which would prove to the contrary is never given. And the evidences of human remains given as proof of evolution are no different from the skeletal remains of today.

But according to the Bible and the Genesis record in particular, the racial beginnings of man stem from "the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread." (Gen. 9:19) The race developed in a three-fold direction, the record of which is found in the brief account of the three national registers of Genesis, chapter ten. The races are there presented under the figure of a hub and wheel. The rim of the wheel is first circumscribed in the Japhetic peoples, the farthest removed over the earth. Then more detail is depicted in the spokes of the wheel representing the Hamitic nations. They are, naturally, somewhat nearer the center. Then the Shemites are the hub of the wheel. If we may borrow from a James-original, this is the wheel of existence (James 3:6), the wheel of the races. It rolls in the direction of the descent of the Seed of the Woman.

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GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

On February 21 we plan to celebrate our fiftieth wedding anniversary, a golden jubilee. Open house will be held at our home at 609 Jefferson Street, Pella, Iowa.

The Lord has truly been good to us; He has led us all the way on the pilgrim journey in wedded union; His Name alone receive all the praise.

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty". Psalm 91:1. Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Vander Molen

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Men's Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan, hereby expresses their sincere sympathy with one of its members, Mr. Harold Schipper, in the loss of his wife,

MRS. HAROLD SCHIPPER

May our gracious God comfort and sustain Harold and his family, in the conviction that when God is for us, nothing can be against us. But also in all these things, though they are grievous according to the flesh, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. Rom 8:31, 37.

J. H. Kortering, Vice Pres.
Edw. Cammenga, Secretary

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Sunday School of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan hereby express their sympathy to the Superintendent, Mr. Harold Schipper, and children in their loss of wife and mother,

MRS. HAROLD SCHIPPER

May the Promises of God in His Word be a comfort to them, in their present need. "Happy is he who hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in Jehovah his God." Psalm 146:5

Ervin Kortering, Asst. Supt.
Lafert Kortering, Secretary

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Men's Society of South Holland Protestant Reformed Church expresses its sympathy to one of their members, Mr. Michael Van Baren, in the loss of his mother,

MRS. FRANK VAN BAREN

May the bereaved be comforted by Psalm 116:15, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints".

Jack Lenting, Sec'y.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Men's and Ladies Societies of the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church extends their heartfelt sympathy to our fellow members, Mr. and Mrs. Art Zandstra, Mr. and Mrs. John Zandstra, Mr. and Mrs. Bart Zandstra, and Mr. and Mrs. Evert Buiters, in the loss of their sister and sister-in-law

MRS. DOROTHY SCHIPPER

May the Lord comfort you in this time of sorrow.
Rev. J. Heys, Pres.
Mrs. R. Poortinga, Sec'y.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Young People's Society of the Holland Church wishes to express its deepest sympathy to two of its members, Jane and John Schipper, in the loss of their mother,

MRS. HAROLD SCHIPPER

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

T. Elzinga, Vice Pres.
C. Haveman, Vice Sec'y.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Consistory of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church expresses its sympathy to their fellow office bearer, Mr. Peter Zandstra, in the death of his sister,

MRS. HAROLD SCHIPPER

Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto Thy name: the upright shall dwell in Thy presence. Ps. 140:13

Rev. J. Kortering, Pres.
D. Engelsma, Sec'y.

Always God is first in the whole work of salvation, and man's activity is only the fruit of the grace God works in the heart. For we are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. And the converted sinner will never boast of his own work in conversion, but give the glory to Him of whom, and through whom, and unto whom are all things! He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord!

— H. Hoeksema, "The Wonder of Grace"

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES—

January 15, 1967

Rev. M. Schipper, of Southeast Church, declined the call tendered him by our Hull, Iowa, congregation.

* * *

Southwest Church has appointed two clerks, the new consistory clerk is Mr. Ted Engelsma, 2333 Clyde Park Ave., S.W., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49509; and the bulletin clerk is Mr. P. Lotterman, 2141 Newport S.W., Wyoming, Mich., 49509. Southeast's new clerk is Mr. John DeVries, 824 Evergreen St. S.E., Grand Rapids, Mich., 49507; and First Church has appointed Mr. James Heys, 1432 Giddings Ave. S.E., Grand Rapids, Mich., 49506.

* * *

Kalamazoo's consistory has inaugurated a change in their order of worship. We note that in the evening service they now use Doxology #8 in our Psalter as a closing doxology. In so doing they have joined many of our congregations who thus pray for the grace of Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Spirit, and ask for the fruit of that communion in their fellowship, immediately before the minister pronounces that blessing upon them.

* * *

Oak Lawn's Extension Committee has published a good 8-page paper. Its name — "The Reformed Messenger", and it can be had free of charge by writing the Committee at: 9402 South 53rd Court, Oak Lawn, Ill., 60435.

* * *

The January 3rd Officer Bearers' Conference was held in the Hope Church of Grand Rapids, with Rev. J. Kortering addressing the men of the Conference. His assigned topic was, "The Proper Supervision by the Consistory over the Preaching of the Word". This important duty of the Elders is one in which they vowed to be diligent when they were installed into office, and is probably the most demanding of their manifold duties for it involves a "diligent search of the Word of God, and to be continually meditating on the mysteries of faith". The result of that speech cannot but spur the office bearers to be mentally alert under the preaching of the Gospel that they may prevent any "strange doctrine" being taught; and to heed the exhortation to "watch diligently against the wolves which might come into the sheepfold of Christ." Blessed is the church whose "watchers on the walls of Zion" take their vow seriously as one made to Christ, the King of His Church!

* * *

Do you know which *Standard Bearer* article in the January 1st issue included this sentence? "But the linethrough Scripture is disjointed, slip-knotted, sheep-shanked, strained and broken with many gaps inter-

vening along its shabby, ludicrous length". If not, then you have not read the entire issue, and you should go back and read Rev. Harbach's treatise on "Dispensationalism An Ancient Error."

* * *

Of special interest to our constituency is the news found in the latest Seminary Newsletter that their library facilities will be available to us so that it will be possible to borrow a book for reference and study upon our request. The faculty also announced a new project: that of the publishing of a "Theological Journal" to meet the need of maintaining the historic and Reformed position on a wide range of theological subjects — a position steadily abandoned by much of the church world. We may expect the first issue next fall. The faculty ended the letter with a plea we cannot afford to neglect when it commended "our Seminary and its needs to our churches and to the prayers of our people". It is the age-old request made by God's ministers, "Brethren, pray for us!"

* * *

Did you know that our South Holland Church has made arrangements to hold a public lecture in the Thornridge High School in Dolton, Ill.? The announced topic is, "The Reformed Faith in Crisis", with Prof. H. C. Hoeksema as lecturer. We presume that our professors and ministers must feel lonely in the awareness that we are the only denomination which still warns the Reformed people of the danger threatening our position that is based on the faith of the giant leaders of the Reformation of the 17th century. Indeed, Christ's Word of prophecy is being fulfilled when, referring to the falling away of many, He said, "because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold".

* * *

Southeast's Young People's Society, in their January 15th after recess program scheduled Prof. H. C. Hoeksema who gave an historical introduction to the Three Points of Common Grace; and the young people of Loveland are reading and discussing the book, "The Protestant Reformed Churches of America" currently treating the doctrinal part under the chapter heading, "The General Grace Theory of the First Point". Surely an indication that the leaders of our youth realize that today's youth is tomorrow's church.

* * *

Rev. R. Decker's year-end bulletin carried a warm expression of appreciation for the congregation's acceptance of his family into their hearts and homes, and the many tokens of Christian love manifested in the 14 months of his pastorate in Doon.

....see you in church.

J.M.F.