

The Standard Bearer

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

IN THIS ISSUE

Meditation:

Salvation For The Chief Of Sinners

Editorial:

The Erring Views of Dr. H. M. Kuitert (3)

The Sources and End of Violence and Revolution

A Childlike Faith

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Editor-in-Chief: Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

Department Editors: Mr. John M. Faber, Rev. Cornelius Hanko, Prof. Herman Hando, Rev. Robert C. Harbach, Rev. John A. Heys, Rev. Jay Kortering, Rev. George C. Lubbers, Rev. Marinus Schipper, Rev. Gise J. Van Baren, Rev. Herman Veldman, Rev. Bernard Woudenberg

Editorial Office: Prof. H. C. Hoeksema
1842 Plymouth Terrace, S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

Church News Editor: Mr. John M. Faber
1123 Cooper Ave., S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49507

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Business Office: Mr. James Dykstra, Bus. Mgr.
1326 W. Butler Ave., S.E.
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Meditation**Salvation for the Chief of Sinners**

Rev. J. Kortering

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners: of whom I am chief,"

I Timothy 1:15.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.
Of all these sinners, I am chief.

This is a true word, worthy of all acceptance.
Amazing confession!

How this word of God contradicts those who attempt to make Christ a universal Savior of all men. On the surface it might even seem as if this text would support their position. One might construct the following syllogism: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, all men are sinners, therefore Christ Jesus came into the world to save all men.

Sounds logical doesn't it?

Yet, there is something wrong. The error lies in the major premise: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. But, is that not verbatim a quotation of the text? Indeed, nevertheless in the above syllogism the assumption is that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *all* sinners! This assumption is unwarranted because of the text and context.

But, are not all men sinners?

There are two kinds of sinners: self righteous sinners and self-conscious sinners. The former are excluded from our text: the latter are included.

With this in mind we can construct a proper syllogism: Christ Jesus came into the world to save self-conscious sinners, I am the chief of the self-conscious sinners, therefore Christ Jesus came into the world to save me!

This is a true saying and worthy of all acceptance.

What really is a sinner?

According to our text, a sinner is one who misses the target or mark. The mark that every man is supposed to hit is none other than God Himself. God deals with all mankind as rational and moral creatures. His command is clearly revealed in the Scriptures and His presence is evident in creation. The central theme of God's revelation is love me with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength and thy neighbor as thyself. The sinner fails to attain this high calling. Willfully he designs his own mark which satisfies his sinful pleasure. He rejects God and lives for himself.

Since such acts are directly contrary to the purpose that God has for man, these deeds are acts of disobedience and rebellion against God. This exposes the sinner to the righteous indignation of the holy God. Hence the sinner is one who is guilty before God, he stands liable for his deeds, both as represented in Adam and for his own sins. God as Judge does not simply declare mankind guilty; He also executes the sentence and the sinner is brought under His curse. The punishment for sin is death, and death is corruption both spiritually and physically.

The sad tale of human misery gives evidence of this death.

Every person born in the human race is by nature such a sinner. Yet, the text does not speak in generalities; it speaks specifically.

From the context it is evident that some sinners are self-righteous. Paul refers to them in verses 3-10. He tells young Timothy that some teach other doctrines and thereby give heed to fables and endless genealogies

ministering questions rather than godly edifying. This has resulted in their viewing the law not as a means to expose their corruption, but rather as a mirror to reflect their innate goodness. They turned aside unto vain jangling, desired to be teachers of the law, but did not understand what they said, imagining that the law was made for a righteous man. Representatives of these sinners were Hymenaeus and Alexander whom Paul said, "I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."

In contrast to the self-righteous sinner, Paul refers to the self-conscious sinner. He reminds Timothy that the end of the law is charity out of a pure heart and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. Every sinner humbled by grace will look at himself in the light of that law and see himself not as righteous, but rather as lawless and disobedient; he will see that by nature he is unholy and profane, murderer of father and murderer of mother, manslayer, whoremonger, defiler of mankind, menstealer, liar, purjured person, and even as those holding to that which is contrary to sound doctrine.

Paul however, does not refer academically to such self-conscious sinners. He immediately becomes personal and places himself in that category. He adds, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, *of whom* I am chief.

This presents two problems. How could Paul say that he was chief? This takes on impetus when we recall that the tense of the verb is not past; he does not say, "I was chief," referring to his past which wasn't very good, but instead he says, "I am chief." He says this while he lies in the prison at Rome awaiting his death as a martyr for the cause of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In a subsequent letter to Timothy, he writes, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness." This man is the chief of sinners? Still more, if Paul is chief, where does that leave us? Can more than one sinner be first, or chief?

The solution to these two problems lies within the same context of the above. Paul is speaking of the self-conscious sinner. As each child of God views himself before the holy law of God, he comes to one conclusion: no other sinner can be as bad as I am.

That is the opposite of self-righteousness.

Why did Paul and why must each one of us come to that same conclusion? We must appraise our spiritual state and condition in the light of *God*. It is not a question for each of us, how do I appear before my neighbor or in the eyes of men. Rather, we must ask how does God see me! This God knows not only our outward deeds, he knows the activities that take place within our souls. He knows the motives of the heart itself. All these He judges in the light of the perfect law which demands a *pure* heart, *good* conscience, and faith *unfeigned*! When we as children of God stand in the light of so great glory, we know ourselves as no other

creature possibly can. Our conclusion is that we are the chief of sinners. Paul said, I am chief! Each of us says, I am chief.

The self-righteous sinner spends his time finding fault with others and exalting himself above them, the self-conscious sinner is humbled in the dust and cries out in confession and repentance, "I am the chief of sinners."

Christ Jesus came into the world to save such sinners.

He came into the world for that purpose.

His name is Christ Jesus.

Upon the basis of this testimony, we must view the work of salvation as God's work in Jesus Christ. As the Christ He was anointed by the Father for this very task. That anointing has its very roots in the sovereign counsel of predestination. God willed to glorify His name in the way of sin and redemption from these sins in Jesus Christ. The Person of the Son of God, destined to take on human flesh, was anointed to remove the two obstacles of sin: guilt and corruption.

Hence He came into the world. He assumed unto Himself true humanity. In our flesh He entered into the pale of death, subjected Himself under the holy law of God, in order that He might satisfy the demands of this law as they applied to His own and thereby earn the right to liberate them from the servitude of sin and bring them into the everlasting fellowship of the Father.

Our guilt was removed at the cross. Bowing under the righteous indignation of the holy God against the sins of the elect, Christ bore the penalty unto the perfect end. He removed the punishment by *bearing* it. Triumphant He cried, "It is finished." Through such perfect obedience to the divine law, God imputed to our account the benefits and declared that we are righteous for Christ's sake. Because of this work of Christ, God declared that under the shadow of His perfect law we are no longer sinners, guilty sinners, but saints.

No less does Christ Jesus come into the world to save sinners from the corruption of their sins. Through the exalted preaching of the gospel, Christ efficaciously applies the benefits of His death unto His elect. Having earned the right to free them from the tyranny of sin, He also actually performs that work. By the Holy Spirit, He breaks the stubborn and proud hearts, He humbles the mighty into the dust. He causes the sinner to cry out, "God be merciful to me, *the* sinner." As the Holy

Spirit pours forth the sovereign and free grace of God into the hearts of the sinner, his reaction is, how terrible I am! With Paul the sinner cries out, "The good that I would I do not and the evil that I would not that I do, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The answer is Christ Jesus! He is the Savior of sinners, He directs these sinners daily into the green paths of the law. He keeps the sinner humble, ever reminding him that the best of his works are polluted with sin and that his beginning is so very small. He holds before the eyes of the dying pilgrim the hope that perfection lies beyond the vale of the shadow of death when salvation shall be perfectly realized in the joyful life everlasting.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save self-conscious sinners.

I am the chief of these self-conscious sinners.

Therefore Christ Jesus came into the world to save me.

This is a true word.

Notice carefully, the conclusion is not conditional. Salvation is not optional, not probable, not available . . . but! Our personal salvation is sure. It is final and definite! All who say, "I am the chief of sinners" are surely saved.

The reason is obvious: natural man who is unsaved is always boasting about his goodness. This is true whether he is a heathen or a hypocrite. The unsaved always view themselves as better than others.

He that looks at the holy law of God and smites his breast and cries out in repentance and confession by saying, I am a sinner, yea more, I am the chief of sinners, is already saved. Such a confession is not of man, but it is of God.

It is the evidence that Christ Jesus has come into the world to save such a sinner.

Hence this is a true saying.

And it is worthy of all acceptance.

The more we see our terrible sins, the more we see how hopeless it is for us to save ourselves, so also the more we see the mercy of God in saving such unworthy sinners. Paul saw his own life as a pattern of what great things God does to the chief of sinners. May God give us grace to view ourselves in the light of that same grace.

Only then is man nothing and God everything.

And thus it must be unto all eternity.

Editorials

Editor's Notes

This issue is the last one of Volume 44. Again the Lord has given us abundant reason for thanksgiving that we might complete this forty-fourth volume of consistent and distinctive witness to the Reformed faith.

The last few pages of this issue contain the annual index for the convenience of those who like to consult past issues in their studies. This is also a reminder that it is time to place your order for a bound copy of Volume

44 if you do not have a standing order. Write to the Business Office. Past volumes, — sometimes all the way back to Volume 1, — are also available on special order. The price of bound volumes is \$5.00.

* * *

We take this opportunity to introduce to you our personable and efficient new business manager, Mr. Henry J. Vander Wal. Mr. Vander Wal is a member of First Protestant Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, and has long been associated with our radio broadcast, The Reformed Witness Hour. We wish him well in this new work, and hope that he may enjoy good relationships with our readers and supporters. We also call to your attention the new mailing address of the Business Office: P.O. Box 6064, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506. All correspondence concerning subscriptions, announcements, anniversary notices, sympathy notices, etc., should be sent to the Business Office, not to the editor.

Please observe this rule; it makes for a smoother operation.

* * *

The Publications Committee informs me that the supply of "Reformed Dogmatics" is down to 375 copies and selling rather briskly. Any of our readers who still desires a copy of this first edition will be well-advised to order it soon. The price is \$14.95, and the address is: Reformed Free Publishing Association, Box 2006, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49501.

* * *

Another bit of publication news. Work is progressing as rapidly as possible toward the publishing of "Behold, He Cometh!" This will be a one-volume edition of the late Rev. Herman Hoeksema's exposition of the Book of Revelation. Target date for our pre-publication sale is about the first of next year, D. V. Watch for more news about this.

The Erring Views of Dr. H. M. Kuitert (3)

by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

We are now ready to evaluate and criticize the views of Dr. Kuitert as set forth in his lecture on the so-called "Genesis-question."

Before proceeding with this evaluation, however, I want to call attention to one or two connected items. In the first place, since I began to write on this subject in the August 1 issue, the July-August issue of *Torch and Trumpet* has appeared. It also devotes a great amount of attention to this Kuitert issue. Possibly I will refer to this again; at the moment, however, I refer to it only to mention that what I read in *Torch and Trumpet* confirms the accuracy of my personal notes and report of Dr. Kuitert's lecture. In the second place, the July issue of the *Reflector*, published by the American Reformed Church (Liberated) also makes reference to Dr. Kuitert. This little mimeographed paper contains a complete transcription in English of a lecture given by Dr. Kuitert in the First (Bates St.) Christian Reformed Church under the sponsorship of the Dutch Immigrant Society on the subject "Changes Among the Reformed." Also to this lecture I shall probably refer later. I mention it now for two reasons. The first is that it is very helpful in understanding Dr. Kuitert's entire outlook. He wants change: change in theology and change in the entire world-and life view of the Reformed. And at least one very strong element of Kuitert's outlook is that he bids farewell to the whole idea of the antithesis. All of which leads me to think that somewhere in this entire picture there is involved to

no little degree the influence of the common grace theory, — even though the latter receives no mention. The second is that the *Reflector* quotes Dr. Kuitert as saying: "Dr. Berkouwer believes the same thing as I do but he doesn't dare to say it as frankly as I do." This tends to confirm what I wrote about "very definite overtones of Dr. Berkouwer in Kuitert's lecture." It also confirms and justifies my severe criticism of Dr. Berkouwer's "Holy Scripture," Vol. 1, in the *Prot. Ref. Theological Journal*.

But now let us turn to an evaluation of Kuitert's ideas. In this evaluation I shall follow the order of Dr. Kuitert's lecture.

Evaluation of Kuitert's View of Genesis

A careful analysis of Dr. Kuitert's lecture leads one to the conclusion that the basic issue, the matter that underlies all that he said, is not this Genesis-question, but rather his view of Scripture. And while the Genesis-question is indeed important, it should be noted that the deeper, underlying issue of the doctrine of Holy Scripture is far more important because it concerns the foundation of the entire structure of the truth. This became very clear, too, when Dr. Kuitert reached the third division of his lecture and spoke about the dogmatical implications of his view. All of this makes it a bit difficult, however, to begin our evaluation where Kuitert began his lecture and to do so without touching upon that basic issue of the doctrine of Scripture. The reader will have to bear with me in this respect. At the

same time, this order of treatment will serve, however, to underscore and clarify my later criticism of his doctrine of Scripture. As I wrote earlier, Dr. Kuitert himself says that he wants to be accepted as believing Holy Scripture. Without making any judgment about his personal faith and salvation (that, after all, is not within the purview of a dogmatical discussion), we must nevertheless face the question whether Kuitert's views are consistent with a belief of Holy Scripture.

How, then, must we evaluate Dr. Kuitert's views with respect to Genesis?

First of all, we should not overlook the important fact that Dr. Kuitert *does not hold to the doctrine of creation, but to the doctrine of evolution*. There is a danger that this is overlooked. For one thing, Kuitert himself did not pay much direct attention to this subject in the course of his lecture; and he certainly did not discuss this issue directly. If I remember correctly, he used the term "evolution" only once in the course of his lecture. Moreover, he is quoted in the *Grand Rapids Press* as holding that creation can take the form of evolution: "Why is it dishonoring God because we say creation takes the shape of evolution?" Besides, he concentrated almost entirely in this part of his lecture on his cunningly devised story of how the Genesis narrative originated and how it served as a confession of Israel's Jehovah-faith and as a teaching model. Nevertheless, it is a fact that Dr. Kuitert does not hold to the doctrine of creation. He is an evolutionist.

Notice that I do not say that he is a so-called theistic evolutionist. There may indeed be many evolutionists who claim to believe in God and to hold that God controlled the processes of evolution. Or they may claim, as Kuitert was quoted as saying, that "creation takes the shape of evolution." But this is a myth. It is utterly inconsistent. It is a contradiction in terms. Creation is not evolution, and evolution is not creation. Believing Christians should once and for all understand this and insist that the lines be drawn clearly and in an either-or manner. They should not be fooled by those who like to use the term "creation" and then to pour a different content, an evolutionistic content, into that term. That is like using the term "white" to describe the concept "black," or the term "milk" to describe the concept "poison," or the term "automobile" to describe the concept "wall," or, if you will, the term "sin" to describe the concept "grace."

You complain that this is rather blunt and radical?

I deny it. I insist that this is indeed the issue. And I insist that this becomes very clear when you analyse Kuitert's teachings. According to Kuitert, Adam and Eve never lived. According to Kuitert, the paradise narrative is not an historical account, which means it is *fiction*, pure and simple. Carry that principle a bit farther, and I insist that this is my logical right. Genesis also says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This is the same Genesis in the same

context which also teaches us that God created Adam and Eve. The same Kuitert who denies that Adam and Eve ever existed although Genesis says that they did must also apply the same rule to the same Genesis which teaches that God created the heavens and the earth. In fact, this line may legitimately be drawn, — must, in fact, be drawn, according to every rule of exegesis, — with respect to all the details of Genesis 1 and the six days of creation. What is the conclusion? You can put it in two words: NO CREATION.

Did this become clear in any other ways from Dr. Kuitert's remarks? Yes, in the first place, it is very striking to me that when Dr. Kuitert made the point that we must read the Genesis story as proclamation, *kerugma*, rather than as a journalistic account containing historical data, he did not even include the truth of God's creative work in this so-called "proclamation." According to my notes, this proclamation is: that creation is good; that we are the guilty ones; that man was meant to be God's representative, God's image-bearer; and that God does not give up on man even if he is a sinner. Notice that the truth that God created the heavens and the earth is conspicuous by its absence from this "proclamation." Now let us understand clearly the implications of this. It means nothing less than that you can believe the gospel (this is, after all, the meaning of "proclamation") without believing that God created the heavens and the earth and all that they contain.

Did it become still more clear from Dr. Kuitert's lecture? Yes, for my second piece of evidence in this regard I refer you to the third part of his lecture, concerning the dogmatical implications of his view. According to Kuitert, we must abandon the historical scheme of creation, the fall, redemption. We see at this point how completely divergent Kuitert's view is. Essentially, it has nothing in common with our Reformed faith. Whence is this? Of what is it the fruit? It is the fruit of Kuitert's view of Genesis. He denies creation. Because he denies creation, he must deny the fall as an historical fact. Because he denies the fall, he denies sin. And because he denies sin, he must necessarily deny redemption and grace. O, I know: he uses the *terms*. But this is the insidious part of it. And remember, that just as Kuitert does not mean creation when he speaks of creation, so he does not mean what we mean, and, more importantly, what the Bible means, when he speaks of sin and of redemption.

Finally, on this point, we must remember that this entire dispute comes down to the question of *Scripture*. If Kuitert wants to teach that "creation takes the shape of evolution," then he must show us from Scripture and by clear and unassailable exegesis of Scripture that this teaching has in it all the authority of Scripture's "Thus saith the Lord!" Then, and then only, will I believe it; and then we *must* all believe it. But with this "Thus saith the Lord" Kuitert does not come. Both according

to his lecture and according to the reported interview in the *Grand Rapids Press*, Kuitert comes with "Thus saith science." I quote: "On the matter of creation he said, 'We should listen to the scientists. Why is it dishonoring God because we say creation takes the shape of evolution? What about the fossils and earth layers?' " I will return to this later; but I am afraid, dreadfully afraid, that Kuitert has no Bible left. To him the Bible is only the personal opinion and the personal interpretation of the human authors of the Bible.

This brings me to my second main point of criticism, namely: *Dr. Kuitert offered absolutely no Scriptural and no exegetical proof for his theories at any point, but instead rested his entire case on so-called science.* I have already referred to this briefly at various points in my report of his lecture. Let me point this out in detail:

1) Dr. Kuitert stated flatly that we must discard the traditional view (the literal interpretation) of Genesis. What was the reason? Did he furnish a Scripturally grounded and well-reasoned exegetical foundation for this radical claim? Not at all. He criticized this view as being from the 17th and 18th centuries. Even this is not true, of course; the literal interpretation is much, much older than this. But my point is that this is not a proper argument. It is not a Scriptural argument.

2) He stated that the Genesis account had its origin in various accounts of the origin of things which were current among the heathen nations of that time. Now I will believe this the moment that anyone furnishes me with indisputable proof that it is true. I cannot accept any man's cunningly devised theory. And to me, — and thus it ought to be for any theologian worthy of the name; yea, for any believer, — indisputable proof means proof with the infinite weight of authority of "Thus saith the Lord." Scriptural proof, exegetical proof, is what we need. Kuitert did not furnish it. In fact, he did not even attempt to furnish proof of *any* kind for this claim. He merely made a claim.

3) The same is true of all that Kuitert said about inspiration and about the manner of inspiration and about Genesis being a teaching model and not a journalistic account. Not only did the doctor not explain his radical theories in very much detail; not only is he guilty of presenting a caricature of the Reformed view of inspiration when he suggested that some hold that it means a "dropping out of the blue;" but he is also guilty of the cardinal error which no theologian ought ever to commit. He failed completely to back up his theories with Scripture and with exegesis.

4) What is Kuitert's starting-point, and what is his method? His starting-point is not Scripture, but *science*. We must listen to the scientists. You cannot talk the fossils out of existence. What about the earth layers? The reader must understand that I am not denying that we may ask about fossils and earth layers, etc., etc. This is not the point. Dr. Kuitert is not reasoning from fossils, earth layers, and whatever else may be men-

tioned in this connection. He is reasoning from certain scientists' *interpretations* of fossils and earth layers. Some scientists have concluded from these things that the universe is millions and billions of years old and that it is the product of a process of evolution. Kuitert begins here. Then he comes into conflict with the testimony of Scripture in Genesis. And he attempts to avoid this conflict by accommodating the testimony of Scripture to the views of science, or rather, scientism. This is a very common ploy of theologians who bow before the idol of scientism. But it is a most fundamental error of method. It is the reverse of what it ought to be. The rule ought to be: first Scripture, and all other things in the light of Scripture. Kuitert's rule is obviously: first science's claims, and Scripture in the light of those claims. Let me emphasize this: even if I had no answer to the claims of scientism and could reach no satisfactory explanation of such things as fossils and earth layers, I and every believer must hold to what Scripture says and not be tempted to accommodate Scripture to what the scientists claim; and we must do this even if the whole world calls us fools!

But here again, the basic question is Kuitert's view of Scripture. The fundamental question is: whence is Scripture? And the real point in this question concerns the much talked about "human factor" or "human element" in the Bible. This we will discuss later.

My third point of criticism is that though there is much talk about the new theology and the new hermeneutics in this connection, *there is basically nothing new in Kuitert's presentation, but it is merely an old theory with a few new twists.* In the first place, the basic issue concerning the historical reality of the things described in Genesis was in the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands once upon a time settled in the Dr. Geelkerken case by Assen, 1926, with its "sensuously perceptible" formula. The trouble is that certain theologians in the Netherlands agitated long enough that the Synod of Lunteren abandoned the position of Assen. Some, Editor Haverkamp of *De Wachter* among them, may try to comfort themselves that Lunteren nevertheless maintained the position of the Belgic Confession on Scripture; but this is totally unrealistic. It is realistic to say that it was exactly the agitation of men like Kuitert which led to the cancellation of Assen's formula. It is realistic to say that Lunteren officially opened the door for theories like those of Kuitert. It is realistic to say that the current opinion in the Netherlands is and will be that views like those of Kuitert are legitimately within the confines of the Reformed doctrine of Scripture as set forth in our Confession of Faith, Articles 4 and 5, properly interpreted. In the second place, in the broader context of the history of dogma what Kuitert presents is not essentially new, but old. Both his view of Genesis and his theory of Scripture's being a synthesis of heathen myths are old. They are theories which, especially under

the influence of German rationalism, were introduced into the churches centuries ago. The churches have fought this battle before. But the enemy does not give up. He gives the lie a slightly new garb and perhaps a more palatable format, especially by the device of speaking of "proclamation;" and thus he has succeeded in bringing the fortress of the Reformed faith into dire jeopardy. What has happened? Instead of heeding the injunction of Hebrews 6: 1 to leave the principles of the

doctrine of Christ, and to go unto perfection, the Reformed churches today are busy questioning and undermining the very first principles of the faith, the a-b-c's of Christian doctrine.

Be not deceived! Even if it becomes necessary to stand as a very small but faithful minority, let us not be swept along by this swelling tide of false doctrine. Let us stand on the intolerant truth!

All Around Us

Prof. H. Hanko

PETER'S BONES

Pope Paul VI announced a few weeks ago that the bones of Peter had been discovered. His announcement read: "For our part, we believe it our duty — in the present state of archeological and scientific conclusions — to give you and the church this happy announcement, bound as we are to honor sacred relics, backed by reliable proof of their authenticity."

The tradition upon which Rome relies claims that Peter traveled to Rome where he was crucified with his head down by Nero somewhere between 64 and 67 A.D. This same tradition claims that he was buried in a common cemetery where later the Emperor Constantine built the first basilica of Saint Peter.

This is an important link in the evidence that the bones discovered belong indeed to Saint Peter. An archeologist of the Romish Church led a team which found the bones in 1953 in a Vatican storeroom. They were placed there some years earlier by a group which had unearthed many bones under the basilica in 1940. The proof that these bones belonged to the apostle is based upon writings around the tomb wall where the name of Peter was found and where a rudely scrawled inscription read: "Peter is within." But the proof is very weak. The bones were admittedly found in a common cemetery, and the only proof that these bones are Peter's is the presence of Constantine's basilica. But it is not even known with certainty whether Constantine built the basilica; and it is quite certain that Constantine had no idea at all where the bones of Peter were. The answer to this given by the archeologists is simply: "Do you think that Constantine would have been such a fool as to build a tomb for the wrong bones?" The answer for anyone who is acquainted with Constantine is: "Yes, indeed."

This is more than a pious fraud and is indicative of the utter foolishness which still pervades the Romish Church.

THE CHURCH'S ABSURDITY IN SOCIAL ACTION

The First Presbyterian Church in Chicago takes her social calling seriously. Under her minister, Rev. John R. Fry, the Church has taken part in the distribution of a \$927,000 anti-poverty grant intended to give the poor job training. It has done its work particularly among the Rangers, one of the biggest gangs of hoodlums on Chicago's South Side. The Church has spent about \$25,000 in bail bonds and legal fees alone to help Rangers when they run afoul of the law.

At a recent U.S. Senate Subcommittee meeting, chaired by Senator John McClellan, testimony was given which indicated that the Church had become a place where the Rangers "laid around, goofed around, smoked pot, gambled, drank, and cleaned guns" and planned "armed revolution." This testimony included some evidence that Rev. Fry had himself given orders for the killing of a dope peddler. The charges are, of course, denied by the minister. But the fact is that, on a police raid, fifty-eight weapons were found in the Church building. Fry had promised to turn the weapons over to police but had not done so. His excuse was that the police had refused protection from a rival gang. Fry's sympathies are all with the hoodlums. He charges the police of robbing young men of their manhood, of acting in such a way that insurrection becomes mandatory and obligatory if one is to remain honorable. He has also charged that white America and the Church are guilty of "monstrous crimes" against blacks and that the responsibility for the present urban crisis rests completely on violent white law and order.

Leaders in the Presbyterian Church and in the National Council of Christian Churches have hastened to Fry's defense.

There is a sad and bitter irony here. Not only has the Church abandoned the gospel in favor of social action, but rather than making their vaunted social action an instrument of spreading the gospel, as they claim is their

intention, the Church itself becomes guilty of the same conduct as renegades from society and common hoodlums who make war against God-appointed authorities. The result of this sort of thing can only be disaster for the Church and for the country.

QUESTIONS OF CHURCH PROPERTY

The Supreme Court of the United States has agreed to hear the case of two Savannah congregations which left the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (Southern) charging "revolutionary, fundamental, unlawful, and radical diversion from the Presbyterian faith."

These two churches had been granted legal right to the property by the Georgia Supreme Court although under the Presbyterian system of church government used in that denomination a congregation which leaves the denomination forfeits all right to that property. So the Supreme Court will have to rule on whether these two congregations which left because of liberalism may keep their property even though the rules of the denomination say otherwise.

There are far-reaching issues at stake in the matter.

For one thing, the Supreme Court has precedent decisions which bar the highest court in the land from entering into the internal and doctrinal affairs of the individual denominations. The precedent is that the highest ecclesiastical assemblies rule with finality on all these matters, and the courts must accept these rulings.

But the two congregations charged basic doctrinal deviations from the creedal and historical stand of the denomination especially in the field of civil rights, civil disobedience and the war in Viet Nam. The Georgia Supreme Court ruled they could maintain their property and agreed that the departures from church doctrine were substantial. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the two congregations in the face of the precedent defined above on the grounds that the departure had been "absolute." There is precedent for this in a decision of 1907 made by the Georgia Supreme Court.

The whole case has sent cold shudders down the spines of Protestant leaders. In their push for ecumenism, they had counted heavily on the power which was theirs over possession of church property. They have always proceeded cautiously in their ecumenical endeavors and waited with action until they could have favorable decisions from the higher ecclesiastical bodies. Then they could expect that almost all the individual churches would follow their leadership down the ecumenical road because they held the club of church property over their heads. Any congregation which refused to go along would automatically lose its property to the denomination. Few congregations have the moral and spiritual stamina to make such a choice.

But now this could be changed. If the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Georgia ruling, any congregation which could prove basic doctrinal change could retain

its own property no matter what the parent denomination did. There are many, many local congregations itching to leave their denominations because of apostasy who would jump at such an opportunity. No wonder ecumenical leaders are getting nervous chills. Their dream for denominational unity would be badly shattered and their drive for one denomination would receive a fatal blow. Their leverage over local congregations would be gone.

The ruling will be made, after hearings, this Fall.

THE ROCKY ROAD TO SAINTHOOD

Many millions of Roman Catholics want to make Pope John XXIII a saint. The road is a long one. Beatification is the first of two lengthy processes on that road. The second process leads to canonization. But beatification itself involves three steps. First of all local tribunals set up where a candidate was born, lived and died, gather evidence for a preliminary hearing. They weigh all the evidence, organize it and send it to Rome. There the evidence is scrutinized and an attempt is made to refute it by a "devil's advocate." If the case survives, it must be approved by the Congregation of Rites — a group of cardinals and by the pope.

The next step involves the establishment of the candidate's "heroic virtue." A postulator tries to establish this while a devil's advocate tries to destroy it. A brief is written, submitted to the cardinals and the Pope once again. If accepted the Church is ready for the third step.

The third step requires that the validity of two miracles be established. This validity is only after a three-fold examination. Pope John is this far along the road that the possibility of miracles is being investigated. But now a 23 year old novice of a religious order has come up with some proof. She was dying of cancer. Last minute and desperate surgery failed to help. The last rites of the Church were given and she was prepared for death which seemed but days away. Her fellow sisters prayed to Pope John. At about 2:30 P.M. on May 25, 1966 an attending nun saw that her condition was hopeless. But a few minutes later the dying sister saw Pope John next to the bed. He laid his hand on her stomach and said: "Now don't be afraid. Everything is over. You are well. Ring the bell and call the sisters from the chapel. You have no fever. You will eat normally. The wound is closed. Have the doctor come, have him write his testimony, have X-rays taken — because one day they will be useful." The result was a complete cure including the immediate healing of the latest surgical incision. The sister is alive and well today.

The interesting part of it is that Pope John, in this appearance, took considerable care to insure his own canonization by reminding the sister to prepare evidence of the miracle. I do not ever read of the apostles doing this.

ACTIVITIES OF CONCERNED PRESBYTERIANS

Although last year's president of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church US (Southern) asked the Concerned Presbyterians to disband, they voted to continue their existence. This group of laymen within the Church fighting for the historic stand of the Church, will in fact, step up its activities. Two matters will occupy most of their attention. The first matter is the proposal to permit union synods and presbyteries within the United Presbyterian Church USA. This

proposal will allow for any presbytery or local Synod to unite with presbyteries and synods of other denominations without the approval of the General Assembly. It has been called "a back-door merger."

The other matter will be the union with the Reformed Church of America. While the Concerned Presbyterians will not officially come out either for or against this proposed merger, they will circulate material weighing the pros and cons. The hope is that this will aid the churches in reaching final decision on the matter.

Trying the Spirits

The Sources and End of Violence and Revolution

Rev. Robt. C. Harbach

A philosopher is supposed to have said, "Let me write the songs of a people, and I care not who makes their laws." Most of the songs of the people of today are inspired of the devil. With *his* songs so popular, what does he care about "*their* laws?" They are completely his captives. Suppose the above quotation had been made by Pete Seeger, folk singer, identified as a member of the Communist Party by the House Committee on Un-American Activities, Annual Report for the Year 1961, p. 43. We would in that event have no trouble getting his drift. No "brother" could smother his meaning. For he is known for his "striking and at times vicious commentary on the American way of life" (Easton, Pa., *Express*, 6-17-63). Suppose, however, that David, the sweet singer of Israel, had said this, explaining, "I care not who makes their laws, whether Pharaoh or Nebuchadnezzar." The people of God would, nevertheless, stand immovable on Christ the Rock. Now suppose this was said by one of those in our government pushing legislation for "general and complete disarmament." He and the pacifist would probably mean by it, "Let me direct the thoughts of a people, and I care not who dictates to their military forces." The way things are going in this direction, we almost expect to hear soon the news that our armed forces, if not entirely withdrawn and disbanded, refuse any longer to fight in Viet Nam or to stand by in Europe. All this only proves that "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" and, "out of the heart are the issues of life."

What a man is also depends on what is his answer to the question, "What think ye of Christ?" A Christian man once said, "Tell me what a man thinks of Christ, and I will tell you how he treats his wife." Some men have depicted Christ as a clown. Would they not then make miserable husbands and incompetent ecclesiastics? Since they have such a strong influence on these very

ecclesiastics, what do the Communists think of Christ? Back in 1932 a "National Religion and Labor Foundation" was organized to spread Communist propaganda within Jewish, Catholic and Protestant churches. Its bulletin, "Economic Justice," with names of its staff including those of Toyohiko Kagawa, Mahatma Gandhi and W.A. Visser 't Hooft, published a "wanted" poster portraying Christ as guilty of "sedition, anarchy, vagrancy and conspiracy to overthrow the government," describing Him as an "alien, a Jew, a professional agitator, having a Red (sic) beard, marks on hands and feet the result of injuries inflicted by an angry mob led by respectable citizens and legal authorities." It is plain from the Communist *Manifesto* that Red propaganda fomented hate, brutality and violence. The ecclesiastical liberals seem to have been blind to this fact, or were foolish enough to be misled to believe that the principles of revolution, social, political, economic and religious, could be put into effect by a gradualism free of those self-destructive evils.

Modern liberalism has its philosophical background in Darwinian evolutionism, which is godless, naturalistic, materialistic; in the Nietzschean philosophy of Hitler, and in the Hegelian thought of Marx. It lauds the latter. Marx himself said of Darwin's Natural Selection, "this is the book which contains the basis in natural science for our view." Out of this thought comes the view that man is essentially an animal. Man is a product, not of nature's God, but of nature. God and nature are identified. Man and nature are also identified. The inference is that Man is the only god, and he is principally a brute beast. He therefore is to be treated as such. It is the strategy of those who love most to direct the masses to appeal to hatred as an incitement to violence. Give the people an object of hate and they can be steamed into seething action. The Marxian principle

acts on the assumption that the mob is bestial, will always behave like a beast, must be goaded as a beast, controlled and rewarded as a beast.

But this is not true of all men, certainly not of the new man in Christ, yet is true enough of the natural man. Peter throws light on this when he says, "But these, as natural brute beasts, made (born) to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of (blaspheme) the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption" (II Pet. 2:12, AV). This, put a little more clearly, may be expressed, "These men are like brute beasts, born in the course of nature to be caught and killed. They pour abuse upon things they do not understand; like the beasts, they will perish, suffering hurt for the hurt they have inflicted" (NEB). The whole human race seems on the verge of a full-fledged massive revolt. Such a movement has been long in widespread preparation. The philosophy of evolution has contributed to this philosophy of revolution, with its degrading and dehumanizing of man. Thus together with the effects of the atheistic philosophies there results a brutalizing of men in a self-centered materialistic life motivated by self-centered materialistic thought. What has happened to man has been well expressed by a farmer and teacher* in Oregon, who asked,

"Who made him dead to rapture and despair,
A thing that grieves not and that never hopes,
Stolid and stunned a brother to the ox?

"Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
... Whose breath blew out the light within his brain?
... This monstrous thing distorted and soul-quenched?"

Who made man dead to God and good? Who made him incapable of any good and prone to all evil? Who made him despise knowledge and righteousness? Who made him insensitive to love for God and love to the neighbor? Who made him a prey to the agitators for strife? Who led him down the road to anarchy where he deludes himself into thinking that he can do as he pleases, burn, rob, steal or kill? Who but those who corrupted him with the doubt, "Yea, hath God said?" Who but those who oil him with the perversion, "God is dead"! Who but those who whisper to him the lie, "there is no God"! Who but those who worm into his brain the suggestion that Christianity is "out" and the New Morality "in," that the church is a failure, that it died in its sleep! Who but those who embolden him to scoff at God and scorn His Word!

Judging from both the evolutionism of Communism's dialectical materialism and that of America's public schools, colleges and universities, the god of naturalism is a "super brute" with a heart of a gorilla and the brain of a mammoth computer, which as Nietzsche taught, would come out of the earth, a "superman," the antichrist. He would operate the world George Orwell fashion like a giant animal farm, controlled by beasts "with the brains of engineers." This, it is maintained,

follows from the fact that nature is governed and controlled by physical force. The universe is sustained by physical powers. Evolution is a continuous progressive change, according to the laws of nature, by means of resident forces. It is only natural that the ruling power of human society should be physical force. Law must be an expression of force. It takes force to execute the law. Man by law must be made to love his neighbor. Love and brotherhood must be legislated and enforced if they are to be realities. If a man cannot integrate with society and contribute to making civilization one great "love in," the law must banish him to the American "Siberia," Alaska.

The Beast will come to do these and worse things to men. His power shall be great, but not by force of arms. He shall cause fearful destruction; he shall make monstrous claims and shall succeed in his policy, destroying his powerful enemies. His designs shall be directed against the saints, and he shall ply his intrigues successfully. By proud plans of peace he shall plot the ruin of many. He shall even rise up against the Prince of princes, but by a stroke from no human hand he shall be shattered. He shall be one on whom the royal honor has not been conferred, but he shall come in peaceably and gain the kingdom by flatteries. Armies shall be utterly swept away before him and devastated. As soon as anyone becomes his ally, he begins to deceive and outwit him, for he rises to power only by the aid of a small power. This king shall do as he pleases; he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, uttering amazing boasts against the God of gods. He shall succeed until the divine wrath has run its course. (For what has been decreed must be fulfilled). He shall not give heed to any other god, for he shall exalt himself above all. (Dan. 8:23-25; 11:21-24, 36, 37).

Then heathen Gog and Magog will break from his antichristian world empire in havoc-making revolt.

"When whirlwinds of rebellion shake all shores . . .

When this dumb Terror shall rise to judge the world!"*

"For God has put it into their heads to carry out His purpose by making common cause and conferring their sovereignty upon the Beast until all that God has spoken is fulfilled." Then "they together with the Beast will come to hate the great city, the mighty city of Babylon; with violence shall Babylon be thrown down, and they will strip her naked and leave her desolate, and they will batten on her flesh and burn her to ashes! They will wage war upon the Lamb, but the Lamb will defeat them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and His victory will be shared by His followers, called and chosen and faithful." (Rev. 17:17, 16; 18:10; 17:14, NEB). Then "violence shall no more be heard in thy land." (Isa. 60:18) But "of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end . . . The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this!" (8:7).

*Edwin Markham, in his poem, *The Man with the Hoe*.

In His Fear

A CHILDLIKE FAITH

Rev. John A. Heys

It was Jesus Himself Who said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me." Matthew 18:3,4,5.

These words were spoken in answer to the question of the disciples, "Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

Man, therefore, should beware lest he corrupt this truth by his inherent tendency to put himself before God in our salvation by teaching a conversion that takes place outside of the kingdom, and that is the prerequisite for entrance. But he should also take heed and be on his guard lest, in his fight for the glory of God and insistence that God is the Alpha of our salvation as well as of our creation, he lose the main thrust of the text and the practical beauty of it.

We need not deal at length with the argument that the text can grammatically be read correctly by the words, "Except a man convert himself . . ." The text does not merely say that we must convert ourselves but also that we must become as little children. And no man makes himself a little child or as a little child by his own works and initiative. A child is born according to the will of others and by the work of others. He is not in this world to cause his own birth but is born *into* this world. And we are not in a position spiritually to cause ourselves to enter into the kingdom of heaven by an act performed outside of that kingdom, but are born in it; and then we can in that kingdom convert ourselves. Until and unless the life of that kingdom is already in us we cannot convert ourselves and humble ourselves as little children.

Then, too, we have those other words of Jesus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. The word here actually is "be born from above" and means "again" only because we have once been born from below. It means, therefore, that except a man be born with life from out of that kingdom of heaven he cannot see the kingdom of heaven. And if he cannot see it, how can he then convert himself according to its way of life and walk? How shall one who cannot see the kingdom and its children humble himself after the pattern of these children? How can the blind imitate the actions of one

whom he cannot observe in his antics? How shall he who has not yet the spiritual life of that kingdom do the spiritual acts of that kingdom? Before the rebirth we do only the works of the old life. And Jesus does not mean to contradict Himself or spout forth nonsense in regard to the works of His kingdom.

We do wish to deal with the matter of a conscious entering into that kingdom in the way of converting ourselves and of becoming as little children. For we have seen such childlike faith; and it was pleasant to behold. Thus far we have spent over five weeks on the island of Jamaica and have preached in fifteen churches from the eastern to the western end of the island. In several of these churches we conducted services more than once. And it is the distance involved that limited us thus far to preach no more often than four times a week, twice on Sunday and once on Wednesday evening and once on Thursday evening. The very closest church to our somewhat centralized location in Montego Bay is an hour's drive over the mountains. Last week Sunday, July 28, we left at 6 in the morning for a river baptism at Hope Hill at 8 o'clock that morning. Then followed a climb by foot — we had already made a very steep ascent with the car as far as the car could go — that lasted from 20 to 30 minutes. For the ladies it was an unforgettable climb after an impressive baptism by immersion of nine young people ranging in age from fourteen years upward. The sermon was not delivered till after twelve o'clock; and we did not get back to our car for a light lunch until after 2 P.M. We then travelled back somewhat in the direction of "home" and had an evening service at Belmont and arrived "home" a little after ten to have our "evening" meal. Food is not the big problem on a day like that, however. It is water or liquid of some kind. But we do find it difficult to tear ourselves away from the people even when we have hunger and thirst for material bread and water. There is a childlike faith manifested, and this year we have enjoyed so much more personal, direct, intimate contact with the people than before, because our schedule allowed more without the regularly conducted courses of last year. There is fruit to be seen upon that "schooling" which we conducted and we still believe it was essential and beneficial. But it is so rewarding and pleasant also to mingle with the people of these three ministers to the greater degree that this year afforded.

Rather than to go into detail in regard to the many,

many experiences which were ours, let us point out one of them which occasioned the penning of the title above. That these are sincere children of God we want you to believe. That they are thoroughly Protestant Reformed and understand in any great detail the Reformed Faith we would not dare to say. They have tasted it. They have reacted to it with gladness and have asked for more. There is much work to be done here and a big field in which to work. That we believe. It is their Sunday School method and attendance to which we refer at the moment. Sunday School is attended by young and old. Little children from five years upward and aged grandfathers and grandmothers sit together while the lesson is being explained. Now you must appreciate the fact that most of the older people have never had the opportunity to learn to read or to write. They are cut off from the Bible as the written Word of God as far as having it in their homes for reading, study and reference is concerned. But they are not too proud to be taught that Word, and they have keen minds for remembering it. We have a tape of one of the sessions which we may be able to play at home, the Lord willing, after our return. But it is the old and time tested method of repetition. The text and where it is found is repeated over and over and over again until it is fixed in the minds of the little ones who cannot read yet, and in the minds of the elder pupils who must have it read to them.

The thought struck us of a childlike faith when at one Sunday School the chapter of the Sunday School lesson was read by the pupils. Each child in turn read his verse. When an adult — perhaps well in the seventies (although ages deceive you among these Jamaicans, and we visited a lady over 100 years old who certainly did not look that old) — who could not read was next, he was not passed by. The Word of God is also for him. And so the ministers, in this case Rev. Ruddock, read the verse for him, and in childlike faith that wanted to enter into the mysteries and joys of the kingdom he then recited aloud the verse read as his contribution to the reading of the chapter. This was done time and again by others.

We can have our pride which keeps us away from the services because we do not want others to see that we cannot read. Our pride can insist that we will not take a back seat for children some fifty years younger than we. But a childlike faith is interested in the kingdom and has the desire to learn more of the Word of God — and do not forget that this is the only way that they can have that contact with God's Word and can get it written into their souls.

Incidentally this is one of the problems here also in the preaching. The limited knowledge of what God's Word contains, the ignorance of the history of God's Church from Paradise to the journeys of the apostle Paul make it difficult. We are reminded of the words of the apostle himself, and also of what the author of the epistle to the Hebrews wrote. These are truly children of

God who need milk and are not ready for the most part for the meat. And they need the sincere milk of the word as new born babes. I Peter 2:2. There is need for us to come to them to give them that milk. Although the poor seldom get a drop of cow's milk to drink, they can get plenty of spiritual milk that is corrupt, adulterated and is strong spiritual poison. The lie has been here long before the truth. They have heard the truth from us; and in childlike faith they have received it, even though they do not fully understand it. We have, by God's grace, been able to give them a richer diet of the truth and to open up to them the mysteries of the kingdom. In childlike faith they have received and not once contradicted us on any point or questioned our teachings. At times it has gone over their heads; and they were not able to chew it and digest it; but from what we have seen, their attitude towards our richer heritage of truth has always been one of childlike faith.

And to come back to Jesus' words, is that not what He demands? Is the gospel not very simple? We need not become dogmatists, professors of theology to enter the kingdom. What then of the Israelites who likewise could not read and write? What of the thief on the cross whose education in the mysteries of the kingdom was also very limited, and there were no more days for him to be instructed. It was a childlike faith that made him cry out, after a period of railing with the other — see Matthew 27:44 — "Lord, remember me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom." Of course we must rightly know God and must not have a childlike faith in a false god. We need to study the Word of God and to gain as rich a conception of Him as we possibly can. We may not be mental slouches. We in this day and age of the printed page and of the full revelation of God in His Word may not despise these gifts and be satisfied with a crumb of the Bread of Life when there is so much more and such richer dainties in the Word for us.

Yet the fact remains that without a childlike faith we shall not enter into the kingdom. We must take God at His Word, as a child without question receives what he is taught. We may not have any mental reservations as far as what God says. We may and often must question what man teaches. But as we said a moment ago, the gospel is very simple. And the cry of the regenerated for salvation is also very simple and uncomplicated. Peter simply cried out when the waves began to swallow him, "Lord save me!" The publican in Jesus' parable cried in a very uncomplicated way, "God be merciful to me the sinner." Paul told the Philippian jailer in simple language, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." And Jesus' sermons are very simple. His parables are very uncomplicated. And the believers on this island express their faith also in simple language. At the river baptism these young candidates standing in the water gave a word of testimony in simple language of why they desired to be immersed in baptism. The songs

of these people express in simple language their childlike trust in God. There is something so refreshing about this simple, childlike approach and trust in God's promises. And of such is the kingdom of heaven.

There is, therefore, also the urgent need to preach and to teach the truth here. For Arminianism and all

free-willism are proud and have not the beginning of a childlike faith. A childlike faith puts God first, depends upon Him for all the things of this life and of salvation and thanks Him for a salvation that is full and free. A childlike faith confesses that God is our Father and that we owe our life from beginning to the end unto Him.

Contending for the Faith

THE DOCTRINE OF SIN

The Second Period— 250-730 A.D.

The Pelagian Controversy

The Augustinian System

Rev. H. Veldman

We are nearing the end of our discussion of the Augustinian system of sin and grace and that church father's opposition to and rejection of the Pelagian conception of sin and grace. We noted in our preceding article that according to Augustine grace is, first of all, absolutely necessary; secondly, it is wholly unmerited, inasmuch as man can do nothing good without grace and is therefore incapable of deserving grace; and, thirdly, it is irresistible in its effect, not in the way of physical constraint imposed on the will, but as a moral power which makes man willing, and which infallibly attains its end, the conversion and final perfection of its subjects.

Finally, however, according to Schaff, Vol. III 849-850, Augustine also taught that the grace of God works *progressively* or by *degrees*:

Grace, finally, works *progressively* or by *degrees*. It removed all the consequences of the fall; but it removes them in an order agreeable to the finite, gradually unfolding nature of the believer. Grace is a foster-mother, who for the greatest good of her charge, wisely and lovingly accommodates herself to his necessities as they change from time to time. Augustine gives different names to grace in these different steps of its development. In overcoming the resisting will, and imparting knowledge of sin and longing for redemption, grace is *gratia praeveniens* or *praeparans*, preparing grace. In creating faith and the free will to do good, and uniting the soul to Christ, it is *gratia operans*, operating grace. Joining with the emancipated will to combat the remains of evil, and

bringing forth good works as fruits of faith, it is *gratia cooperans*, cooperating grace. Finally, in enabling the believer to persevere in faith to the end, and leading him at length, though not in this life, to the perfect state, in which he can no longer sin nor die, it is *gratia perficiens*, the grace that finishes and completes even unto the end. This includes the *donum perseverantiae*, the gift of perseverance, which is the only certain token of election. "We call ourselves elect, or children of God, because we so call all those whom we see regenerate, visibly leading a holy life. But he alone is in truth what he is called, who perseveres in that from which he receives the name." Therefore so long as a man yet lives, we can form no certain judgment of him in this respect. Perseverance till death, i.e., to the point where the danger of apostasy ceases, is emphatically a grace, "since it is much harder to possess this gift of grace than any other; though for him to whom nothing is hard, it is as easy to bestow the one as the other."

And as to *the relation of grace to freedom*: Neither excludes the other, though they might appear to conflict. In Augustine's system freedom, or self-determination to good, is the correlative in man of grace on the part of God. The more grace, the more freedom to do good, and the more joy in the good. The two are one in the idea of love, which is objective and subjective, passive and active, an apprehending and a being apprehended.

And so the Augustinian conception of sin and grace stands absolutely over against all pelagianism. The pelagian denies original sin, guilt and the power of sin, and sets forth the heresy that man is either good or evil

as he chooses to be good or bad. Whereas the Scriptures declare that man does the evil because he *is* evil, pelagianism teaches that the sinner is what he is as the choice of his own free will. As far as our primitive state is concerned, our original state, Augustine taught that man was created in perfection. As far as our state of sin is concerned, he taught that man is completely alienated from God, is in the bondage of sin and death. And as far as our redemption is concerned, he set forth the Scriptural teaching that we are redeemed solely by grace, and through this grace attain unto the blessed freedom of the children of God. Here, in this life, we are clogged with the remains of sin and death, but in the hereafter we shall be absolutely perfect, without the possibility of apostasy.

In connection with the teachings of Augustine, we wish to make in conclusion the following two observations. In his notes on the History of Dogma, Rev. H. Hoeksema writes the following:

It is worthy of note that Augustine, over against Pelagius, taught that the so-called virtues of the heathen and unbelievers are essentially nothing but vices. Pelagius highly praised these so-called virtues of the heathen, because he wanted to maintain that the Lord gives His grace not to those whom He wills, but to those that are worthy of acceptance. These virtues, however, according to Augustine, are in reality nothing but vicious sins, whereby the one sin restrains the other. A clear illustration of this is found in misers, whose lust for money controls all the other lusts. And thus it is essentially with all sinners, even with the great and illustrious among the Romans. When these not infrequently suppressed evil lusts, and performed, according to the evaluation of men, praiseworthy deeds, they were motivated by the sin of vain ambition, which over-ruled and controlled all the other lusts. For that reason the so-called virtues of the natural man must be called rather vices than virtues. Even when unbelievers practice chastity in marriage, they are motivated by the sinful desire to avoid all kinds of evil effects. Sins as such are not restrained. And when in some cases they endure hardships, the word of Scripture must be applied, that false wisdom is natural, earthly, devilish. Cf. "De Predestinatieleer van Augustinus, Thomas van Aquinas, en Calvijn," Dr. A.D. R. Polman, p. 77. From this it will be evident that even though one may appeal with a semblance of justice to Calvin for the view that these virtues of the unbelievers are gifts of common grace, this doctrine certainly does not go back to Augustine.

Rev. H. Hoeksema, in these notes on the History of Dogma, also writes of Augustine the following:

We must understand that in his struggle against Pelagius, Augustine, in the deepest sense of the word, was concerned about God's sovereign predestination. In the views of Pelagius he saw the denial of God's sovereign grace, and hence, also the denial of predestination. This was his chief motive in combatting the views of Pelagius. This is denied by some. Many claim that the question did not concern so much the

truth of *sovereign* grace as the truth that grace is entirely unmerited. But this is not correct. Augustine could not even have understood, still less justified, such a distinction. For him, sovereign grace must also be unmerited grace, and unmerited grace is necessarily sovereign grace. He clearly discerned the inseparable connection between the two. And at the same time, he also clearly understood the inseparable connection between the truth that man is by nature totally depraved and the truth of predestination. Hence, in his strife against Pelagius he was concerned with the electing grace of God. To election as the deepest background he appeals, when he combats Pelagius' denial of original sin. In his arguments on this score he proceeds from the truth of Scripture that all have sinned in Adam, that in Adam they are all damnable before God and could justly have been punished with eternal death, even though among men there was no other sin than original sin.

That Augustine should see in the view of Pelagius the denial of God's sovereign predestination need not surprise us. It lies in the very nature of the case that the doctrine of sovereign predestination and that of man's utter depravity are inseparably connected. Although this church father did not fully understand these doctrines during the early years of his life, he surely did understand them later in his life and during his struggle with Pelagius. He was about sixty years old when his struggle with Pelagius began. And he had been prepared for this conflict, personally and spiritually, when the Lord had called him out of sin and darkness into His marvellous light.

SEMI-PELAGIANISM

We will now call attention to what is known as semi-pelagianism. The development of semi-pelagianism need not surprise us. Concerning this development Schaff has the following introductory remarks, Vol. III, 857 f.f:

Semi-Pelagianism is a somewhat vague and indefinite attempt at reconciliation, hovering midway between the sharply marked systems of Pelagius and Augustine, taking off the edge of each, and inclining now to the one, now to the other. The name was introduced during the scholastic age, but the system of doctrine, in all essential points, was formed in Southern France, in the fifth century, during the latter years of Augustine's life and soon after his death. It proceeded from the combined influence of the pre-Augustinian synergism and monastic legalism. Its leading idea is, that divine grace and the human will jointly accomplish the work of conversion and sanctification, and that ordinarily man must take the first step. It rejects the Pelagian doctrine of moral soundness of man, but rejects also the Augustinian doctrine of the entire corruption and bondage of the natural man, and substitutes the idea of a diseased or crippled state of the voluntary power. It disowns the Pelagian conception of grace as a mere auxiliary; but also, quite as decidedly, the Augustinian doctrines of the sover-

eignty, irresistibility, and limitation of grace; and affirms the necessary and the internal operation of grace with and through human agency, a general atonement through Christ, and a predestination to the salvation conditioned by the foreknowledge of faith. The union of the Pelagian and Augustinian elements thus attempted is not, however, an inward organic coalescence, but rather a mechanical and arbitrary combination, which really satisfies neither the one interest nor the other, but commonly leans to the Pelagian side.

For this reason it admirably suited the legalistic and ascetic piety of the middle age, and indeed always remained within the pale of the Catholic Church, and never produced a separate sect.

How true! The union of the Pelagian and Augustinian elements thus attempted never really satisfies either the one interest or the other. No compromise ever satisfies. And this view known as Semi-Pelagianism is really more dangerous than outright Pelagianism. Any attempt which takes off the sharp edges constitutes a sinister attack upon the fundamentals of the Word of God. And the result is invariably that the truth is undermined and that heresy is introduced into the Church of the living God. And, of course, it does not surprise us that the enemies of the truth should resort to these tactics to introduce heresy and the lie into the Church of the living God. We will continue with this, the Lord willing, in our following article.

A Cloud of Witnesses

A Refusal and a Promise

Rev. B. Woudenberg

And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying,

Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? . . .

When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

II Samuel 7:4, 5, 12, 13

Having taken the ark of God out of oblivion and restoring it to a position of central attention within the royal city of Jerusalem, David was ready to set forth upon his life's calling — that of clearing the land of Israel from all heathen influence and of expanding its ideal boundaries as far as God had always promised and intended. It was a work that should have been performed long before this when the children of Israel had first entered the land of Canaan. In fact, it was in a very real sense their failure to clear the heathen from their land which had led the children of Israel into all of the lawlessness and confusion that obtained during the period of the judges. But now at last there was a leader in Israel who was both dedicated enough and qualified to see the spiritual needs of that great nation before anything else. Partly no doubt because he was aware of the command of God regarding the heathen, but even more because he felt within his own heart that there was a spiritual antipathy between Israel and the heathen

which made it impossible for them to live in harmony together, David set out immediately to battle with these heathen in the name of Israel and of Israel's God. We are not given a great many details about exactly how and how rapidly and how extensively David engaged in all of these various battles; but it is evident that he fought in awareness of and obedience to the command of God given already through Moses in Deuteronomy 20:10-17, "When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace, unto it. And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it: and when the LORD thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword: but the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt

thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the LORD thy God hath given thee. Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which care not of the cities of these nations. But of the cities of these people, which the LORD thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth: but thou shalt utterly destroy them." Step by step David led the children of Israel to put these commands into practice perfectly and completely for the first time: and the result was that in a very short time wealth and strength began to pour into their nation such as had never been seen before. All of the great blessings which God had promised through Moses were realized in their very sight.

It was not long after David began to receive all of this tribute from the nations surrounding Israel in an ever broadening circle that he became a very wealthy man, and accordingly built himself a very magnificent palace from beautiful cedar logs imported from the land of Tyre. No sooner had David done this, however, than he began to feel himself smitten with a very guilty conscience. From the beginning of his reign he had looked upon the city of Jerusalem as an ideal site for the tabernacle of God where He might dwell in the midst of His people. To be sure, he had taken the ark of God into Jerusalem. It was one of the first things that he had done after the city was captured. But nevertheless, its dwelling place was only in a tent, and a rather makeshift tent at that, not even in the one which had been made for it by Moses in the wilderness. To David it simply did not seem right that this should be so while he was living in a most beautiful house made of cedar. Thus it was that after long and careful consideration David finally called the prophet Nathan to him and laid the problem before him, saying, "See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains."

Nathan the prophet was a man who had long watched the development of David very closely. Here was a man whose heart was completely dedicated to God before everything else, and to whom the Lord returned His blessing with the utmost of grace and of favor. That he should continue in this way so completely even after he had become king and very wealthy moved Nathan to astonishment. When David, therefore, called him into his presence to consult with him concerning his wishes and desires, Nathan came with a feeling of awe and astonishment. Even more, once he grasped the fact that David was asking him as to the desirability of building a house or temple as an abiding place for the ark of God, it seemed to him beyond question that such a noble plan proceeding from one so greatly favored of God could not but meet with God's approval. So confident was he of this that he immediately responded by saying, "Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the LORD is with thee."

The response was that which David had wanted to hear and he was very apparently pleased with it as Nathan could see. But Nathan had spoken presumptuously upon the basis of his own opinion rather than seeking the will of God first. This became apparent that very night, for, when Nathan had returned to his own home, God appeared unto him and spoke. This is what He said, "Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar? Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcot, from following the sheep, to be a ruler over my people, over Israel: and I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great even that are in the earth. Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime, and as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house. And when the days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever."

Surely it was not an easy thing for Nathan to return to David the next day to tell him of what the Lord had said. If we may take Psalm 132 at its full value, David had gone far beyond just expressing a desire to build a temple for God; he had vowed, perhaps after obtaining Nathan's consent, Psalm 132:3-5, "Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids, until I find out a place for the LORD, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob." And now there was nothing left for Nathan to do but to go back and inform David that this could never be.

Nevertheless, there was in the message with which Nathan was sent to David a wealth of deep spiritual truth which Nathan may well not have fully understood

or appreciated that morning. Spelled out very carefully for David, we may find three very basic and important truths. In the first place, God assured David that He was in no need and had never asked for an elaborate earthly house. The greatness and glory of God does not in any way depend upon such earthly richness. In the second place, He reminded David that he, David, was His creation from beginning to end. God had chosen him and God had established him, and God had done this so that through him His people might be established in the land of promise. But finally, and most importantly, God assured David that this was not in any sense a temporary venture on His part. He had established His covenant with David and his seed forever. Thus there would be given to David a promised son who would do what David could not do himself, a son who would provide an house and a kingdom for God that would endure for ever. This son was in the first place and in the typical sense, Solomon; but in the final analysis it was Christ.

David, although he surely did not grasp the full meaning of this rich revelation of God immediately, nevertheless felt much of its greatness. In response to the words of Nathan, he broke forth into a beautiful prayer of thanksgiving and appreciation. Immediately he went down to the tabernacle of God, and standing before the ark of God's presence said, "Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God? And what can David say unto thee? for thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant. For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart,

hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant know them. Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemest to thee from Egypt, from the nations, and their gods? For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, LORD, art become their God. And now, O LORD God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said. And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts is the God over Israel: and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee. For thou O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house: therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee. And now, O LORD God, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant: therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O LORD God, hast spoken it: and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever."

As disappointed as David surely was that he might not build the temple which he desired, he very evidently realized that far more important were the promises given to him by God which centered in the coming of his promised seed.

BOOK REVIEWS

Prof. H. Hanko

CHRISTMAS PROGRAMS FOR CHURCH GROUPS, by Marilyn A. Smith; Baker Book House, 1968; 91 pp., \$1.50 (paper).

In our schools and Sunday Schools teachers are constantly looking about for material suitable to annual Christmas programs. This is a book which might be of some assistance. There is in it extensive use of Scripture in the construction of programs; there are suggestions of excellent program themes. It might be possible to glean some ideas from it to aid in the difficult work of making programs. But the book is not all very helpful. It suggests programs which require the use of costumes, creches and dialogue in some instances. And the theology is not always very Reformed. Recommended as being of some help in the making of programs.

YOU JONAH!, by Thomas John Carlisle; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968; 64 pp., \$1.00 (paper).

Eerdmans has collected in this book a number of poems illustrated with impressionistic woodcuts which deal with the history recorded in the book of Jonah. While it is difficult for me to evaluate any type of poetry, this is especially true of the free verse which the author uses in this collection. The weakness of the poems is their failure to interpret Jonah's life correctly — Jonah is made almost an unbeliever — and their inability to catch the central thrust of this prophecy. Nevertheless, some of the poems are forceful and sharp and present certain aspects of Jonah's life in a way that makes the book of Jonah a living book. If read with discretion it is worth purchasing to those who are interested in poetry and to those who teach literature in the schools.

Pages From The Past

Believers and Their Seed

Rev. Herman Hoeksema

Chapter II

Arminianism Injected Into The Covenant

(continued from June 1 issue)

(Editor's Note: Again a printer's mistake crept into the previous installment of this translation of "*De Geloovigen en Hun Zaad*." The beginning of a new chapter was not indicated at the bottom of the first column on page 403. This should have been entitled: "Chapter II, Arminianism Injected Into The Covenant." This chapter is now continued. HCH)

This is no less the case with Question 74 of the Heidelberg Catechism, which is also cited by Prof. Heyns in support of his view.

There we read:

"Are infants also to be baptized?"

"Yes: for since they, as well as the adult, are included in the covenant and church of God; and since redemption from sin by the blood of Christ, and the Holy Ghost, the author of faith, is promised to them no less than to the adult; they must therefore by baptism, as a sign of the covenant, be also admitted into the christian church; and be distinguished from the children of unbelievers, as was done in the old covenant or testament by circumcision, instead of which baptism is instituted in the new covenant."

Also here the professor makes the same comment as he did in connection with the Prayer of Thanksgiving in the Form for the Lord's Supper. The answer here distinguishes between the meriting and the application of salvation. But the professor goes somewhat farther and asserts that we must distinguish between the right of possession and the right of application. To give the right of possession is to bequeath the benefits of salvation, thus teaches Prof. Heyns; but the right of application is not yet the application itself. One can indeed have the right to the possession of the benefits of Christ; he can also have the right to the application of those benefits; and yet he may not become partaker of that application itself.

But we observe at once that this presentation certainly is not to be found in Question 74 of the Heidelberg Catechism. The 74th Answer says only that to children as well as to adults the application by the Holy Spirit, as well as the objective redemption from

sin, is promised. The distinction which is made by Prof. Heyns we certainly do not find in Question 74. And besides, we may point out that the professor here makes a very dangerous separation between the work of Christ and the work of the Spirit. One can have the right to the application of salvation and yet never receive salvation. Where does one obtain the right to the application of salvation? Only in the blood of Christ. Christ's work is the ground for this right of possession of which the professor speaks. The presentation of the professor comes down to this, therefore, that one may indeed have in Christ the right to salvation, and yet never actually receive that salvation. One must, of course, then also accept the idea that Christ has shed His blood and merited that right for all who are historically in the covenant. And thus we arrive again in principle at the doctrine of universal atonement, a *Christus pro omnibus*. We do not write this to injure and offend the ex-professor. If the matter were not so deeply serious, we would not want to elaborate upon it. But now the matter may not be stated differently than it really is. The conception of Prof. Heyns, which has already for a long time gained acceptance in the Christian Reformed Churches, is thoroughly Arminian. And it is to be deplored that the churches have for long years countenanced it, that the professor has corrupted the mind of the churches with this Pelagian doctrine and has directed their thinking in Arminian channels.

Matters become even worse when the professor turns to our Baptism Form. The section of the Form which he has in view and from which he quotes reads in full as follows:

"Secondly. Holy baptism witnesseth and sealeth unto us the washing away of our sins through Jesus Christ. Therefore we are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. For when we are baptized in the name of the Father, God the Father witnesseth and sealeth unto us, that he doth make an eternal covenant of grace with us, and adopts us for his children and heirs, and therefore will provide us with

every good thing, and avert all evil or turn it to our profit. And when we are baptized in the name of the Son, the Son sealeth unto us, that he doth wash us in his blood from all our sins, incorporating us into the fellowship of his death and resurrection, so that we are freed from all our sins, and accounted righteous before God. In like manner, when we are baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost assures us, by this holy sacrament, that he will dwell in us, and sanctify us to be members of Christ, applying unto us that which we have in Christ, namely, the washing away of our sins, and the daily renewing of our lives, till we shall finally be presented without spot or wrinkle among the assembly of the elect in life eternal."

What does Prof. Heyns want to make of this beautiful portion of our Baptism Form? He wishes to make a distinction between the work of the Spirit, on the one hand, and the work of the Father and of the Son, on the other hand. Of the Father it is said that He really *adopts* us as His children and heirs, that He really *establishes* His eternal covenant of grace with us; of the Son, that He really *washes* us in His blood from all our sins, and *incorporates* us into the fellowship of His death and resurrection; but of the Spirit, not that He dwells in us and sanctifies us, but that He *will* dwell in us and sanctify us. On that *willing* of the Holy Spirit, in distinction from the *doing* of the Father and the Son, Professor Heyns wants to put all the emphasis. And then the meaning is supposed to be that also here again the application of salvation is presented as conditional. By virtue of the covenant of grace the Holy Spirit indeed grants the right to the application of salvation; but it is not said that He will also actually apply salvation to the covenant member. This willing of the Spirit becomes

reality only when the covenant member consents to the covenant.

Now it ought to be plain that this is not the intention of this section of the Baptism Form. How would it be possible thus to separate between the work of the Father and the Son, on the one hand, and the work of the Spirit, on the other hand? If the Father establishes an eternal covenant of grace with us and adopts us for His children and heirs; if the Son washes us in His blood from all our sins and incorporates us into the fellowship of His death and resurrection; how then could there be any doubt whether the Holy Spirit would also make us actual partakers of all of salvation, dwell in us and sanctify us? That is simply impossible! That is not a distinction, but a separation of the work of the Father and the Son and that of the Holy Spirit. It is also evident then, that when the Baptism Form speaks of a willing of the Spirit, this is not intended to present the application of salvation as conditional; but it is simply in harmony with the peculiar character of the work of the Spirit. That work of the Spirit is continuous; it stretches out into the future, even to everlasting perfection. This is not true of the establishing of the eternal covenant, of incorporation into Christ, of the adoption unto children, of becoming a partaker of the fellowship of Christ's resurrection. All this is the work of a moment. But the work of the Spirit, or, rather, the work of the Triune Covenant God as it is wrought in us through the Spirit of Christ, is abiding, is a continuing process, goes on until we shall be presented without spot in the assembly of the elect. Thence it is that with a view to the future of the covenant member it is said that the Holy Spirit *will* dwell in us and *will* sanctify us to be members of Christ. In all this there is nothing strange. (to be cont.)

ANNOUNCEMENT

Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Churches will meet, D.V., October 2, 1968, 9:00 A.M., at the Hope Protestant Reformed Church. Consistories will consider this an official announcement in the appointment of delegates.

M. Schipper, S.C.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Ladies Aid Society of the Hudsonville Prot. Ref. Church herewith expresses its sympathy to Mrs. Rhine Lubbers and family in the recent death of her father,

MR. RALPH VELTEMA.

May our God comfort them with His Word and Spirit and give them peace.

Rev. H. Veldman, Pres.
Mrs. Henry Zwak, Sec'y.

Men! ATTEND

The Annual Meeting of the Reformed Free Publishing Association

SUPPORT YOUR STANDARD BEARER

Hope Protestant Reformed Church

Thursday, Sept. 26, 8:00 P.M.

News From Our Churches

Aug. 31, 1968

Rev. G. Van Baren was chosen from a trio which included the Revs. C. Hanko and M. Schipper to receive the call from our South Holland Church.

* * *

Lynden's pastor, Rev. B. Woudenberg, combined a Classical appointment to Forbes, N. Dak., with the September meeting of Classis West which was held in Edgerton, Minn.

* * *

Holland's congregation welcomed their pastor back to his pulpit Sunday, Aug. 25, after his stay in Jamaica this summer. Rev. Heys enjoyed his visit and his heavy work-load on the Island again. But he was also happy to be back in his own church, to take up his duties in the new season of activities that awaits him. Everyone is eager to hear about the work accomplished by Rev. Heys and Mr. Feenstra on this trip.

* * *

The Dedication of Covenant Christian High School has been scheduled to take place Sept. 19. A program is in the planning, which will include a tour of the building and refreshments.

* * *

With the 1968 Young People's Convention being held in Grand Rapids, there was much activity in First Church. Besides the event specially designed for the young people, parents and friends shared with them three evenings of speech and song: a pre-convention hymnsing, a Friday evening Mass Meeting and the next Sunday's convention hymnsing. These brought out large and enthusiastic crowds. The Mass Meeting was held on a hot, sultry evening which also produced an electrical storm accompanied with hard winds. The Keynote Speaker was Rev. G. Lanting, of Edgerton, Minn. His topic was "How Great Thou Art — in Creation." Prof. H. Hanko gave an afternoon send-off speech; Rev. Van Baren and Rev. C. Hanko provided the other main speeches; the former's topic was "How Great Thou Art — in Salvation," and the latter's topic was, "How Great Thou Art — in Glorification."

* * *

The Convention's theme, "How Great Thou Art" was also carried out at the two hymnsings. The song leader at the first one, Arnold Dykstra, and Chas. Westra, who led the second sing, chose the songs in harmony with the three divisions of the theme as it was reflected in the main speeches. There were many special numbers by talented young people. Some of them were, a tenor solo by Gary Bylsma, a trumpet solo by John Hoekstra, a violin solo by Mary Klop, a reading by Pat Kamps which was a meditation by the late Rev. H. Hoeksema written up in a 1926 issue of the Standard Bearer, a piano-organ

duet by Ellen and Mary Kregel, another piano-organ duet by Linda Ekema and Shirley Gritters, and a sextet of girls who sang an excerpt from Ecc. 12. The Kregel sisters accompanied the singing at both sings. The 1968 Convention was labeled a success, and the young folk are already looking ahead to next year. Their gaze is fixed to the West, as far west as they can go, for Redlands, California beckons them.

* * *

Randolph's 25th Anniversary celebration was a joyous occasion for them and for several visitors from Grand Rapids who shared the festivities with them. Saturday's event was held in Fond du Lac County Park and included a potluck dinner and program. Mr. Dewey Alsum, vice-president of the Consistory opened the afternoon program with prayer, followed by audience singing and a special number by representatives from the Adult Bible Class. A taped message from Rev. C. Hanko was heard in which he related several interesting facts about the origin and inauguration of the congregation, a part of their history in which Rev. Hanko played no little part. The clerk of the Consistory gave a more detailed account of the church's history, its joys and sorrows, their pastors, and the periods of vacancy, as well as their appreciation of their present pastor, son of Rev. H. Kuiper who served them from 1951 to 1954. Then a letter was read from Rev. G. Van Baren who served them three years until 1965. A speech by Rev. D. Kuiper was followed by a reading by Tim Tamminga of the Y.P. Society. Before Rev. Lubbers, Randolph's first pastor, closed the program with prayer, he called upon three members of the congregation to sing "Consider the Lilies" a repeat of a number given at Rev. Lubbers' Installation program. This was a surprise number, even to the trio which sang it — and the pianist, all who did this without benefit of a music book! Twenty-five years did not erase it from their memory. The piano was trucked from Bill Huizengas for the day, but it was reported that the lady of the house wanted it moved to another spot anyway, so it went there by the way of the County Park. Sunday's commemoration was in the regular worship services, both of them led by Rev. Lubbers, the one sermon based on Ex. 14:15, and the other an exposition of 2 Peter 1:19-21. The readers of the Standard Bearer congratulate you, Randolph, and wish you the blessings of the King of His Church until He returns on the clouds of Glory!

* * *

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. James 1:27

... see you in church

J.M.F.

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