

The Standard Bearer

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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The Promise to the Called

Editorial:

“The Corruption-Process in the Gereformeerde Kerken”

The R.E.S. and the W.C.C.

(see: Examining Ecumenicalism)

Merger Items

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THE STANDARD BEARER

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Meditation

THE PROMISE TO THE CALLED

Rev. M. Schipper

“For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Acts 2:39.

Comforting truth!

So intended by the Holy Spirit, to be directed to those who under the mighty impetus of the gospel are pricked in their hearts, and who are impelled to cry out: “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Verse 37). And unto whom the apostle must say: “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (Verse 38). “For the promise is unto

you . . . !”

However, a truth which throughout history has been cast into the throes of ecclesiastical controversy, whether that debate be about the idea of the covenant, or more particularly about the promise of the gospel. And, therefore, a truth, when not properly understood, fails to convey the intended comfort. Not, you understand, as though the Word of God is uneffectual; for it will surely come to those for whom it is intended, and

will comfort their hearts. But when this Word of God is explained as being a promise for all men, or that God's covenant is intended to embrace all men, then it loses its intended comfort. For a comfort that is for all, or a promise that is for all, is a promise and a comfort for none!

What we have here is a universal proclamation of a particular promise!

The promise!

Not always does the Word of God speak of the promise in the singular. Again and again we read also of the promises. Observe the following examples. "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises." Romans 9:4. "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." Romans 15:8. "Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid . . . !" Galatians 3:21. "But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises . . ." Hebrews 7:6. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises . . ." Hebrews 11:13.

But also frequently we read of the promise, in the singular, as for example: "Is his mercy clean gone forever? doth his promise fail forevermore?" Psalm 77:8. "And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endowed with power from on high." Luke 24:49. "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same . . ." Acts 13:32. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Galatians 3:29. And so it is in our text: "For the promise is unto you . . ."

Evidently the plural emphasizes the riches of the implications of the promise; while the singular is intended more particularly to identify the promise and express its unity. But always it is about the same promise, which is essentially one.

As to its nature the promise differs radically from an offer! Also in respect to the latter the person that makes an offer declares something. He declares his willingness to do something for or to bestow something upon another unto whom the offer is made. However, for its realization the offer is contingent upon the willingness of the second party, upon his consent to the offer. And peculiarly an offer that is contingent upon the acceptance or consent of the second party may be general. The promise, on the other hand, is a declaration, written or oral, which binds the person that makes it to do or to forbear to do the very thing promised. A promise implies also the declaration of a certain good together with the assurance that this good shall be bestowed in behalf of the person to whom the promise is made. And a

promise that binds the promising party and that is certain of realization is not general, but it requires a definite second party. This distinction of the promise we observe to be true especially in Scripture.

The promise is always sure! Its certainty is sustained by the fact that it is God Who makes the promise. He conceived of it, and declares it; and it is He Who realizes the thing promised. It cannot, therefore, in any sense of the word be contingent. It cannot be contingent upon the will of the creature for its fulfillment. The promise is as faithful and true as God is unchangeable. He will surely realize His promise. Fact is, when He binds Himself to bestow something, He does so by an oath. Notice what we read in Hebrews 6: 13, 14, 17, 18. "For when God made promises to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee . . . wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation . . ."

And the object of the promise is never general, but definite and particular! In Scripture the promise is centrally made to Christ, and through Him to the seed of Abraham, who are called the children of the promise, or heirs and co-heirs of the promise. This is clearly expressed in that passage quoted above from the Book of Hebrews. And this also clearly is asserted in such a passage as found in Galatians 3. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ . . . And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Verses 16, 29).

Scripture speaks variously of the contents of the promise. It speaks of the promise of life—I Timothy 4:8; of the promise of eternal life—I John 2:25; of the promise of Christ's coming—II Peter 3:4; of the promise of entering into rest—Hebrews 4:1; of the promise of becoming heirs of salvation—Romans 4:13; of the promise of raising up a Saviour—Acts 13:23. You feel immediately that though the expressions differ, they all nevertheless have to do with the same thing. Always the content of the promise has to do with Christ, or with something related to Him. Always, we may say, the promise is the gospel concerning Christ, or matters relating to Him. Such is also the truth concerning the promise in our text.

The promise concerning the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of Christ!

Note the context! "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." (Verse 33). "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of

you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Verse 38). It was the day of Pentecost, the day when the Spirit was poured out on the church in heaven and on earth! The Spirit of the resurrected and glorified Redeemer! Given to Him in His exaltation without measure, and by Him poured out on the entire church. The Holy Spirit of Christ whereby He becomes to them the Comforter as He promised. So He regenerates them and makes them new creatures. He imparts to them faith, and through faith righteousness, sanctification, forgiveness of sins, and eternal life. As the Spirit of promise He is depicted often in Scripture. Think of that monumental passage in the prophecy of Joel, referred to in verses 16ff. But many passages as well look at the Holy Spirit as the fulfillment of the promise.

The promise to you, to your children, to all who are afar off!

To you, i.e., the immediate audience of the apostle as he preached his Pentecostal sermon. These are described in the context as Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven who were present in Jerusalem. They are called men of Judea, men of Israel, men and brethren.

To your children, i.e., the children of these hearers, Jewish children.

To all who afar off, i.e., not only the Jews scattered over the world, as some insist, but also these refer to Gentiles who had lived all through the old dispensation far from the covenant of Israel.

So that we may conclude that the promise is not limited to one class or nation of people, but is universal in its scope. To the Jew first, then also to the Gentile—that is the order in which the promise is given and fulfilled.

To as many as the Lord our God shall call!

Though the promise has a universal scope and presentation, this does not mean that God gives this promise to all men. We must have nothing of the popular view that maintains that God gives the promise to all who hear the gospel, or who maintain that the promise is to all who are members of the church by baptism or born in the sphere of the covenant. These views are plainly erroneous on the very surface of our text. The apostle speaks emphatically and in no uncertain terms of the promise of the Holy Spirit as being intended for all and as many as the Lord our God shall call.

And the calling here is not the mere outward sound of the gospel, but the inward, effectual calling as God realizes it in the scheme of redemption. It belongs to the order of salvation described by the apostle Paul in

Romans 8:30. "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." The calling in this sense is not a mere invitation which you may accept or reject at will; rather, when you are called you come.

Those who are called are described in the context as repentant, who are pricked in their heart, and who cry out: What shall we do? They are those whom Paul describes as having been predestinated and chosen, or again, as the seed of Christ, and heirs of the promise. The called respond in faith, appropriating the promise, and experience the sweet, benevolent operations of that Spirit already in their hearts. These only receive the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ according to the unfailing promise of God. The promise already spoken to Abraham, the father of all believers. (Genesis 17:7) The promise of which evidently Peter is thinking as he uttered the words of our text.

We say again, how comforting is this truth!

It is intended to be in part at least the answer to the question of those whose hearts were pricked and who exclaim: Men and brethren, what shall we do? They had witnessed in the apostles the miracle of Pentecost, who were preaching the gospel in the language of each one gathered in Jerusalem. They had come under the hearing of the gospel which had as its theme the crucifixion, death, resurrection, and glorious ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. They had been shown in no uncertain terms that all of this had come upon Christ according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, but also through the hands of lawless men, who are charged especially with the sin of the crucifixion. And when they heard all this, they were pricked in their heart. They were convicted of sin, considering themselves worthy of damnation, and in despair were impelled to cry out: What shall we do?

It is therefore in the way of repentance and the experience of remission of sins that the recipients of the promise receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is also in this way that God fulfills His promise which cannot fail in its realization in those for whom it is intended. Having been called out of darkness into His marvelous light the recipients of the promise experience subjectively through the way of repentance and the means of grace that the promise by divine direction has been realized in them. The Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the exalted Redeemer has come to take up His abode in their hearts and to lead them further into the joy of their salvation.

And this promise He is still realizing in them that are called wherever He is pleased to establish His covenant, not only in those who are near, but also afar off.

Editorial

"The Corruption-Process in the Gereformeerde Kerken"

Prof. H.C. Hoeksema

Bing! Bang! Boom! BOOM!

The heavy artillery has been unlimbered in the *Gereformeerde Kerken*.

I am referring to a brochure recently sent me for review by the publishing firm of *Buijten en Schipperheijn*. This little booklet is written by an elderly minister in the churches mentioned, Dr. Ph. J. Huijser. This brochure of 141 closely printed pages is entitled "The Corruption-Process in the Gereformeerde Kerken (Het Verwordingsproces in de Gereformeerde Kerken)" and sub-titled (because this is the first of a series) "The Ruling Class (De Regerende Klasse)." It sells for f4.50 (Dutch money). I recommend strongly that anyone interested in following events in the Dutch churches should get this brochure and also the rest of the proposed series. This is the first time that the firm of *Buijten en Schipperheijn* has sent anything to our magazine for review; and I take this opportunity to thank them for sending this brochure and to assure them that if they will send the forthcoming brochures in this series, the *Standard Bearer* will gladly review them. I am following the unusual procedure of devoting an editorial to this publication, rather than placing a brief review in our Book Review department, because I deem this brochure to be very significant and informative with a view to the situation in the Dutch churches. I would expect that it will receive not a little attention, both in the Netherlands and here.

A Brief Survey of the Contents

Dr. Huijser introduces his brochure by calling himself "a disillusioned Reformed man." He recalls an incident from the time of the schism in the 1940's in which an acquaintance had thus characterized himself. He admits that at that time he attempted to convince this acquaintance that the churches were on the right path and that there was no reason to be disillusioned. But he also admits, to use his own words, that he was "a big ass" to have supported the synod at that time. But, he asks, what naive and trusting person could have sensed what the church-rulers had under their cap for the church-people and what would later come about after that synodical purification-passion? And now, he says, "when we review the history from the time of the schism to the present and then pay special attention to the process of development which has taken place in our churches in recent years and which we characterize as a *corruption-process*, . . . we can apply that expres-

sion to ourselves: I am a disillusioned Reformed man." The author hastens to assure us that he not disillusioned as preacher, as catechete, or as pastor; nor as a Bible-believing and Christ-believing man. But he is disillusioned by the spiritual and ethical decay in the churches which "can no longer in truth bear the honorable name of *De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland*."

But there is more than disappointment in the author. He is also offended and indignant about the manner in which they have been misled since the so-called mission-synod of Eindhoven, 1948. He believes that there was a break-through all along the line at the Synod, when two of three Forms of Unity were made inoperative for the mission-territory of Java. And then he goes on to mention innumerable items in the Dutch churches which were approved, encouraged and peddled in the churches by the ruling party, but which never were and never will be Reformed. He declares that he is offended and indignant about the errors imported or thought up by the theological professors; about the increasing boldness with which the divine authority of the Scriptures is attacked; about the undermining of the faith of the church; about the sowing of seeds of doubt about the reality of hell and the second death; about the false interpretation of the vow in the Formula of Subscription; about the opening of all ecclesiastical offices to women; about the clamor for a bishop; about the glossing over of public indecency and blasphemy; about the anti-militarism and the so-called Reformed peace council; about the throwing away of money in missions; about the prostrating of church polity in the direction of a concentration of power in the hands of the elite; about the ogling in the direction of Rome and in the direction of a bastardized world-church; about the swearing by a proud, evolutionistic science, which "leaves our earliest forefathers hanging in a tree and swinging from limb to limb;" about the free-thinking and sometimes insane talks and left-wing political babble in many pulpits; about the propaganda for neo-malthusianism and the excusing of sins contrary to nature; about the demagoguery in the ecclesiastical press; about the evil enlightenment and leadership of the church's youth. This long list he concludes by saying that what especially offends him and fills him with indignation and abhorrence is the hypocrisy

and the double morality involved in applying or not applying synodical discipline of doctrine.

The above will give you some idea of the frankness with which Dr. Huijser expresses himself.

But there is more. The author tells us that it is his express purpose in this popularly written brochure to arouse resistance (*verzet*) in the churches. According to him, (with a reference to the writing of the late Dr. Schilder at the time of the war), it is time "to put on the uniform," that is, time to abandon a defensive position and to take the offensive. "We live in an apocalyptic time. All the more, therefore, must a well-organized resistance be offered against the apostasy, against the spirit of error and the false prophecy." (p. 10)

This first brochure, however, does not treat the apostasy and doctrinal departures. Dr. Huijser's purpose is to deal with the ruling class, the power structure, in the *Gereformeerde Kerken* which is responsible for the process of corruption in the churches. He expressly states, however, that he does not intend to arouse resistance to the *persons* who comprise this ruling class. What intrigues him, he says, is their system of thought, of will, of action, the mentality which they reveal, their purposes, their goals, their methods and means. In this connection, he holds that the fundamental position of this ruling class is what he calls "neo-Kuyperianism." He claims that this ruling class has abandoned and mocks at all the doctrines, the principles, the clear antitheses which Dr. Kuyper left as a spiritual heritage. But they follow Kuyper in one respect: his power-politics. But while Dr. Kuyper had to be satisfied with achieving only partial dominance, according to Huyser, due to the presence of a strong influence of the Afscheiding in his time, the neo-Kuyperians have succeeded in achieving sole dominance in the *Gereformeerde Kerken*. And it is against this neo-Kuyperianism and its power politics that the brochure is directed in its entirety. Dr. Huijser insists that to understand the corruption-process in the Dutch churches correctly we must have a clear vision of the nature of this neo-Kuyperianism as a power-phenomenon. We must not be satisfied to see some symptoms. Nor must resistance be offered, first of all, against the deformation in the churches, but against the unholy power and the impure spirit which are the cause of the deformation.

Such, in brief, is the main thesis of this brochure.

Next follows a long chapter about "the authoritarian method" of these neo-Kuyperians. In this chapter the author offers an expose of the various devious methods which the so-called ruling party follows in order to achieve their purposes, demolish their opponents, and deceive the people in their writings, particularly in the mass of church papers which are published by the thousands every week in the Netherlands. He does this by using the device of a

literary flower-market, on which the wares of the various flower-merchants are offered for sale. Very carefully and thoroughly, but also in an emotionally charged and bluntly outspoken manner, Dr. Huyser describes various species of "literary flowers" offered by the neo-Kuyperian merchants. For example, there is the "lovely species" and the "esteeming species" and the "progressive species" and the "calming species" and the "harmonious species" and the "reasonable species" and the "popular species" and the "spiteful species" and the "didactic species" and the "changing species" and the "political species" of literary flowers. These, according to the Huijser, are the chief kinds of speaking and writing employed by the neo-Kuyperian rulers; and they are methodically employed to influence the thinking of the churches. But the author does not write in the abstract about methods. He cites instances and names the names of the leading lights in the *Gereformeerde Kerken*. There is none of the representative men of this group who does not come in for his share of sharp criticism and accusations. It must be kept in mind, however, that this brochure is directed to the people, not to these neo-Kuyperian leaders. The author runs rough-shod over the latter, although he is well-aware that they will attempt to "smear" him by every device at their command. About this Dr. Huijser does not care one whit. He aims to arouse the people to active resistance and to acquaint them with the methods of the ruling party.

The final chapter is of the same character as the second. But it is devoted to exposing the party-politics of the neo-Kuyperians. The author sees this ruling party as a power-group which always defends and advances and recommends the men of its own party in the churches. The main burden of this chapter is to show how these neo-Kuyperians through devious methods have succeeded in making the Theological School of Kampen (which originally represented the Afscheiding-trend in the churches) into nothing but a vassal and a branch of the Free University. When the neo-Kuyperians achieved the latter, they had achieved a position of sole dominance in the churches. Again the author names names and events in a brutally frank manner in this chapter, and he does so in language which is indeed calculated to arouse the people.

At the conclusion of the third chapter the author faces the question which by this time has arisen in the soul of every reader: what must be done? He suggests that various answers will be given to the question. But then he informs us that he will not answer this question immediately. First we may expect another brochure, in which Dr. Huijser will show how far the spirit of the times has penetrated into the ecclesiastical and theological sphere of the *Gereformeerde Kerken*. In a third brochure the author proposes to sketch the nature and the extent of the ecclesiastical and theological corruption. And only then, in still a fourth

brochure, the author will face the practical question: "what can and must we do in order at least to free our own conscience from co-responsibility for the innumerable ecclesiastical crimes which have been and still are being committed under a pseudo-Reformed flag?"

Evaluation

What shall one say about this first brochure?

In the first place, as I suggested in my opening remarks, this represents an unlimbering of heavy artillery; and, in my opinion, if Dr. Huijser succeeds in arousing those in the *Gereformeerde Kerken* who are already disturbed about the situation, then this means open and fierce ecclesiastical warfare! I cannot see any other possibility. Especially in the light of the fact that there is hardly a leader of the liberal party in the Netherlands who does not come under attack from Huijser, and especially because all these liberal leaders are also the recognized leading lights of the *Gereformeerde Kerken* and because they are certainly influential and dominant men, it seems to me that there must be war,—if, that is, there is still enough spiritual power and will to fight in the Dutch churches. About the latter I cannot very well judge, although from a reading knowledge of circumstances in the Netherlands I sometimes have serious doubts.

In the second place, I believe Dr. Huijser is to be congratulated and encouraged because of the courageous and forthright manner in which he declares his position. Personally, I have been waiting for a long time for someone in the old country to wade into the battle without fear or favor and to say things just exactly the way they are. Everyone seemed to be reluctant. It is true that the "Alarmed Ones (Verontrusten)" have become organized and have grown in number. It is also true that "*Waarheid en Eenheid* (Truth and Unity)," one of the Dutch papers, has lent itself as the voice of the "Alarmed Ones." But until now the opposition has been rather mild. There seems to have been a reluctance, if not fear, to fight openly and to "call a spade a spade." Meanwhile the corruption-process has been picking up speed, and one could sometimes rub his eyes in disbelief at the outlandish ideas which could be proposed without any penalty and without very many people even becoming upset. I am glad, therefore, that someone has at last had the courage to come out in the open. At least a small ray of light can now be seen in the situation in the Netherlands, the cradle of our Reformed faith.

In the third place, I will not venture to predict what will be the result of this first brochure. Those whom Huijser has attacked will, I am sure, be as indignant and offended as he is, and probably more so. But how they will deal with it remains to be seen. They may belittle the author and his brochure. They may feel themselves so strong that they can afford to ignore it and allow Huijser and the few conservatives to "die on

the limb." They may also take swift and hateful vengeance. I have the distinct impression that Dr. Huijser does not care what they do, however. His concern is to arouse the people, the faithful Reformed people, if at all possible. And if this and succeeding brochures of this kind do not succeed in arousing them, then the situation is indeed hopeless.

In the fourth place, I have serious doubts as to the wisdom of Dr. Huijser's approach. I can foresee that he will be accused of employing an *argumentum ad hominem*, of attacking the men instead of the issues. I am not saying that this is what the author does; in fact, I believe that he does not do so. He attacks their thought-structure and their methods. In effect, he attacks their *ethics*. I believe it would have been far more effective to deal with the doctrinal and spiritual issues first, and to do so on the basis of Scripture and the Confessions. This, after all, is what must appeal to Reformed people; and if they cannot be reached by an appeal to Scripture and the Confessions, they are not worth reaching any more. I do hope, moreover, that in his future brochures Dr. Huijser will make a strong and air-tight case against all the doctrinal corruption in the *Gereformeerde Kerken*. This is highly necessary. This is, after all, the heart of the matter. We will be awaiting the remaining brochures eagerly. And I invite the publishers to send them to me; I will give them careful attention in the *Standard Bearer*.

My fifth remark is that I cannot at this time see how Dr. Huijser can reach any other practical conclusion in his forthcoming fourth brochure than that church reformation in the sense of *secession*, in the sense of a new *Afscheiding* or a new *Doleantie*, is the only salvation for the faithful remnant in the *Gereformeerde Kerken*. Thus far, to my knowledge, no one has dared to suggest this. Even among the "Alarmed Ones" the idea has been suggested that what they must work for is "*richtingen*" (trends)—a liberal wing and a conservative wing,—such as are present in the *Hervormde* (Established) *Kerken*. This, to my mind, is the death of conservatism sooner or later. Besides, it is in my opinion morally wrong. But what will Dr. Huijser suggest as the practical solution? Time will tell.

Finally, I have this comment concerning Dr. Huijser's characterization of the neo-Kuyperians. It seems to me that Dr. Huijser overlooks the fact that there was another Kuyper than the Kuyper of strong Reformed principles and of the antithesis. There was not only the Kuyper of a strong emphasis on sovereign, particular grace; but there was also the Kuyper of *common grace*. And it seems to me that the Kuyper of common grace is very closely related to the Kuyper whom Dr. Huijser pictures as being followed and imitated by the neo-Kuyperians namely, the power-thirsty Kuyper. I would like to have Dr. Huijser consider the possibility that all the doctrinal and

spiritual departures in the Reformed churches today, as well as all the openness to the spirit of the times and to world-conformity of which he writes in his brochure,—all these are the direct result and fruit, at bottom, of the corrupting influence of Kuyper's common grace theory. Moreover, the intolerant power-madness of the neo-Kuyperians is closely connected with this maintenance and influence of the common grace theory. In other words, the neo-Kuyperians are not as "neo" as might seem to be the case. Incidentally, although Huijser does not go so far back into the history, it might also be very interesting to study and consider the question whether what is now happening in the Netherlands represents (historically) the ultimate triumph of "de jongeren."

In conclusion, I have a few practical words for Reformed people in our own country. In the first place, the entire history in the Netherlands is an object lesson in the necessity of constant watchfulness and readiness to fight for the truth. Those who should have spoken up long ago are only now beginning to speak up and to realize what has happened. And it may well

be too late to accomplish anything now. Watch therefore! In the second place, would that there were in the Christian Reformed Church and in the Reformed Church in America a courageous voice like that of Dr. Huijser! What is highly necessary today is that Reformed people be rallied together around the banner of the pure Reformed truth. For the situation in this country is basically no better than in the Netherlands. The Christian Reformed Church in this country is only X number of years behind the Dutch churches; and the RCA, as a whole, is still farther gone. But in this country there are at least the Protestant Reformed Churches to serve as a strong and pure rallying point for all who wish to remain Reformed. And we can, and we must, and by the grace of God we shall, let our clear witness go forth. But it is high time that those who belong to the faithful Reformed remnant within the Reformed community put on their uniforms, come out fighting, be vocal in their opposition, and be prepared to accept the consequence of secession and church reformation! It is later than you think!

Question Box

NEITHER . . . NOR

Question

From the South Holland, Illinois Ladies' Society, through their secretary, Mrs. Connie Busker, I received the following:

"In our Ladies' Society we recently discussed the question, 'Is there any scriptural basis for believing in "integration" or "segregation"?"

"We would appreciate it very much if you would discuss and comment on this question in the *Standard Bearer*."

Reply

It appears as though the South Holland ladies dare to tackle some rather weighty questions. The question presented above is also a rather touchy one in the minds of some; and I would imagine that in the town of South Holland, with its conflict about the integration of the public school district, this has been a particularly touchy subject. This subject is also a wide-ranging one, with many facets. I have no way of knowing the trend of the discussion which took place in the South Holland Ladies' Society. And although I may have benefited from knowing some of the specifics of that discussion, nevertheless I think the question as presented above is correctly stated. And I will try to present not a detailed treatment of the segregation-integration question in general, but some guidelines from a Scriptural, Christian point of view.

The latter I consider important from a practical viewpoint because of the fact that both segregation and integration forces,—especially the latter,—have made many claims to being Christian and have enlisted the help and support of churches and church members, and have even succeeded to no little extent in giving to their movements the coloration of a religious, gospel crusade. The question, therefore, is a real one: what should be our attitude as Protestant Reformed Christians and in the light of Scripture?

As I understand the question, it does not refer to segregation and integration in the abstract, but to the two systems of thought and social, economic, political movements in our country which strive either to achieve and maintain racial integration or to achieve and maintain racial segregation. I consider it important to see this. The alternatives involved are not something which we as Christians create or control, but they are options with which we are confronted by the world. The actually existing integration movement and the concretely existing segregation movement are both movements created, controlled, and directed by the world of ungodly, unregenerate men. They will go on existing whether we support them or not; neither will our support change them. But the question is: what should be our attitude toward them?

In the first place, I would like to point out (contrary to a great deal of social gospel philosophy) that the

Bible is singularly unconcerned about what kind of political or social system exists in the nations of the world. It is not concerned, for example, whether we have democracy or dictatorship, whether we have absolute monarchy or limited monarchy, as our form of government. In Romans 13, for example, the apostle does not urge that Christians should strive to get rid of the then-existent imperial system of government represented in a man like Nero. No, he admonishes the saints to be in subjection to the powers that be, for God's sake, regardless of what the system of government may be. Nor do you find in Scripture any injunction to get strive to do away with the slave-system, for example. No, the Bible admonishes the Christian slave to be in submission to his master; and it admonishes the Christian master to be a *Christian* also in his conduct as lord. Nor do you find in Scripture a calling to strive for equal rights for all citizens in the Roman Empire and to do away, for example, with the distinction between those who held Roman citizenship (like Paul) and those who did not hold such citizenship. On the contrary, Roman citizens and non-citizens, if they were believers, were to remember above all that they were citizens of the kingdom of heaven and were to conduct themselves as such in every sphere of life. I am well aware that this almost sounds like heresy in our day. It is almost taken for granted that today's stresses on democracy, equal rights, equal opportunity, social improvement, integration of races, equality of sexes, etc. are *per se* Christian and in harmony with the Word of God. This largely successful deception is the result of the big-lie-technique: repeat the lie loudly enough and often enough, and almost everyone will believe it, especially if that lie is given a cloak of religion.

In the second place, I see the modern-day integration movement (with all its nuances and all its associated movements throughout the whole civilized world) as standing in the sign of Antichrist. It is a thoroughly humanistic movement. At Babel, remember, the anti-christian beast received a deadly wound in one of its seven heads. The world's integration movement is but one phase of the age-long attempt to overcome the effect of that wound. To establish a unified, peaceful, prosperous world-kingdom (and indeed, a pseudo-

Christian kingdom) which is not only without God and His Christ, but which is anti-God and anti-Christ,—that is the great striving of fallen mankind and of the powers of darkness. In this effort the false church joins, but in the name of the gospel and in the name of Christianity, of course. This accounts for the fact that a social movement like the integration movement enjoys the support of many churches and church men and employs the terminology of the Bible and of the church, speaking of brotherhood, of love, of reconciliation, of renewal, etc., etc. Eventually this antichristian striving will also achieve a measure of outward and temporary success, world-wide success, according to Revelation 13. The deadly wound will be healed. The world-empire of Antichrist will be achieved. Apparently the cause of the beast and the false prophet will triumph over the cause of Christ. And for a little while it will seem as though all the social, economic, political, and international problems of the world have finally been solved by the Man of Sin. But Scripture warns us to understand that the number of the beast is the number of man, the number of vanity, six hundred sixty-six.

If we see today's integration movement in this light,—and I can see it in no other light,—then it is obvious that integration is not an option for the Christian for reasons of principle, the principle of the antithesis. It is not an option, mind you, not because the Christian is a "racist," but because he is a *Christian*.

In the third place, I hasten to point out that this does not at all mean that the Christian is a *segregationist* in the current sense of that term. The segregation movement (as a concretely existing movement in our country) is also nothing but a sinful, humanistic attempt to solve the problems of this world without Christ, without the cross, and without grace.

My answer to the question, therefore, is: neither integration nor segregation is an option for the Christian. I am aware that there are many practical questions which may arise in connection with these matters. Perhaps, too, my answer has occasioned further questions on the part of some. The Question Box welcomes further questions; and it always will try to furnish answers based on Scriptural principles. H.C.H.

It is not simply that the institute of the church itself grows more and more corrupt as time marches on, but such a church is lost in its generations. There may be found in the church those who yet cling to the truth. There may be found faithful men who despair at the hopelessness of bringing such a church once again to its former confession. There may be men who still look to God as the sovereign God of their salvation, and see the cross as their only hope and comfort in life and in death. There may be found those who still love the truth enough to fight for it and die fighting if necessary. But the tragedy of the whole matter is that unless they hear the call of Christ to come out from such a church, their generations which follow them fall away. When it becomes hopeless to reform a church, and when it is impossible to bring a church back again to the place which it once occupied, then such people who still fight the good fight of faith must come out of the ranks of those who will not fight with them and join those who will. Not to do this is to lose the battle. While they may still be faithful unto death, it nevertheless remains a fact that their children can no longer be faithful in that church which hurries along the way to apostasy.

—H. Hanko, "The Covenant Witness"

All Around Us

Merger Items Toward A Relevant Liturgy

Prof. H. Hanko

MERGER ITEMS

The proposed union between the Presbyterian Church in the US (Southern) and the Reformed Church of America has failed, defeated by the vote of the Classes of the Reformed Church. The first plans of merger were begun in 1962 when authority was given a Joint Committee to draw up a proposal for merger. Last year the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and the General Synod of the Reformed Church approved the merger plans and they were sent back to the presbyteries and classes for final approval. Three-fourths of the presbyteries (58 out of a total of 77) were needed for approval in the Southern Presbyterian Church. These fifty-eight votes were received while 18 were opposed to the merger. But the vote failed in the Reformed Church. In this denomination, two-thirds approval was required for passage. This meant that thirty out of forty-five votes were needed for passage. The final count was twenty-four for, twenty-one against. So the merger will not come to pass and each denomination will, for the present, proceed its own way.

The voting proved to be rather strange. There were some conservative presbyteries in the Presbyterian Church who were in favor of the merger. But there were also liberals who favored the merger apparently on purely ecumenical grounds. The liberals who opposed the merger were afraid that a favorable vote would delay entrance of the Southern Presbyterians in COCU or raise a barrier to union with the United Presbyterian Church. Other liberals thought the Reformed Church was too conservative for their taste. Conservatives who opposed the merger in the Southern Presbyterian Church did so chiefly because they opposed various elements in the merger plan such as the plan to write a new confession.

In the Reformed Church, it was mostly the conservative Classes in the Mid-west who were responsible for the failure of the plan. To them the liberals in the Southern Presbyterian Church were too strong and the danger of getting carried into COCU too real. The Eastern part of the Reformed Church strongly favored the plan.

Herman Harmelink III, in his recent book "Ecumenism and The Reformed Church," wrote of possible alternatives and consequences if the Reformed Church would reject this latest plan of union. These

two alternatives were:

She can attempt to maintain the status quo, remaining separate as she has for the past three centuries. The likely result of such action would be the withering away of the Reformed Church in the metropolitan areas of the East. The membership of the eastern part of the church has remained about the same for a number of years, because most of the eastern churches are in the metropolitan area, where Protestants are a minority and the Reformed Church relatively unknown. This reduction in the East could lead to a greater dominance of the West with consequent growth of conservatism.

It is possible that before the first alternative could happen, there would be a division between the Eastern and Western branches of the Reformed Church. Many ministers in the East would like to see their congregations leave the Reformed Church, if she refuses to unite with the Presbyterians, and become Presbyterian themselves. The historic Reformed Church as such would then be destroyed, with the Western section continuing alone as a conservative body, or possibly joining the Christian Reformed Church.

One wonders if Harmelink will prove correct.

Although the plan for merger with the Reformed Church received approval from the Southern Presbyterians, another plan of union failed. We quote from the March 18, 1969 *RES Newsletter*!

The Proposal that synods and presbyteries in the Presbyterian Church in the US and the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. be permitted to merge without waiting for the two denominations to unite was defeated by a vote in the Presbyteries of the Southern Church. By action of the southern church's General Assembly, the vote needed only a simple majority of the Presbyteries to carry.

The outcome of the vote was a disappointment to many churches living in the states where there are congregations of both the southern and northern churches. Two meetings to seal the proposed merger of bodies of the two churches had already been set and had to be cancelled when the proposal was upset by the presbyteries.

Although the merger has been barred, the governing councils of the synods of the two churches of Kentucky decided to continue close cooperation in their programs. Twenty-four delegates from the two Synods agreed to share staff personnel and facilities and recommended to their synods that the

boundaries be aligned. They also recommended to hold joint synod meetings where possible.

The union of the synods and presbyteries had been pushed strongly by the liberal church leaders and opposed vigorously by the conservatives.

TOWARDS A RELEVANT LITURGY

In the February, 1969 issue of the *Reformed Journal*, Nicholas P. Wolterstorff discusses "The Young Person and the Liturgy" and pleads for liturgical renewal. He has listened to the young people and has found that "the reflective young people . . . are intensely dissatisfied with the current form and manner of worship in their churches." These young people to whom he has listened have raised various objections against the liturgical practices in the Church. The first of these objections is that the young people believe "that they did not have enough opportunity to participate" in the worship services. The fundamental character of Reformed liturgy demands that worship services be dialogue. And if they are dialogue, there must be participation in an active way by the people.

If the structure of the liturgy is really a dialogue between God and His people, then one would think that a basic principle in ritual would be this: Whenever structurally an act is an act of the people, it will be done by the people. But consider how systematically a typical Reformed service violates this principle

A second objection which "one hears over and over from the young person is that the worship services—the liturgy and the ritual—are not relevant, that they do not bear on his life and on his concerns" Dr. Wolterstorff explains what this means when he says:

. . . In how many sermons, and in how many prayers, is there specific, concrete recognition of the problems of the world, of the nation, of the community, even of the local church? Suppose that one composed, solely on the basis of the sermons and the prayers heard in church, a catalog of the events of the year which are of concern to the Christian community. Would one not in many cases have a very short catalog indeed? From attending Reformed churches would one have known, this past year, that two of our country's leaders were assassinated, that Czechoslovakia was invaded, that peace talks were taking place in Paris? Would one have known that the World Council was meeting at Uppsala, and the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in Holland? Would one have known of the local millage issue? Would one have heard of any controversial social issue at all?

Now, altogether apart from the fact that it seems to me that the average man in the pew reads his daily newspapers to find out about the invasion of Czechoslovakia and the local millage proposal, must we assume that God's people are such spiritual minors that they have to be informed of these things from the

pulpit and informed of how to react towards these events? Must we assume that God's people cannot understand even the fundamentals of the Christian's faith? Are they totally incapable of weighing any of life's events in the light of God's Word?

The third objection is that, while the essence of the Church is the communion of saints, the young person "has no sense of community, no sense of fellowship, when he engages in the worship of the church." By this is meant that the young person "when he says that he has no sense of fellowship during the worship, is in part claiming that he finds there no recognition of shared purpose and shared concern. . . . In how many congregations is there the sense of jointly doing God's work in the world, each member performing a facet of the comprehensive, many-faceted task, and of then assembling for worship in order to gain sustenance for the next week's work."

There is one very important point which strikes me in all this criticism of the liturgy presently in use in the Reformed Churches. That point is: there is no place in the worship service any longer for the Word of God. I take the liberty to quote in part from a personal letter which recently I received from my father.

We have always spoken with pride of the heritage received from the Reformation that the Bible was once more placed in the center of the divine worship service. Often the remark has been made from our pulpits, etc., that when you enter the Protestant Churches in distinction from the Roman Catholic Church, your eye falls on the Bible. Evidently this is tradition, and the present revolutionary age must have nothing of tradition. But medieval history shows that the fall of the Roman Catholic Church can be ascribed in large measure to the very fact that liturgy took the place of the preaching of the Word The authority of Christ in the public worship and in the preaching is so completely denied. The minister is no longer to be an ambassador of Christ but a servant of the public, following the whims of young people, a social worker at best. The Word of the cross has indeed become foolishness and is being replaced by the Word of man

This is precisely where liturgical renewal such as Wolterstorff proposes will lead. There is no longer a place in the Church for "Thus saith the Lord!" There must rather be "dialogue." Worship must be relevant, so that the Word of God is abandoned and the pulpit filled with pious discourses about various secular subjects.

But it ought to be understood that such liturgical renewal will never lead to any worship such as Jesus describes to the Samaritan woman: "They that worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth." The Church will then have lost her calling and become a human institution.

Examining Ecumenicalism

The RES and the WCC (II)

Rev. G. Van Baren

Last time I called your attention to the fact that the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES) reaffirmed its previous stand that the member churches ought not to join the W.C.C. (World Council of Churches) in the present situation. This decision was based upon the advice of a study committee which, in the majority report, set forth its reasons for the advice. In reviewing this report, we have already noticed how this committee points out the *nature* and the *basis* of the W.C.C. both of which give reason for the advice: do not join the W.C.C.

There is a final section in the report of the majority of the committee of pre-advice which is worthy of consideration: the unity of the church as conceived and practiced by the W.C.C.

The report points out that there has been a development or evolution of the concept of unity in the W.C.C. At the inception of the movement toward unity, there existed an "as if"-concept of unity. One writer declared, "that in the region of moral and social questions we desire all Christians to begin at once to act as if they were one body in one visible fellowship. This can be done by all alike without any injury to theological principles." However, this early concept of unity soon met with several objections. Some of these were: (a) "Common action without attempting to agree on the content of the Christian faith, is altogether different from the fellowship in Christ of which the New Testament speaks." (b) "It creates the impression that a utilitarian relationship is an adequate response to the call which God addresses to His Church and to the need of the world." (c) It is inadequate to restore real physical unity.

Gradually, among those promoting organic unity, this "as-if" idea of unity was replaced by the idea that "we have our unity already in Christ"—which was regarded as the *given unity* upon which organic unity might be based. This *given unity* was then the *starting point*.

The report suggests that the unity as conceived of by most of the members of the W.C.C. consists of four aspects: (a) the given unity which is the basic starting point; (b) the present manifestation of unity and its growth; (c) the unity towards which we must work—physical unity of the church on earth; (d) the unity as ultimately realized in Christ.

This "given unity," the first of the four points listed above, is explained in W.C.C. decisions and publications. The following was presented in the official report from New Delhi:

The unity which is given is the unity of the one Triune God from whom and through whom and to whom are all things. It is the unity which he gives to his people through the gift of his Son, who by his death and resurrection binds us together in him in his sonship to the one Father. It is the unity given to his people through his Spirit, and through all the gifts of the Spirit which enliven, edify, and empower the new humanity in Christ."

The second point above, "the unity of the road," has become the basis for combined action. On the basis of this, the Christian is compelled to do together whatever his conscience does not compel him to do separately.

The third point above, the "unity of goal," emphasizes especially what members of the W.C.C. have in mind. The W.C.C. declared at New Delhi: "Christian unity has been the primary concern...from the beginning, and the vision of the one church has become the inspiration of our ecumenical endeavour." The same gathering declared:

We believe that the unity which is both God's will and his gift to his Church is being made visible as all in each place who are baptized into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord and Saviour are brought by the Holy Spirit into one fully committed fellowship, holding the one apostolic faith, preaching the one Gospel, breaking the one bread, joining in common prayer, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all and who at the same time are united with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages in such wise that ministry and members are accepted by all, and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls his people.

Finally, there is envisioned also some sort of eschatological unity—that which is realized when "God sums up all things in Christ."

The RES committee report points out that there are certain ideas of unity as expressed by the W.C.C. with which they could agree. The committee notes "with appreciation that the W.C.C. sees the *spiritual unity* of all believers in Jesus Christ as the essential aspect, which underlies all other aspects." The committee also agrees that this "spiritual unity must be realized in a *visible unity*."

Yet the committee has "*fundamental objections* to the way in which the W.C.C. operates with this unity-concept." First, the committee has real problems with the way in which the W.C.C. interprets what is called the "given unity." The committee writes:

But we have also seen that in the New Testament

this unity is always a “*qualified*” unity. It is a unity characterized and determined by faithful adherence to the word of the apostles (cf. John 17). It is always a unity-in-the-truth . . .

Precisely on this point we encounter one of the great problems of the modern ecumenical movement. It is an undeniable fact that in many of the churches, which constitute the W.C.C., the situation is such that *heresy is tolerated* and that those who preach and teach it have a legitimate place in their church.

Here we find the deep ambiguity and “schizophrenia” of modern ecumenical thought. Here the basic question lies, which all Reformed Churches will have to answer in order to come to a conscious and justified decision concerning the ecumenical problem. Are they allowed and prepared to accept *co-responsibility* for this situation by affiliation with the W.C.C.? Are they able and prepared to agree with this witness of the W.C.C. concerning the given unity,—a witness that is given in behalf of *all* the participating churches,—while they know that many of these churches tolerate liberalism as a legitimate modality and some of them also become more and more “catholic” in their doctrine of the ministry? We for ourselves believe that, on the basis of the New Testament, the *answer must be in the negative*.

Secondly, the committee has objections to the W.C.C.’s concept of unity because it involves recognizing many other churches as manifestations of the Body of Christ—churches in which fundamental heresies are condoned. They write:

Today there is a general awareness that it is our task “to seek fellowship with all those who, while not members of the same visible body, belong together as members of the mystical body.” In reality, however, the W.C.C. goes much further. It proclaims this fellowship as an existing reality in the ecumenical movement (i.e. the W.C.C. itself), without, in all earnestness, speaking against or rejecting that which threatens or denies this unity. To put it in the terminology of the Belgic Confession: the W.C.C. speaks only of the true church-aspect, without explicit rejection of the false church-aspect (i.e., the work of Satan). It even refuses to accept the possibility of the false church within the W.C.C. itself, for in the report on “Christian Witness, Proselytism, and Religious Liberty,” (adopted by the Central Committee at St. Andrews, 1960) it says: “Membership in the W.C.C. places a moral obligation upon the churches to observe a particular attitude in this discussion. It would be inconsistent with this

membership for one member church altogether to deny another member church the status of a church, or to regard it as entirely heretical or hopelessly given over to abuses, so that its members could only be helped by being rescued from it. On the basis of their common confession of Jesus Christ as God and Saviour and as the One Head of the Church, member churches jointly recognize ‘hopeful signs’ in each other.”

The committee, in conclusion, warns against two extremes: “On the one hand, there was the danger of *doctrinal labadism*, that absolutizes its own formulations and is unable to see the difference between centre and periphery. On the other hand, there was the danger of *doctrinal latitudinarianism*, that relativizes all differences and refuses to speak the ‘anathema’ (Gal. 1:8).” The committee believes that the first extreme is one into which churches of the Reformed faith can easily fall. The latter extreme is one into which the W.C.C. has fallen. The committee quotes from W.C.C. decisions and publications showing that consistently the W.C.C. minimizes doctrinal differences. It refuses generally to speak of heresy or recognize its existence. The W.C.C. speaks of “common faith (which) allows for certain differences of interpretation and practice”—but nothing is said of heresy within churches.

On the other hand, this same W.C.C. speaks out forcefully regarding separation between churches. This is regarded as THE heresy of which churches are guilty today. The W.C.C. says, “When diversity disrupts the manifest unity of the body, then it changes its quality and becomes *sinful division*.” And, “Even when we have done that which we thought it right to do, we must remember that we are *culpably* implicated in *sin* not wholly of our own making and cannot dissociate ourselves from the sin of division.”

The committee’s conclusion, in the conviction of this writer, on the basis of its report, is correct: churches ought not join the W.C.C. in the present situation. Fact is, the situation in the W.C.C. will not improve—it will only deteriorate. It rests upon wrong foundations and principles—its structure, therefore, can not somehow become sound. Any church would simply delude itself were it to think that by joining the W.C.C. it could make its own good influence felt. Light and darkness may never work together.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Galatians 6: 7. Certainly it is true that what is sown in the hearts of the youth in the church and by the church will be reaped in their lives. If the church no longer sows the seed of the truth of the Word of God, the harvest will be a harvest of thorns and thistles.

—H. Hanks, “The Covenant Witness”

The Lord Gave The Word . . .

The History of Missions

1000 to 1500 A.D.

Rev. C. Hanko

The period of history from approximately the year one thousand to the time of the Reformation is characterized by various mission endeavors. There was the mission effort of the Roman Catholic Church to make converts among the barbarians that still existed on the mainland of Europe and the surrounding country. There was, secondly, the attempt to reach into the countries where the Mohammedans had gained control. And there was, thirdly, what may be referred to as the reformatory mission endeavors within the Roman Catholic Church as the Church became increasingly apostate.

We have seen in a previous article that by the year 1000 the greater part of Europe was nominally Christian and even assumed an attitude of being able to rule the world. Nevertheless the Scandinavian countries had not been won over to Christianity. The efforts that had been made in Denmark, for example, did not prove to be of lasting significance. At the beginning of the tenth century Gorm, the king of Denmark, decided to destroy the churches and kill the priests. However his son and successor, Harald Bluetooth, claimed to have made the Danes Christians. He reestablished the religion of the Roman Catholic Church and allowed bishops to be appointed throughout the country. Yet it was King Canute (Knut) who allowed Christianity, as it was known at that time, to become a part of the life of the Danish people. In 1018 he became king of Denmark and for a time he also ruled over Norway, having control of both sides of the North Sea. In 1026 he made a pilgrimage to Rome and thus showed himself prepared to join the western world in their religion. In 1022 he sent bishops to the archbishop of Canterbury to be consecrated, and thus a contact was established with England. The State maintained a certain power over the Church with remote control by the pope.

In Norway the State also played a chief role in introducing the Christian religion into the country. The name of Olaf Trygvesson (969-1000) is often referred to in this connection. Olaf was influenced by a hermit whom he met in the Scilly islands and by whom he was baptized. In 995 he returned to Norway and shortly after was elected king of Norway. He resorted to every means available to introduce his religion into the country, not hesitating to use flattery, guile, persuasion and even coercion. The members of the Assembly were reluctant to accept his views, but finally conceded. Olaf Haraldsson, also referred to as

St. Olaf, carried on this work, but passed the responsibility of working it out to the bishops. When St. Olaf was overthrown, the religion of Norway was a mixture of Christianity with ancient customs and traditions. The State had control of religious matters.

Christianity soon made its influence felt in Iceland and Greenland also, changing the customs and practices of the people and introducing bishops who were under the authority of Rome. Sweden was probably slower than all the rest in adopting the new religion. The king, Olof Skotkonung, put forth his effort in the early part of the eleventh century to bring a bishop into the country, but he met with great opposition. A hundred years later Inge became king and tried to abolish the heathen practice of sacrifices and to introduce baptism, but he also met with serious resistance. It was in the twelfth century that finally Christianity had gained a foothold in Sweden, about the same time as in Finland. Thus all Europe, with a few exceptions, was said to be Christianized. In some areas, as in Prussia, Christianity was forced upon the people by the edge of the sword. We read that "all who were not baptized must receive the rite within a month, that those who declined to comply should be banished from the company of Christians, and that those who relapsed into paganism should be reduced to slavery."

There was also an intensive effort made by the Roman Catholic Church to win back those countries that had fallen to Mohammedanism. Mohammed had imposed his teachings as well as his influence upon the warring tribes of Arabia in the early part of the seventh century. These Arabs, partly through fanatic zeal and partly driven by the urge to obtain richer lands, set out to conquer the world. By 650 the ancient empire of Persia had fallen into their grasp. Jerusalem was taken in 638, Ceasarea in 640, and thus Palestine and Syria came under the Moslem control. The armies spread out into Egypt and along the entire northern coast of Africa until in 697 Carthage was taken. Then sweeping into Asia Minor and through the southern part of Europe the Islam armies reached into Spain. Even Rome was plundered and Sicily fell into their hands. For many centuries afterward Islam held control of practically all the land surrounding the Mediterranean Sea.

The Roman Catholic Church obviously resented this control and put forth every effort to regain the territory that was lost to them. It is quite generally

agreed though that the crusades (1096-1270) actually attained nothing from a religious aspect. Whatever they may have accomplished they did not succeed in their attempt to replace the Islam Crescent with the Cross. They actually brought the Name of Christ in ill repute among the nations.

It was especially the Italian Franciscans and the Spanish Dominicans who felt it their calling to spread the Gospel of Christ among these Mohammedans. Francis of Assisi established the brotherhood or Order that carried his name. He inaugurated the mission endeavors among the Muslims. In 1223 he went to the East to preach the gospel to the sultan of Egypt. He is said also to have labored in Spain, and sent out many followers to various areas of the East. Also Dominic, the founder of the Dominican friars, felt it his calling to send out members of his order to spread the gospel wherever possible.

In this connection Ramon Lull (sometimes referred to as Raymond Lully) is mentioned, who worked both with the Franciscans and the Dominicans, but who especially stressed the need for trained missionaries. Laboring among the Mohammedans he wanted to be able to refute any argument that they could raise against the Christian religion. He formulated certain definite rules or requirements for an effective mission endeavor. The first was a comprehensive and accurate knowledge of the oriental languages. Five colleges were established for the study of such languages as Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac and Greek. Second, he felt the need of a well formulated book of doctrine that could give grounds for its contentions and refute the errors of the Moslems. A Mohammedan leader had challenged him, "If you hold that the law of Christ is true, and that Mohammed is false, you must prove it by necessary reasons." A challenge of that sort could hardly be ignored. And third, he felt the need of willingness to be faithful and courageous in the witness against the opponents, even at the cost of one's life. It was a perilous effort to witness against the Mohammedans, because the preaching of the Gospel in Islamic countries was an offence punishable by death. Lull himself paid three or four visits to Africa to dispute and to preach. On the last visit in 1315 he was so roughly handled that he died of his injuries.

Actually all the mission endeavors in the Far East have borne very little fruit throughout the centuries. Undoubtedly God did gather His own elect also in those countries from time to time, but the nations never became even nominally Christian. One is reminded of the prophecy of Noah concerning his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, Japheth, who spread throughout Europe after the confusion of Babel, did come to dwell in the tents of Shem. The line of the covenant definitely runs through the descendants of Japheth as well as through those of Shem. But nothing was said about Ham, and as far as Ham's descendants

are concerned, the line of the covenant never continues for any great length of time among them.

But there is still a third phase of mission endeavor in this period which I would not like to ignore, even though this is not usually considered mission work in the accepted sense of the word. I have in mind the reformatory efforts that arose within the Roman Catholic Church as the church became increasingly corrupt; efforts that announced the dawn of the Reformation.

We should mention, first of all, John Wycliffe who is often referred to as "The Morning Star of the Reformation." Wycliffe was born in Hipswell, near Richmond, Yorkshire, England, about 1320. He was a teacher in Oxford, but stands out more particularly as a writer and a reformer. Wycliffe's views concerned particularly three subjects, the Church, the Eucharist, and the place of Scripture for Christian doctrine and life. In regard to the Church, he insisted that our membership in the church does not depend on the authority of the pope. He also denied the priestly power of absolution. Overagainst these errors of the Roman Catholic Church he maintained the Scriptural doctrine of predestination, holding that "the true Church was composed of the 'congregation of the predestined' as the body of Christ, where neither place nor human election makes a person a member of the Church, but divine predestination in respect to whoever with perseverance follows Christ in love, and in abandoning all his worldly goods suffers to defend His law." ("The Morning Star," by G. H. W. Parker). In regard to the Eucharist, Wycliffe insisted that the priest did not have the power to change the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. He opposed the practices of the Mass as idolatry. In regard to the Scriptures he maintained that they are the only sound basis for doctrine and behavior. His translation of the New Testament was completed in 1380; the entire translation of the Bible was completed in 1384, although it is not probable that he did more than a fragment of the work of translation himself. His followers were known as Lollards, who later were arrested and after some time were compelled to recant. Thirty years after Wycliffe's death his writings were condemned, his bones dug up and burned in an official ceremony.

In this connection John Hus of Bohemia must also be mentioned. He came in contact with the writings of Wycliffe, agreed with them and taught them. Although Hus did not agree with Wycliffe on the Eucharist, his arguments about the nature of the Church were similar to those of Wycliffe: "he claimed that it was composed of the predestined under Christ, and that the Pope, cardinals and all the clergy possessed ministries only insofar as they lived according to God's law in Scripture; he denounced simony in any form, and denied any sacerdotal power to remit sin. In addition,

he upheld the right of individual judgment against ecclesiastical authority." (The Morning Star, page 81). He was excommunicated, but stood his ground. Later he was brought to trial, called upon to recant, and when he categorically refused was burned to ashes.

It can also be mentioned that Peter Waldo, a rich merchant of Lyons, France, disposed of all his possessions and became the leader of "The Poor Men of Lyons." He also opposed the errors of transubstantiation, mass, purgatory, absolution of sins by the priests,

sales of indulgences, and the supreme authority of the Pope in Rome, as well as the worship of images, relics, of the virgin Mary and of the saints. (The March of Truth, Sr. Stephen Szabo). His followers were known as the Waldenses and are said to have joined the Calvinists after the Reformation.

How true it is that the Son of God, and He alone, gathers His Church, and that by His Word and Spirit. Heid. Cat. Ques. 54.

Contending for the Faith

THE DOCTRINE OF SIN

THE THIRD PERIOD – 730-1517 A.D.
DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH OF ROME
COUNCIL OF TRENT

Rev. H. Veldman

The Roman Catholic Council of Trent, which met for several years and began its sessions some thirty years after the beginning of the Reformation in 1517, was convened to combat and counteract the rising tide of the Reformation. This council set itself to maintain the doctrinal position and teachings of the Romish Church. It also expressed itself on the subject of sin. Concerning the task and difficulties of this council, Hodge writes as follows, Vol. II, 174 f.f.:

The Council of Trent had a very difficult task to perform. In the first place, it was necessary to condemn the doctrines of the Reformers. But the Protestants, as well Lutheran as Reformed, had proclaimed their adherence to the Augustinian system in its purity and fulness; and that system had received the sanction of councils and popes and could not be directly impugned. This difficulty was surmounted by grossly misrepresenting the Protestant doctrine, and making it appear inconsistent with the doctrine of Augustine. This method has been persevered in to the present day. Moehler in his "Symbolik" represents the doctrine of the Protestants, and especially that of Luther, on original sin, as a form of Manichiesm. The other, and more serious difficulty, was the great diversity of opinion existing in the Church and in the Council itself. Some were Augustinians; some held that original sin consisted simply in the want of original righteousness, but that that want is sin. Others admitted no original sin, but the imputation of Adam's first transgression. Others, with the Dominicans, insisted that the disorder of all the powers consequent on the loss of original righteousness, i.e., concupiscence, is truly and properly sin. This the Franciscans denied. Under these circumstances the pontifical legates, who attended the Council, exhorted the assembled fathers, that they should decide nothing as to the nature of

original sin, reminding them that they were not called together to teach doctrines, but to condemn errors. This advice the Council endeavoured to follow, and hence its decisions are expressed in very general terms.

The Council of Trent, in its fifth session, held June 17, 1546, set forth its decrees concerning original sin. After declaring that, in order that their Catholic faith may continue in its own perfect and spotless integrity, and that the Christian people may not be carried about with every wind of doctrine, seeing that that old serpent, the perpetual enemy of mankind, amongst the very many evils with which the Church of God is in these our times troubled, has also stirred up not only new, but even old dissensions touching original sin, this council would now ordain and confess what is the truth concerning all these matters, the Council now sets forth the "truth" on this matter in 5 chapters.

In chapter 1 the Council declares the following:

If any one does not confess that the first man, Adam, when he had transgressed the commandment of God in Paradise, immediately lost the holiness and justice wherein he had been constituted; and that he incurred, through the offense of that prevarication, the wrath and indignation of God, and consequently death, with which God had previously threatened him, and, together with death, captivity under his power who thenceforth *had the empire of death, that is to say, the devil*, and that the entire Adam, through that offense of prevarication, was changed, in body and soul, for the worse; let him be anathema.

Here the Synod anathematizes all those who do not confess that Adam, when he transgressed in paradise the commandment of God, did immediately lose the holiness and righteousness in which he had been constituted; and that by that offence he incurred the

wrath and indignation of God, and thus also death and subjection to him who has the power of death, that is, the devil; and that the whole Adam by the offence of his transgression was as to the body and the soul, changed for the worse. Hence, the effects of Adam's first sin upon himself therefore was (1) The loss of original righteousness. (2) Death and captivity to Satan. (3) The deterioration of his whole nature both soul and body.

In chapter 2 the Council declares the following:

If any one asserts, that the prevarication of Adam injured himself alone, and not his posterity; and that the holiness and justice, received of God, which he lost, he lost for himself alone, and not for us also; or that he, being defiled by the sin of disobedience, has only transfused death and pains of the body into the whole human race, but not sin also, which is the death of the soul; let him be anathema: — whereas he contradicts the apostle who says: *By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned.*

In this chapter the Synod anathematizes all those who say that the sin of Adam injured only Adam, and not his posterity. Here it is taught that the effects of Adam's sin upon his posterity are: (1) The loss of original righteousness. (2) Death and the miseries of this life; and (3) Sin, or spiritual death. Now this is a distinct condemnation of Pelagianism, and the clear assertion of original sin, as something transmitted to all men. The nature of that sin, however, is not further stated than that it is the death of the soul, which may be differently explained.

In chapter 3 the Council declares:

If any one asserts, that this sin of Adam, — which in its origin is one, and being transfused into all by propagation, not by imitation, is in each one as his own, — is taken away either by the powers of human nature, or by any other remedy than the merit of the *one mediator, our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath reconciled us to God in His own blood, being made unto us justice, sanctification, and redemption*; or if he denies that the said merit of Jesus Christ is applied, both to adults and to infants, by the sacrament of baptism rightly administered in the form of the Church; let him be anathema: *For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved.* Whence that voice: *Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who taketh away the sins of the world*; and that other: *As many as have been baptized, have put on Christ.*

In this chapter the Synod anathematizes all those who say that this sin of Adam, which is conveyed to all, can be removed by the powers of human nature. In this chapter it is asserted: (1) That original sin is conveyed by propagation and not, as the Pelagians say, by imitation. (2) That it belongs to every man and inheres in him. (3) That it cannot be removed by any other means than the blood of Christ.

In chapter 4 we have the following:

If any one denies, that infants, newly born from their mothers' wombs, even though they be sprung from baptized parents, are to be baptized; or says that they are *baptized* indeed *for the remission of sins*, but that they derive nothing of original sin from Adam, which has need of being expiated by the laver of regeneration for obtaining life everlasting, — whence it follows as a consequence, that in them the form of baptism, *for the remission of sins*, is understood to be not true, but false, — let him be anathema. For that which the apostle has said, *By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned*, is not to be understood otherwise than as the Catholic Church spread everywhere hath always understood it. For, by reason of this rule of faith, from a tradition of the apostles, even infants, who could not as yet commit any sin of themselves, are for this cause truly *baptized for the remission of sins*, that in them that may be cleansed away by regeneration, which they have contracted by generation. *For, unless a man be born again of water and of the Holy Ghost, he can not enter into the kingdom of God.*

Concerning this chapter Hodge has the following comments:

The Synod condemns all who teach that new-born children should not be baptized; or, that although baptized for the remission of sins, they derive nothing of original sin from Adam, which needs to be expiated in the laver of regeneration in order to attain eternal life, so that baptism, in their case, would not be true but false. Children, therefore, who cannot have committed sin, in their own persons, are truly baptized for the remission of sins, that what they had contracted in generation, may be purged away in regeneration. From this it appears that according to the Council of Trent there is sin in new-born infants which needs to be remitted and washed away by regeneration.

The fifth canon or chapter reads as follows:

If any one denies, that, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is conferred in baptism, the guilt of original sin is remitted; or even asserts that the whole of that which has the true and proper nature of sin is not taken away; but says that it is only rased, or not imputed; let him be anathema. For, in those who are *born again*, there is nothing that God hates; because, *There is no condemnation to those who are truly buried together with Christ by baptism into death; who walk not according to the flesh, but, putting off the old man, and putting on the new who is created according to God*, are made innocent, immaculate, pure, harmless, and beloved of God, *heirs indeed of God, but joint heirs with Christ*; so that there is nothing whatever to retard their entrance into heaven. But this holy synod confesses and is sensible, that in the baptized there remains concupiscence, or an incentive (to sin); which, whereas it is left for our exercise, can not injure those who consent not, but resist manfully by the grace of Jesus Christ; yea, he who shall have *striven lawfully shall be crowned*. This concupiscence, which

the apostle sometimes calls sin, the holy Synod declares that the Catholic Church has never understood it to be called sin, as being truly and properly sin in those *born again*, but because it is of sin, and inclines to sin. And if any one is of a contrary sentiment, let him be anathema. This same holy Synod doth nevertheless declare, that it is not its intention to include in this decree, where original sin is treated of, the blessed and immaculate Virgin Mary, the mother of God; but that the constitutions of Pope Sixtus IV, of happy memory, are to be

observed, under the pains contained in the said constitutions, which it renews.

We will conclude our present article at this point. So, although the apostle Paul does sometimes call it sin, the Romish Church has never understood it to be called sin, as being truly and properly sin in those who are born again. And, of course, the Romish Church excludes the virgin Mary from this decree which treats of original sin. This, of course, is a very arbitrary decision. To this canon or chapter we will return in our following article.

A Cloud of Witnesses

David's Flight From Jerusalem

Rev. B. Woudenberg

And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with edge of the sword.

And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint.

And the king went forth, and all of his household with him.

II Samuel 15:14-16

Surely in all of his life, there was never an experience as painful to David the king as receiving the news of Absalom's rebellion. By it he was utterly stunned. In a moment, it seemed that all of his joy had fled from his life.

In the first place, the assurance was in every message he received that all of Israel was following after Absalom. These were the people whom he had loved with his whole being from the day he was a child. With them he had gone to worship all through his life and led them in worship since he was their king. For them he had fought, again and again to the risk of his own life. And now for many a year he had ruled over them in kindness and fairness and consideration. They in turn had often assured him in many different ways of their appreciation, loyalty and love. But now in a moment, all had turned from him to follow in the way of treachery. It was almost impossible to believe.

Even more painful to him, however, was the fact that this was a rebellion planned and led by his son, even by Absalom. There was something about that child which he had always especially loved. It was not that he had not realized that in his heart Absalom had no real love for that which was right and true. That had been evident from his youth, and the murder of Amnon had brought this clearly to the fore. Yet, for him David had ever hoped and prayed, wrestling with God in his behalf. This was why he had left him so long in the banishment of Geshur and even after that had refused to restore him to favor in the court. He

had hoped it would bring Absalom to see his sin and turn him to repentance. But it had failed. It was evident now that through it all Absalom had only become more and more bitter, hateful, and resentful. He no longer even stopped at seeking the overthrow of his own father. This hurt David even more than the treachery of the people.

And then there was the most painful fact of all—this was God's punishment upon him because of his sin. Never had David been able to forget the words of Nathan the prophet after his sin with Bathsheba, "Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house," but neither had he ever realized how true this would be and how far it would actually go. And now that this evil had come upon him, the one thing that stung him more than anything else was the inescapable realization that it was the hand of God which brought it upon him. The implication was clear. Whatever it was that happened, it was nothing more than what he deserved. It was this above all that moved David to issue the command to his servants, "Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword." David was not a man who could easily turn to flight; but this was the hand of God upon him, and he had not the courage to resist.

Surely, it was a sad scene. David was by now an elderly man, and the effects of his recent illness still were to be clearly seen on him. Besides this, he was

burdened with deep feelings of responsibility and guilt. It was not possible for him to take strong command, as he had so often done in the adverse circumstances of his youth, and carry everyone along with the power of his own confidence. Each person had to shift for himself as best he could in the few hours they had to prepare for their journey. There was through it all only one thing that diluted the sorrow. As difficult as everything looked to be, each and every one of David's personal servants remained faithful behind the king. Their answer was only this, "Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint." They would stay with him until the end, for they had come to love David as a father.

David, however, was an extremely spiritual man. Under his presence, the procession which left the palace and the royal city was almost transformed into a pilgrimage of worship. It was actually a rather large crowd of people that set out to accompany the king. There was his family, a goodly number of women and children in itself, and all of the servants of his house with the exception of ten of his concubines which were left behind in charge of the palace. With them was what remained in Jerusalem of David's army, the Cherethites and the Pelethites, his personal bodyguard, as it were. And then, most striking of all, there were over six hundred Philistine men who had come with David when he had left Gath. These were converted heathen, men who from David had learned to love the service of the true God. So true and faithful was their love for David who had taught them so much that even now, when all of Israel had turned against him, they were ready to follow into whatever hardship he might come. Here was to be sure a silent condemnation that cried against all of the nation of Israel. When evil came upon their own king given them by appointment from God, it was the converted heathen that stood with him much more than Israel itself.

It was this latter fact that was brought to the fore even more emphatically in the instance of Ittai the Gittite. Here was a man who had come to Jerusalem just one day before this flight from Absalom was taking place. What the circumstances were which surrounded his coming, we do not know. However, it would appear that under the rule of David it was not completely uncommon for heathen subjects to fall under the conviction that Israel's God was the true God and ought to be worshipped also by them. Thus Ittai had come to Jerusalem with the purpose that he might be received into the worship of Jehovah, and thus Ittai had been received by the king just some 24 hours before.

It was as David was leaving the city that also this man appeared to join himself to the fleeing procession. David saw him immediately, and always mindful as he was of the dangers which confronted anyone no matter how lowly, he went to Ittai and said, "Wherefore goest

thou also with us? return to thy place, and abide with the king: for thou art a stranger, and also an exile. Whereas thou camest but yesterday, should I this day make thee go up and down with us? seeing I go whither I may, return thou, and take back thy brethren: mercy and truth be with thee."

But Ittai was not a man who had come without reason and conviction. Israel might not know and appreciate the blessedness which was theirs in this king which God had given him, but Ittai did. Quickly he replied in words that echoed closely the confession of David's own ancestral mother Ruth the Moabites, "As the LORD liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be."

David was deeply touched by this gesture and trust. Quietly he answered, "Go and pass over." Thus it was that another band of people, Ittai, a group of men that followed him, and his whole family were joined to David's procession."

Neither was David the only one moved by the composition of his procession. As they began to move outside of the city more and more of the Israelites began to feel that what was happening was not likely to work to their favor. With troubled hearts they poured out of their homes to watch silently from the side of the road as their king fled from their presence in the city. Soon tears and weeping were to be seen everywhere. In their hearts they knew it was not good even though few had the courage to stand up to defend him. Thus it was that David and his followers made their way down to the brook Kidron to pass over and turn their faces in the direction of the wilderness.

It was at this juncture, however, that a still stranger band appeared to join themselves to David in his departure. It was led by Zadok the priest and contained in its midst Levites bearing the Ark of the covenant. The intent of this too was clear. Zadok was not about to leave the ark of God within the city where a treacherous pretender to the royal throne might well be expected to try to use it in some manner to reinforce his false and evil claims. Let it rather go with David as an indication of the truth that he was the rightfully anointed of the Lord.

But David would have none of this. Turning to Zadok he said, "Carry back the ark of God into the city; if I shall find favour in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me again, and shew me both it, and his habitation. But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him." David had learned the lessons of history well. He was not about to suppose, as so many in the days of Eli had, that by merely carrying the ark of God with him, he was sure to obtain the divine favor. He recognized that His God was behind all that was taking place from beginning to end; He had ordained it from eternity. David had no desire to try to change that

eternal plan. He could wait for that which the Lord had willed for him. Meanwhile, let the ark rest in its proper place. If it was God's will for him to return to it again, it would come; and if not, that would have to be well then, too.

Moreover, David also had intentions for Zadok the priest which were best served by the ark being left where it belonged. To Zadok he further commanded, "Art not thou a seer? return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar. See, I will tarry in the plain of the wilderness, until there come word from you to certify me." David indeed waited upon the counsel of God to fulfill its proper purpose; but he realized, too, that proper provision should be made which might be used by God in bringing it all to pass. A warrior at heart, always, already his mind was beginning to form plans by which he and his company might be defended from the treachery of his son. Thus

the ark was returned to its proper place in Jerusalem so that Absalom might not suspect those who would be used by God and David to assist in his defense.

Thus it was that at last David's company went on to pass over the top of the Mount of Olives, the last place from which the city that he had established might be glimpsed. Each step of the way sorrow cut at the heart of the king because of this strange way into which he by the hand of the Lord was being led. There upon the top of the mountain he covered his head and bared his feet and wept. It was his gesture of submission and responsibility before the judgment of God. Whatever the Lord might do to him, he would receive it as good. And so the whole procession did likewise. In contrast to that great company of eager and ambitious men who were even now approaching Jerusalem from the opposite direction, there was no pride or rebellion here, only submission to the will of the Lord.

In His Fear

IN THE WAY

Rev. John A. Heys

The above expression is one of those phrases that depend upon the context for its content.

A way can be a path. It can be a direction. It can be a manner of conduct or behavior.

Abraham's eldest and most trusted servant used the phrase in a very spiritual and beautiful way. Eliezer said, after God had blessed him in his effort to obtain a wife for Isaac, "I being *in the way*, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." Genesis 24:27.

There are other uses of the phrase in Scripture. Solomon tells us in Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child *in the way* he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 2:20 contains the expression with somewhat of an explanation. For we read, "That thou mayest walk *in the way* of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous." The opposite is present in Proverbs 4:14, "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not *in the way* of evil men." God uses the phrase to comfort His people in the howling wilderness with these words, "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee *in the way*, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared." Exodus 23:20.

We use the expression to present a pointed and important question: Is God in your way? You see, we walk in the way of the Lord, or we find Him in our way. And then we will not find Him walking in our way, but as Balaam's ass, we will find Him there ready to destroy us. We are never in His way in the sense that we obstruct the path on which He would go; but so

often we find Him obstructing the way which we want to go. And therefore it is a question of walking in the way of good men, or it is a case of finding God in our way. A man cannot walk in two ways at the same time. We cannot serve God and mammon. Either we walk with God, as Enoch did, and have His friendship and covenant fellowship; or we find Him a nuisance at first, and then a threat to all of our joy, and ultimately a terror to us in His righteous indignation and wrath! We are never a nuisance to Him. We never frustrate Him. Nor do we even slow Him down a bit as He walks straight ahead on the path that He has sovereignly chosen to walk. We displease Him. We make Him furious by our sins. For when we do not walk in His way, we come up against Him. We oppose Him as enemies. Yet we do not stand in His way in the same way that we find Him standing in our way, that is, in the way of our flesh, to curb us, stop us and ultimately destroy the wicked and cast them forever out of His way and into the lake of fire.

What, then, is the case in your life? Does God stand *in the way* of your pleasure and joy and life? Or are you walking side by side with Him *in the way* that His Word points out to you?

God created us at His own side. He made us to be His friend-servants; and we walked with Him in the direction of His glory. In fact, that was the only way that we knew. We could not possibly imagine going contrary to that way. We were aware of such a contrary walk, for God told us of it when He pointed

out the tree of the knowledge of good and of evil and told us not to eat of it. The way of opposition was shown to us. The way of rebellion, the way of coming up against this Friend-Master, was clearly indicated. We did not choose it thinking that this was the way we were supposed to go. These two ways do not run parallel to each other. They do not crisscross each other. They go in exactly opposite directions. As we said, either we walk *with* God and in His way; or we come up against Him in rebellion. But even though we knew that contrary way, we could not think of going down it. We had no desire whatsoever to do anything but walk in God's way. At that time to walk in the way was to walk in the way of God's command and of His glory.

We were turned by the lie of Satan, who deceived us into thinking that going in this opposite direction was far more advantageous for us, and instead of being harmful was actually the way of life. And the way of death we chose for the way of life. It is for that reason that now we find God in our way. Instead of God finding us on His way, we now find God in our way. That lie of Satan was that we should and could walk in the way of taking away God's glory without finding Him there before us with the sword of death! And we turned around to challenge the Almighty and to strive for His glory! No wonder then is it that we find Him in the way. His is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. He is a jealous God Who will not allow any creature to take the smallest part of His glory away; but He will surely visit this iniquity of ascribing His glory to the creature and of lowering Him to the level of the creature. He is not going to step aside to let us go in in that way. He set cherubim with a flaming sword after driving man out of paradise to keep the way of the tree of life; and He is still there to guard His holiness and glory. Therefore at the end of the way, at the end of our life, we will find Him there with that sword, if we have not walked in His way. Solomon declares this in Proverbs 14:12, when he writes, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

But is God in the way for you? We admit that when we try to brush Him aside by brushing aside His Word. And we admit that God is in our way when we brush aside His representatives in His church here below. When we change church membership in order to be able to walk in the way of our flesh without being bothered by the "watchmen" upon the walls of Zion, we admit that we find God in our way. We do that when we strive to get from under the hand of discipline by asking for our church papers to carry them in our pockets or to present them to a body of men who will not investigate or continue the discipline. We do that when we seek a church roof where these same sins, of the way which we in our flesh have chosen, are practiced and condoned. Foolishly we have

striven to go another way when we find God in our way; and then at the end of the way we still find that there He is! We will not answer to Him through the representatives of His church; but we still will have to answer to Him personally at the end of the way. Walk in His way, or else you will find Him at the end of the way.

All the riots and revolt, rebellion and revolution that we find in the world today are another testimony to the fact that the natural man always finds God in the way. He stands before us in the principle of the fifth commandment, for He stands before us also in the person of the authority that He has placed over us, be it father and mother in the home, the king on the throne, the police on the street, or the employer in the business establishment or factory. *All* revolution and revolt, riot and rebellion are an attempt to brush Him aside in order that we may continue on our way to seek the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. Thus it was when the ten tribes in rebellion cried, "What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David." I Kings 12:16. Turning their backs upon David, they turned their backs upon the *Son of David*, and turning their backs upon Him, they turned their backs upon God. Rehoboam's demand and stand may have been unwise, but their reaction was unrighteous. It was a case of refusing in the mind to go in God's way. It was finding God, as He speaks in the fifth commandment, standing in their way. Had they been walking with God, seeking to glorify Him as He always seeks to glorify Himself, they would have said with Paul, "We must be subject to all in authority over us, for the powers that be are ordained of God; and to resist these powers is to resist God." Instead they said, "Away with God!" And they said that in more than one way. They said it in that they were pushing aside His Word in I Peter 2:18, "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully," but also in that they turned away from Christ when they turned away from David *and his house*. They were through with the royal line from which Christ would come. They were then through with God's way.

All rebellion against the authorities, including those in the colleges and universities against the faculties and school boards, is due to the fact that men have found God in their way; and like Balaam of old, they are going to go ahead, even though Balaam's ass knew better. It is not merely a matter of finding a man or a group of men in your way. It is a matter of finding God's law and consequently God in the way. When we follow the lust of our flesh, the lust of our eyes and the pride of life and consequently are more interested in satisfying our carnal desires than to walk with God

and patiently wait for the kingdom of heaven, we will try to push God away, though He says, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." Romans 13:1.

Walking in the way of the Lord means that we would rather suffer loss than to go contrary to His will. Walking in the way of the Lord means that we also say, "There is a way which seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Walking in God's way we are not opposing Him, have no desire to oppose Him, and walk toward the new Jerusalem, meanwhile patiently bearing the afflictions and injustices of men. And walking in His way means that we desire what He desires and hope to spend eternity with Him. He is not then in our way; but we do long to see Him at the end of the way as our covenant Father Who has there prepared a place for us in heavenly glory.

Are you sincerely willing and ready henceforth to live unto Him? And can you with David declare in all sincerity, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple?" Psalm 27:4. Then God is not in your way. Then He is not a threat to your joy and happiness and life, but you are on His way and walking to where you will meet Him in blessed covenant fellowship in a kingdom wherein all goes in God's way.

Look about you, however, in the church world of today. You have this same evil of finding God in the way. So much of the ecumenical movement of today is nothing less than a manifestation of man's awareness that God stands in the way of an evil walk, and of man's desire to get around Him in a folly not found

even in Balaam's ass. He stands before them in sound doctrine. He stands before them in the Confessions of the Church. He stands in the way of their flesh' desires. And so He must go. They will not turn to walk with Him and be willing to be a "little flock" that is despised and hated by the serpent and his seed. HE must go. Even as the Form-of-God-but-denying-the-power-thereof Synagogue attenders of Nazareth rushed at God in our flesh, when in His preaching He plainly stood in the way of their pipe dreams of a super, colossal kingdom of David and Solomon once again in Palestine, and sought to get Him permanently out of their way, so the modern church strives to do this by scrapping all those points of difference in doctrine which stand in the way of their dreams of a colossal, super church with man on the throne with his social gospel that knows little or nothing of guilt of sin before God, and seeks a salvation from the curse without the atoning blood of the cross.

God grant that we and our children are not deceived into taking a position where we find God in our way. May He give us grace to continue to stand at His side walking in His fear and hoping for the day when we shall live with Him and be satisfied with His covenant fellowship in an unending day of bliss and glory. And, indeed, the only solution to all of our problems is that He bring us back to such a stand. The psalmist says so significantly in Psalm 80:3, 7 and 19, "Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause Thy face to shine; and we shall be saved." It is a case of being turned *again*. We turned away to oppose Him and to stand where He must oppose us. He must turn us again to walk in His way; and then His face will shine on us; and we will be glad to find Him at the end of the way to welcome us home.

BOOK REVIEWS

DEATH AND CONTEMPORARY MAN: THE CRISIS OF TERMINAL ILLNESS, by Carl G. Carlozzi (*Eerdmans*, 1968, 79 pp., \$1.45, paperback).

This little book, written by an Episcopalian minister who served for a time as an assistant chaplain at a metropolitan hospital, attempts to deal with various aspects of what is called "terminal illness," that is, illness which is incurable and which therefore will end in death. After an introductory chapter on "Death and Contemporary Man," the subject of terminal illness is viewed from the viewpoint of the patient himself, the family in the terminal setting, the pastor's ministry,

and the physician's function. The book, therefore, is one which lies in the area of poimenics, or pastoral care.

There is no question about it that the subject with which this book deals is an important one and a practical one for a pastor. For sooner or later in his ministry any pastor will come face to face with the situation in which one of his sheep, along with his family, is confronted by "terminal illness." How must the pastor deal with such a situation? What constitutes proper pastoral care of those involved?

This little book is not very helpful, in my opinion, for three reasons. One reason is that the book tackles a very large subject in the short space of 79 pages. For this reason, it hardly scratches the surface of the subject; its value probably lies mostly in the fact that it will set a pastor's thoughts in motion on the various problems involved. The second reason is that the entire approach of the book is only very vaguely Scriptural.

The third reason is that the book suggests, in my opinion, some highly unethical answers to grave ethical questions, particularly in the discussion of euthanasia (mercy killing) and anti-dysthanasia (so-called indirect euthanasia). In general, my evaluation is: not very helpful.

H.C.H.

TAKEN TO GLORY

On Friday, April 11, 1969, it pleased our Heavenly Father to take to Eternal Glory our dear husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather

JACOB H. VANDER WAL

at the age of 79 years.

Through many years of sickness and affliction his hope steadfastly grew in the sure promise of his Covenant God that:

"Though flesh and heart should faint and fail,
The Lord will ever be
The Strength and Portion of my heart,
My God Eternally." (Psalm 73).

Mrs. J.H. Vander Wal
Henry and Dorothy Vander Wal
Dick and Angeline Vander Wal
William and Lois Versluys
14 Grandchildren
14 Great-grandchildren

Grand Rapids, Mich.

CALL TO SYNOD

By decision of the last Synod, the Consistory of The Protestant Reformed Church of South Holland, Illinois, notifies the Churches that the 1969 Synod will convene on Wednesday, June 4, at 9:00 A.M., the Lord willing, in the above mentioned Church.

The Pre-Synodical Service will be held on Tuesday, June 3rd., at 8:00 P.M., Rev. John A. Heys to deliver the sermon.

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

Those in need of lodging please contact Raymond L. Bruinsma of South Holland, Phone (312) 333-1622.

Consistory of the Protestant
Reformed Church of South Holland.

Daniel Poortinga, V. P.
Raymond L. Bruinsma, Clerk.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The board of the R.F.P.A. hereby expresses its sincere sympathy and hope that our fellow business manager and laborer Mr. Henry Vander Wal and family may find comfort and assurance thru that faith which cometh from God.

"Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion and righteous.

Mr. R. Teitsma Pres.
Mr. G. Pipe, Sec.

CALL TO ASPIRANTS TO THE MINISTRY Seminary and Pre-seminary Students

All young men desiring to begin their studies this fall in either the pre-seminary or the seminary department of the Theological School of the Protestant Reformed Churches are requested to appear before the Theological School Committee at its meeting to be held, D.V., on Tuesday, May 27, at the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Mich.

The qualifications requisite to enrolling in the Seminary course are:

1. You must present a letter from your local consistory certifying that you are upright in walk and pure in doctrine.

2. You must present a certificate of health, signed by a reputable physician.

3. You must be a graduate from high school, being able to show that you have completed a one-year course in General History and in Church History, and that you have completed the following College courses: Latin-2 years, Greek-2 years, German-2 years, Dutch-2 years, Philosophy-1 year, Psychology-1 year, and Logic-1 semester.

The qualifications to enter the pre-seminary department are the same as above, except that "3" should read, "a graduate from high school."

In the event you cannot be present at this meeting, please notify the undersigned secretary of your intentions prior to the meeting.

Rev. J. Kortering, Sec'y
1551 Wilson Ave., S.W.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504

News From Our Churches

REPORT OF CLASSIS EAST

April 2, 1969

At Hudsonville, Mich.

Rev. G. Van Baren presided over the opening devotions, and after the Credentials were accepted pronounced the Classis properly constituted. All the churches were represented by two delegates each.

Rev. H. Veldman then presided, while Rev. Van Baren recorded the minutes. Rev. Veldman welcomed the delegates with a few well-chosen words, and read the agendum to Classis. The chairman appointed the brethren P. Cnossen and F. Ondersma as finance committee, and brother H. Vander Kolk to thank the ladies of Hudsonville for their excellent catering.

The Stated Clerk read the minutes of the January Classis which were read and approved, and then read his report re correspondence. The Classical Committee also reported. Classis West and Southwest Church requested classical appointments to which Classis acceded. The committee, Revs. J. Kortering and J. A. Heys and Elder R. Pastoor, prepared the schedule which Classis adopted as follows:

SOUTH HOLLAND — Apr. 13 - G. Van Baren Apr. 20 - J. A. Heys May 4 - H. Veldman May 11 - G. Van Baren May 18 - J. Kortering June 1 - G. Van Baren June 15 - J. A. Heys June 22 - J. Kortering June 29 - H. Veldman July 6 - R. C. Harbach July 13 - J. A. Heys July 20 - M. Schipper July 27 - G. Van Baren Aug. 3 - G. C. Lubbers Aug. 10 - J. Kortering Aug. 17 - M. Schipper Aug. 24 - H. Veldman Aug. 31 - R. C. Harbach Sept. 7 - G. C. Lubbers Sept. 14 - H. Veldman Sept. 21 - J. A. Heys Sept. 28 - G. Van Baren.

SOUTHWEST — Apr. 13 - M. Schipper Apr. 20 - H. Veldman & M. Schipper Apr. 27 - G. Van Baren & M. Schipper May 4 - J. Kortering & G. Van Baren May 11 - R. C. Harbach May 18 - G. Van Baren & H. Veldman May 25 - R. C. Harbach.

RANDOLPH — Apr. 27 - J. Kortering May 11 - J. A. Heys.

PELLA — Aug. 10 and 17 - J. A. Heys.

HULL — Apr. 13 and 20 - R. C. Harbach May 11 and 18 - M. Schipper July 6 and 13 - J. Kortering.

FORBES — July 20 and 27 H. Veldman.

The committee appointed in the January Classis to study an appeal reported, and Classis adopted the advice given with a minor amendment.

Another appeal from an individual against his Consistory was rejected by Classis because the appellant had not given a copy of his appeal to the Consistory and had not given enough time to consider it.

The Subsidy Request from Holland was approved by Classis and sent to Synod. A Consistory requested approval of the erasure of a baptized member, but Classis denied the request.

Classis voted for Church Visitors with the result that the Revs. M. Schipper and J. A. Heys were chosen with

Rev. H. Veldman as alternate for both.

The Questions of Article 41 of the Church Order were asked and answered satisfactorily. One Consistory asked a question relative to the determining the number of families in the congregation, which Classis answered.

The chairman spoke words of appreciation to Classis for the cooperation given him, and especially directed a farewell address to the Rev. G. C. Lubbers and Elder H. Meulenberg who were about to leave for Jamaica, wishing them the Lord's blessing and expressing the prayer for their safe journey.

Classis decided to meet next time on July 2 at Southwest Church, and then adjourned. Rev. R. C. Harbach was asked to offer the closing prayer after the Classis sang Psalter Number 345. M. Schipper, S.C.

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An Office Bearer's Conference, held in Hudsonville Church, featured Rev. Schipper speaking on, "The Encouragement of Students for the Ministry, according to Art. 19 of the Church Order"; Prof. Hanko spoke for the Mens' League April 7 on, "The Intermediate State"; and Rev. Van Baren addressed the Eastern Ladies' League April 10, speaking on, "The Restoration of Babel", which the speaker said was taking form before our eyes, ushering in the time when our Lord will once more say, "... and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do." *Gen. 11:6*.

* * * *

The Spring Lecture was held in First Church April 11, with Prof. Hoeksema speaking on, "The Marks of the True Church", a moving exposition of the Word of God as it is embodied in the treatise on "The Church" found in the Netherland Confession. The size of the audience was a bit disappointing, not to be blamed to inclement weather, for it was a cloudless evening. If some stayed away because they thought they would hear nothing new — they were right, for the truth of The Church is at least as old as our Confessions. If others stayed away because they thought the Seminary Professor would say that ours was the purest manifestation of the true church — they were right, but he based it on the truth of the confessions which clearly spell out the distinctive marks whereby we may know the true from the false. But a lecture on that subject cannot be expected to draw a big crowd in this day of the idol worship of the modern god, "Ecumenicity," who views the words, "mark" and "true", as four-letter-words not to be mentioned in the company of his worshipers. The speaker especially warned the young people of the gradual decline from the true to the false, and reminded them of their calling to be joined to the purest manifestation of the true church. Mrs. C. Lubbers was at the organ playing music furthering the theme of the lecture. The offering was for the Jamaican Building Fund.

... see you in church, J.M.F.