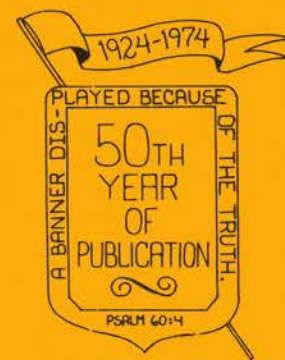
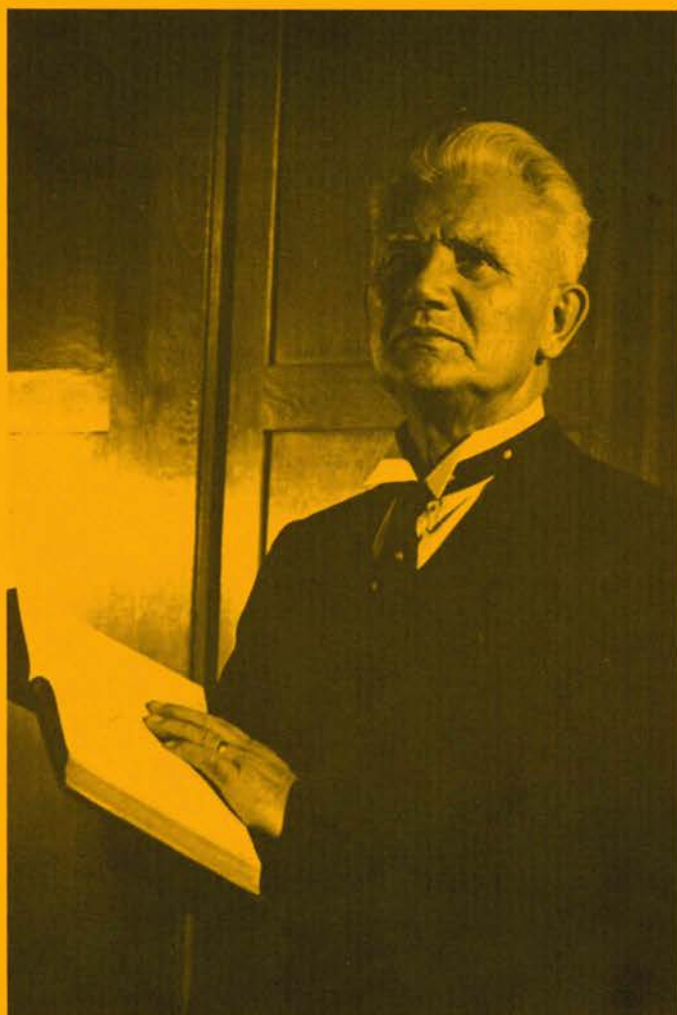


The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE



Golden Anniversary Issue



Reverend Herman Hoeksema, 1886-1965



Reverend George M. Ophoff, 1891-1962

This special issue marks the completion of fifty years of publication. With heartfelt thanksgiving we acknowledge the faithfulness of our Covenant God, Who has preserved us in the truth of His Word, Who has provided abundantly the necessary means for publishing our magazine, Who has by His Spirit and grace guided and sustained our editors through all these years, Who has given to our Reformed Free Publishing Association an open door, and Who has made perfect His strength in our weakness.



The pictures on the front cover are two of our original editors who for many, many years did the lion's share of the writing in our magazine, who were stalwart battlers for the Reformed faith, and who through their writings have been instruments of God's grace to instruct us and enrich us in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ.



MEDITATION

Worthy Of Our Calling

Rev. M. Schipper

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Ephesians 4:1-3.

Doctrine and life belong together, and in such a way that the latter flows out of the former.

Such is the implication of the text before us.

Implicit in the term "therefore" is the doctrine which the apostle had set forth in the first part of his epistle. There he had made known the mystery that God in Christ is gathering together all things in one to the church. Christ, so he says, has been made the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

Incumbent on the church is that she walk worthy of her calling, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

And the latter the apostle weights down with the assertion that he is the prisoner of the Lord. This he says, not to discourage the church, so that some, hearing of his bonds might lose heart, concluding perhaps that if a godly walk leads to jail, it were better not to walk so godly. No, the very opposite is true. His purpose is to incite his readers to walk fearlessly. A godly walk, one that is in the fear of the Lord, is not one that is to be feared, but it is to be counted desirable; provided, of course, that one so bound understands that he is a bond-servant of Jesus Christ. More than once the apostle speaks of his bondage. In the preceding he writes: "I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles." And again in the closing part of the epistle: "for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." And in our text he mentions it once more. That he is a prisoner "in the Lord," as the original suggests, means that he is a prisoner in respect to the Lord, and therefore for His sake.

I, namely, the one who am a prisoner in the Lord — I beseech you!

I beseech you to walk worthily of the calling, namely, the one by which you were called!

The calling here undoubtedly must be understood in the sense of the saving, efficacious calling which had come unto the church through the preaching of the gospel. This calling is generally distinguished as outward and inward. It is one calling with two aspects. In its outward aspect it comes to us through the preaching of the gospel. Accordingly, we hear it with our physical ears and understand it intellectually. At the same time it is brought to our innermost spiritual understanding, to our hearts, so that we hear not only with our ears, but with our innermost being Christ speaking to us. It is He Who through His Spirit and Word calls us out of darkness into His marvelous light. He who is thus called hears not only the command of Christ to come to Him, but he responds by actually coming to Christ. It is the calling whereby God by His Spirit and Word calls us out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. It is the calling which is irresistible, efficacious, and saving.

It is the purpose of God to gather together all things under one Head, Christ. Such is the doctrine which the apostle had expounded in the preceding context. It is the church of Christ, chosen and redeemed by Christ, which constitutes the center of the "all things" being gathered. And the realization of the church is by the efficacious calling, wherewith the elect are called into the holy unity God in Christ is realizing.

Of that calling the redeemed church is to walk worthily!

One's walk embraces his whole life, in all its departments, as one lives that life here in the present evil world.

To walk worthy of our calling means to live in this present world in such a way that that walk is in harmony with one's calling; that is, in such a way that our manner of life in no way negates our belonging to the unity of all things as God purposes to realize it. It means that we consider our belonging to that unity so precious that in thought, word, and deed we never conduct ourselves in such a manner that we deny it. It means positively that our whole manner of conduct in this world is in complete harmony with it.

When we walk worthy of our calling we walk in all lowliness of mind and meekness.

Lowliness of mind, as the word "lowliness" in the original suggests, stands overagainst sinful and carnal pride. It signifies a deep sense of moral littleness. One possessing and exercising this grace does not seek to exalt himself over another. He remembers the carnal pride from which he has been delivered as a vicious, evil thing. He has been truly humbled, so that he does no longer think much of himself.

Closely connected to lowliness of mind is meekness. One who is small in his own eyes is also meek, gentle, and mild. He esteems others better than himself.

Lowliness of mind and meekness characterize the grace whereby we are saved. Earlier the apostle had declared that we are saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, lest any should boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before prepared, in order that we should walk in them. This is indeed a humbling truth! It leaves nothing wherein we can boast in ourselves. Consequently this grace of salvation makes us lowly in mind, and instead of a proud, haughty spirit, the child of God is become meek, gentle. It belongs to the very nature of the grace whereby we are saved to negate self, and exalt God Who saves us in Christ Jesus.

To this the apostle adds: with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love!

With these words he rounds out the character or manner of the walk to which we are exhorted.

Longsuffering and forbearance have to do with our relationship to others in the church. Here it becomes perfectly evident that the church on earth is far from perfect. Her members have many infirmities and weaknesses, and often reveal much of the characteristics of the old man of sin. Yet because they are brought by the grace of God into the sphere of love in which in principle there is perfection, the duty of each member is to seek for the perfection of himself and of one another. That is the implication of the phrase "in love". When, however, much imperfection comes to manifestation in our mutual

relation, we are to suffer long with the weaknesses of others, and when they reveal actual evil towards us, we are to bear with them, until they come to repentance or are banished from the visible manifestation of the church.

The thrust of this part of the admonition is therefore that we are to conduct ourselves in such a manner towards one another that more and more we are conformed to the image of Christ.

And the aim and purpose is: that we endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

This must mean that in principle the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace is already established.

As was suggested above, it is the purpose of God to gather together all things in one to the church. This purpose God realizes through the Spirit as He is given to Christ the Head. The Holy Spirit of Christ therefore is the subject, the worker of this unity. This unity which He works is realized, first of all, in the church. Consequently, the church is one, as God is one. The church is one body though it is composed of many members. Of this the apostle speaks in succeeding verses: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all." From this circle of unity the Spirit works out until the unity embraces all things, both in heaven, and on earth.

Moreover, this unity further described appears as the sphere in which resides the bond of peace.

Where this unity is established there is no schism, no conflict, no warfare; rather, peace reigns. All disrupting forces have been eradicated. Harmony, tranquility, unanimity prevail.

When the Spirit of unity takes hold of us, members of Christ's church, then we, too, endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Then we make every effort, strive diligently to guard the unity which the Spirit has wrought.

This we do, not by seeking to foster an ecumenicity that would cut down or lop off the sound doctrinal edges of the basis upon which the unity of the church must stand. This we do, not by seeking to establish a false unity in which there is no longer pure preaching of the Word, proper administration of the sacraments, and no Christian discipline exercised.

Rather, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, we believe an holy catholic church, and seek earnestly for its realization. And when we believe that we have found it, we endeavor with all that is in us to guard its unity by insisting on its maintenance of the three characteristic earmarks of the true church, namely,

the pure preaching of the Word, the proper administration of the sacraments according to the mind of Christ, and the faithful exercise of Christian discipline.

This implies that we are willing to enter into controversy when the doctrines of the Word of God are denied or corrupted. Where this corruption persists, we are willing by way of reformation to preserve the true doctrine. This implies that when the sacraments are profaned and the members of the church are allowed to do as they please, and where wickedness is condoned, we protest violently through proper channels. And should all our protesting prove fruitless, we cast from us the evil, and establish once

more the purest manifestation of the church of Christ upon earth.

O, indeed, the Holy Spirit is not dependent on us to maintain the unity!

He is well able to keep the unity in the bond of peace!

But it is also true that He precisely keeps this unity through the faithful, persistent effort of the church to guard the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Needless to say, how important it is to heed this admonition today!

So, and so only, will we walk worthy of our calling!

The Completion of Our Fiftieth Year

Prof. H. C. Hoeksema



Twenty-one issues ago we called your attention to the fact that we were beginning our fiftieth year, and that we conceived of this volume-year as a running of the last mile before reaching the more important milestone of the completion of our fiftieth year of publication. Now we have reached that milestone, our golden anniversary. This is the climax of this golden anniversary year, the grand finale!

Here we raise our Ebenezer, our “stone of help.”

For hitherto hath the Lord helped us!

And He will help us in the future!

Two of my colleagues — one older, one younger — accepted the tasks of looking backward and looking forward, respectively, at this significant occasion. That rather automatically limits me to a consideration of the present. In this connection, there are especially two questions which we should consider. In the first place, where do we stand today? And, in the second place, what is our present task, or calling?

Our Present Position

There are several aspects to our answer to the first of these questions. Let us briefly consider them.

In the first place, we stand on the basis of Scripture and the Reformed confessions. We stand unashamedly on the basis of Holy Scripture as the infallible Word of God, and we hold to the Three Forms of Unity as our subordinate standards, as well as to the old Reformed Liturgical Forms as confessions of a secondary order. It was because we did not want to depart from these creeds, but cling to them, that our *Standard Bearer* was first published fifty years ago. And it is because, through the faithfulness of our covenant God, Who has preserved us, we still maintain the position of our Reformed confessions, that our *Standard Bearer* occupies its distinctive position today.

This is important. There was a time when it was almost trite to speak of standing on the basis of Scripture and the Three Forms of Unity: almost all Reformed people made that claim. And while it is true that many give a certain lip-service to that claim today, nevertheless the climate today has changed. Many have become ashamed of the confessions and speak of them as little as possible. Men chafe at the “narrow” confines of the creeds. To many the Reformed confessions are ecclesiastical museum pieces. Some subscribe to the creeds tongue-in-cheek

and with mental reservations. Some wish to do away with them altogether. Others wish to revise them in the name of relevance. Still others seek to replace them by modernistic and generalized statements of belief, in the interest of promoting so-called horizontalism, social activism, and revolution. But we of the *Standard Bearer* are Reformed and are not ashamed of our Reformed confessions. We purpose to maintain them in all our writings. And we believe that in such a time as this it is above all things necessary that the people of God be instructed in the knowledge of the truth set forth in our confessions, so that they may be doctrinally articulate, may be armed with the whole armor of God, of which the girdle of the truth is essential, and so that thus they may be spiritually ready for the battle and prepared against the onslaughts of false doctrines and false philosophies which are so numerous and fierce in our time.

In the second place, we maintain the position of our creeds *antithetically*, that is, over against all the departures from the Reformed faith which are sweeping the churches today, and particularly over against all departures from and compromises of the truth of sovereign, particular grace. This has been true from the very beginning of our fifty years of existence. In fact, it was for the purpose of providing our original editors a forum for the development of their views over against the pernicious theory of common grace that the *Standard Bearer* was begun.

We have been criticized for this. The charge has more than once been made that we are only reactionary and that we have only a negative basis and a negative reason for existence. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that it has always been characteristically Reformed to oppose and to exert one's self to expose false doctrine. This is part of the calling of the church in the maintenance of the truth. Moreover, it is quite in harmony with the confessions themselves, and certainly in harmony with the requirements of the Formula of Subscription. Besides, the truth of the Word of God is always presented antithetically in Scripture itself. In fact, the *Yes* to the truth always implies the *No* to the lie; and the truth cannot be maintained except by way of rejection of false doctrine and unless the people of God are well equipped to discern the truth from the lie.

Moreover, practically speaking, today it is more necessary than ever before to warn against false philosophy and to call God's people away from the path of error and false doctrine to the straight paths of the truth of God's Word and our Three Forms of Unity. Why? Because the forces of the lie are more powerful, because the forms of the lie are more numerous and more insidious, and because the voices

raised in support of false doctrine are more deceitful, more strident, and legion in number. All the more reason this is for the *Standard Bearer* to sound the trumpet-call to battle with clear and certain and distinctive notes!

In the third place, and in close connection with the preceding, there is no question about it that the *Standard Bearer* has exerted itself to expose the many-sided error of the theory of common grace and to vindicate the truth of God's sovereign, particular grace. This we have seen from the very beginning of our fifty years — and we still see today — as a peculiar aspect of our calling.

Why?

Was it simply an accident of history, so to speak, that it was the common grace conflict of 1924 which gave rise to our origin? Was it, perhaps, merely out of a desire to vindicate ourselves and our right of existence over against those who cast us out in 1924? Is this effort on our part a kind of majoring in minors, a constant harping on insignificant doctrinal differences, a futile poking into old sores and trying to keep up a fight that already belongs to rather ancient history? If any of these be true, it is a pity that the *Standard Bearer* ever came into existence; and it is more of a shame that it has existed for fifty years.

No, it was — and is — because the error of common grace in all its facets goes to the very heart of the Reformed truth. This is the reason why we have always exerted ourselves to demonstrate the error of this doctrine and to warn against it. Down through the ages the battle of the church has, in one form or another, always been concerned with this. Always there have been attempts to deny the particularity — and with it, the sovereignty — of God's grace. Always there have been attempts to universalize the love and grace of God. Hand in hand, there has always gone the attempt to deny the totality of man's depravity. At bottom, this has always been the deepest issue in the battle of the church for the truth. Is God GOD? Or is man on the throne? No, this has not been our peculiar battle *only* with respect to the stand of the Christian Reformed Church taken in 1924. Turn where you will in the Reformed scene or in the ecclesiastical scene at large, and you will discover the battle for the truth has had this character. In 1924 this universalizing tendency took the form of the Three Points. In the 1960s, it took the form of a universal, saving love of God and a universal atonement in the same Christian Reformed denomination. Today the same universalizing tendency is still present in the idea that the nature of the Word of God is *only saving*! In other lands and in other denominations, even where common grace in

any form is not an officially declared doctrine, the same error is found. The specter of this universalism looms large in the history of doctrine. And turn where you will today, you will discover this error and the effects of this error everywhere; you will discover, too, that the ecclesiastical forces promulgating this error are larger and more powerful than ever before; and you will discover that those who desire over against it to maintain faithfully the truth of sovereign, particular grace in all its implications constitute an ever smaller remnant.

In the fourth place, however, let no one listen to the fiction that our *Standard Bearer* has been only negative or only polemical. In large measure, in fact, that we were polemical in our writings has been only because necessity was laid upon us. After all, when the enemy attacks, is it not a fool or a coward who does not defend his heritage? But that we have been purely negative or polemical is a lie fabricated out of whole cloth! Literally thousands of pages have been written in the course of the positive development of the truths of Scripture and the confessions, especially in the development of the cardinal Reformed truths of God's everlasting covenant of friendship and His sovereign grace. Let me remind you that the recently republished three large volumes of *The Triple Knowledge*, the late Rev. Herman Hoeksema's exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism, appeared first in serial form in our magazine. The same is true of *Behold, He Cometh*, Rev. Hoeksema's exposition of Revelation. Much of the substance of his *Reformed Dogmatics* also found its first expression in the *Standard Bearer*. Call to mind that there have been well over a thousand thoroughly Scriptural meditations published over the years. Think of the fact that the late Rev. G. M. Ophoff, and others, wrote hundreds of pages of exposition of the Old Testament. Think of the New Testament expositions, the expositions of the Psalms by the late Rev. Gerrit Vos, the hundreds of articles on church history, on the history of doctrine, on the Church Order, on the Netherlands Confession, on the Canons of Dordrecht, on Christian education, on the Christian life, on current events in the churches. I make bold to say that it would be difficult indeed to find a record of fifty years of Christian journalism such as that set by our *Standard Bearer*.

Note well, I say this in all humility. For not only would I be the first to admit that our work has been marred by many weaknesses and imperfections, but I am also well aware of the fact that we do not "count" in the field of religious journalism. We have always been small, and we are small today. Undoubtedly it is a good thing that the Lord has kept us small — good for us as editors, at least. That tends to keep us humble, too. And above all, let us

remember that what we are and have and have been is all of grace! We have nothing to boast of ourselves!

But this does not detract one iota from the factualness of what I have written above.

And that means that we have a tremendously rich heritage. If you are one of those who has the fifty volumes of the *Standard Bearer* in his library, you have a veritable gold mine of instruction and information. Not only that, but standing on the shoulders of our fathers, we occupy a distinctive position TODAY! We are fifty years later in history, and that means fifty years richer! While our *Standard Bearer* has not changed essentially, but still bears the same standard, the flag of the truth, you and I have the distinct advantage and privilege at this fiftieth anniversary of all the development and enrichment of those fifty years.

Our Calling

From all this it follows that ours is a very serious responsibility.

First of all, to be sure, we are called to deep and heartfelt gratitude to our Covenant God. Let none of our celebration of this anniversary be self-congratulation. Let us bless the Lord, and forget not all His benefits. And let us esteem very highly our heritage, and let it never become commonplace to us!

In the second place, let us not stagnate. There is a certain danger of this, I believe, when we reach an important milestone such as this. We have attained! We have come of age! We have it made! But nothing could be more wrong! Our calling is to hold fast that which we have, indeed. But remember: that is, at best, always a battle. If we fail to hold fast what we have, if we fail continually to drink at the fountain of the truth all that we can, we shall not only stagnate, but go backward. That is simply a law of life. We as editors must go on in the tradition of these fifty years, laboring with all that is in us for the defense, but also for the further development and enrichment of our heritage. And we as readers — and I say emphatically *readers*, not merely subscribers — must likewise go on.

In the third place, we must pass the standard on to our children, the next generation of God's covenant people. Here, I believe, is an area which can stand attention from us all. By word and by example we must teach our children, at a rather early age, to read our *Standard Bearer*. Do not imagine that this is something automatic among our young people. Especially today that is not the case: we don't live in an age when such reading — or any reading — is automatic. If you would have your young people read this or any worthwhile religious literature, you will have to *teach* them to read. And after you have

instructed them to read, you will have to check up whether they have followed your instructions.

In the fourth place, we must get the *Standard Bearer* OUT! This, I believe, is one of the greatest responsibilities we have today. And it is in harmony with the original purpose of our magazine to be a witness.

What do I mean by this?

I mean that we must bend every effort to distribute our *Standard Bearer* on a larger, much larger, scale than heretofore. As surely as it is true that we have something very precious in our *Standard Bearer*, so surely it is also true that we may not keep it to ourselves, but must spread it abroad. In fact, if we largely keep it to ourselves, I would take that as an indication that we do not count our magazine very valuable and that we have somewhat of an inferiority complex about it.

No, I have no illusions that there are large numbers of people who are receptive for what our *Standard Bearer* presents. But everywhere today, both at home and abroad, there are pockets, small groups, of Reformed believers who must be reached, people who will be surprised and happy to find that there is a magazine such as ours.

No, I do not mean in the first instance to strive for more subscribers. That is good: I like to hear from our Business Manager of periodic increases in the number of paid subscriptions. But that is not the goal in itself. Besides, when the distribution increases, the subscriptions will also increase.

But WE must get our magazine out! We must

witness!

I mean that the number of Protestant Reformed subscribers and readers has always been far larger than the number of those outside our churches. I would like to see that proportion reversed, and more than reversed! Not, you understand, by a decrease in the number of Protestant Reformed readers. No, but by a vast increase in the distribution outside of our churches, and that, too, initiated by us!

We are making a beginning with this issue. I understand there are 4000 copies of this issue being printed, most of which will be distributed.

We must — and can — do more of this. I say: we can! For the Lord has put us in a favorable financial position at present to make a beginning at this task. Moreover, our people have royally supported this cause in recent years, so that we can do more. And I believe that experience shows that if and when there is a special financial need, our people meet this need. A side benefit will automatically be a larger number of paid subscriptions. Experience shows this, too! When the *Standard Bearer* is more widely distributed and becomes more widely known, it "catches on."

But let us get busy at this task!

Let our Board and our R.F.P.A. and all our supporters catch this vision and put their shoulders to the wheel!

These are my thoughts at the completion of this fiftieth year.

May the Lord be pleased to prosper our *Standard Bearer* as a witness while our Lord Jesus tarries!

PRE-PUBLICATION SALE
PEACEABLE FRUIT
(For The Nurture Of Covenant Youth)

by
Gertrude Hoeksema

This new R.F.P.A. publication is scheduled to come from the presses on or about November 1. The regular price of this clothbound volume will be \$5.95. If you place your order before November 1, you can take advantage of the pre-publication sale price of \$4.95. Your check or money-order must accompany your order. All orders will be filled as soon as the book is available. Mail your order to: Reformed Free Publishing Association, P.O. Box 2006, Grand Rapids, MI 49501.

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(Please print plainly)



The Standard Bearer

- - Looking Back

Rev. C. Hanko

As our thoughts travel back across the years, reflecting on the 50th anniversary of our *Standard Bearer* the cry of the Psalmist arises in our hearts:

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits. (Ps. 103:1, 2)

Classis East was in session in November of 1924. The matter before this body was the demand of a previous classis that Rev. H. Hoeksema and his consistory sign the Three Points adopted by the synod a few months before. No other ministers had been placed before this demand, except Rev. H. Danhof of Kalamazoo and Rev. H. Hoeksema of Grand Rapids, Michigan. But that is hardly the point here. The point I wish to make is that one of the delegates arose at this November meeting to reprimand Rev. Hoeksema for *The Standard Bearer*, the first issue of which had appeared in October, only a month previous to this. "Why," he asked, "why did you ever begin to publish that new paper, *The Standard Bearer*?" Rev. Hoeksema was sitting at the edge of his seat, one arm resting on the back of the pew, the other hand on the pew ahead, ready to rise to give answer. A cloud of amazement had swept over his face, as those who knew him will so well remember his look of perplexity. It was as if he would say, "How can anyone ask a question like that?" Soon a ready smile caused his eyes to gleam as rising, he said, "What else could we do? The church papers, *The Banner* and *De Wachter* refuse to accept our contributions. Yet to obey the mandate of the synod, we as well as all the others are called to enlighten the churches on the subject of common grace, which the synod regarded as still in need of further investigation."

Yes, *The Standard Bearer* had made its first appearance on October 1, 1924, the significant year of the adoption of the Three Points by the Christian Reformed Church. This new magazine had already made a tremendous impact upon friend and foe alike. Those were days in which the whole Christian

Reformed denomination, but particularly the city of Grand Rapids, throbbed with the excitement that centered about the common grace issue. If one saw a group of people wrapped in conversation on the street corner, one could be quite sure that the issue of the day was receiving its pros and cons. On a warm summer evening one had but to walk the streets of the southeast part of the city, (which was perfectly safe in those days), and he would hear voices, loud and clear, bursting from the various homes, all concerned about the same issue. The daily Press even carried front page news items about the proceedings of the Classes and the happenings in the churches.

The Standard Bearer had come to stay. Anyone who still is privileged to possess an early issue will know how brown and tattered these copies are from their constant use. It is no fiction that copies were exchanged from one to another, were eagerly perused in the public library, and were even carried in the coat pockets of young men visiting their girl friends.

In the first issue of *The Standard Bearer* appears an editorial explaining the reason and the purpose of this new periodical. After mention is made of the Free Publishing Association, which made itself responsible for the publication, we read,

This society, which already for some time has given strong support to the above mentioned ministers (the Revs. Danhof and Hoeksema), will devote themselves to this same task in the future through this monthly magazine. They feel that they must fight for the cause of the Lord, not only against the enemy which stands outside of our own church communion, but no less against the enemy within the gates. They want others to lift up the banner, instruct the people of God and lead them in the battle, which is inescapable and must be fought. The real need for

leadership is felt in regard to ecclesiastical problems, doctrinal differences, prevalent views, and the practical application to our daily lives. And although they have no intention of limiting themselves in this struggle to the publishing of *The Standard Bearer*, they nevertheless want this periodical to lead the way in the bitter struggle.

At the same time, the position of the editors is hereby also explained. The writers want to allow God's Word to speak, and want to labor in the reformatory and progressive Reformed spirit. They insist on a Bible-believing, not philosophical conception of the Word of God. And they seek to apply the proper emphasis of the will of God to Christian living, along the entire line of human activity. Thus not everything that has been presented in history as Reformed truth will blindly be branded as Scriptural. Nor do they underwrite every presentation of the fathers, no, not even when the shadow of error fell upon the faulty views of the Confessions of the churches. Caution is indeed required in doing this. Yet the true welfare of the church demands that the full light of the Word of God is kindled in regard to everything that pertains to the promotion of the cause of the Son of God. For being children of God, we must be blameless and upright, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom we shine as lights in the world; holding forth the Word of life. From that we may not desist. The editorial staff of the *Standard Bearer* seeks to equip the church for that task. (Translated)

In this same first issue Rev. Hoeksema began his series on "Doctrine" with the contribution, "God is God." This may well be considered the keynote upon which all the contents of *The Standard Bearer* is based. Just as this is the keynote of the preaching, echoing the grateful response, "For this God is our God. He will be our Guide even until death." Those who formerly attended the preaching in the Dutch services of our churches will recall how these services were concluded with triumphant song of the Psalmist:

Gij toch, Gij zijt hun roem, de kracht van hunne
kracht,

Uw vrije gunst alleen wordt d' eere toegebracht.

Wij steken 't hoofd omhoog, en zullen d'eerkroon
dragen

Door U, door U alleen, om 't eeuwig welbehagen.
Want God is ons een Schild in 't strijdperk van dit
leven,

En onze Koning is van Israel's God gegeven.

Those who cannot appreciate the Dutch psalter any more, will forgive me this slight diversion. Those who still do enjoy the Dutch will agree with me, that no reminiscing of the past would be complete without this. Let me share this blessed experience with you, in as far as that is possible, by referring to

the English text of Psalm 89:17, 18, from which this is taken: "For Thou art the glory of their strength: and in Thy favor our horn shall be exalted. For the Lord is our defence; and the Holy One of Israel is our King."

These were difficult years, these first years. Soon the lion's share of the writing fell squarely on the shoulders of the Reverends Hoeksema and Ophoff. Not as if they had little else to do. They had their congregations, requiring the usual preaching, catechizing, sick visiting, family visitation, and all the accompanying duties. This was sufficient to keep any diligent minister occupied. But besides that they were giving a full course of theological training for students that were being prepared for the ministry of the Word in churches which were being organized in various places. Particularly Rev. Hoeksema was also called to make repeated lecture tours throughout the west, even as far as California. Yet the deadline for each issue had to be met. I recall meeting Rev. Hoeksema on a train in Spencer, Iowa. There had been a washout on the railroad caused by heavy rains during the night. In order to arrive at the classis meeting at Hull that same day, he had called ahead asking for someone to pick him up. Upon arrival we found him busily engaged in typing an article for the next issue of *The Standard Bearer*.

Others were added to the editorial staff from time to time, which was also appreciated. But both Rev. Hoeksema and Rev. Ophoff burned much midnight oil to remain faithful to the task God had committed to them. One of the sons of Rev. Ophoff made the remark at one time, that he best remembers from his childhood that he would awaken at night and see the light in his father's study still burning. The question is often raised why our churches did not make direct contact with all the areas in which churches of Reformed persuasion were located, to let them all know of our existence. The answer is given above. God simply did not supply us with the means at that time to reach out farther than we did. Yet *The Standard Bearer* reached many more, both at home and abroad, than we shall ever know. The full repercussion of this defence of the truth of God's Word is certainly God's work, and as such is preserved in the annals of eternity.

This witness of the Protestant Reformed Churches and of the truth entrusted to us remained faithful to its calling even in the years of "strum" and "drang." In the late 40s and in the early 50s heavy storm clouds hung over our churches. The history of the Protestant Reformed churches is from their very inception intertwined with the history of *The Standard Bearer*. And the opposite is also true. I take the liberty to quote from an editorial by Rev. Hoeksema, written in connection with the

twenty-fifth anniversary of our churches under the heading, "Protestant Reformed."

It is by no means with an unmixed feeling of joy that *The Standard Bearer* celebrates the twenty-fifth anniversary of the existence of our churches . . .

The reason for this attitude on our part must be evident to all that read our papers.

And although it might probably be expected that no church in the world could stand for any length of time on the basis of such pure and strong Reformed truth as that which is represented by the Protestant Reformed Churches; and although, years ago, at an outing of our young people, I said that I conceived of the possibility that, if I lived long enough, I would be cast out once more; yet it cannot but be a cause of deep sorrow when, after so short a time, this departure from the pure basis of the Protestant Reformed truth becomes evident.

It is being said that some are emitting an *entirely different sound* from that which is blasted from the trumpet of those men that always stood for the Protestant Reformed truth, that the conception of the latter is not a doctrine of our churches, and that most of the Protestant Reformed do not think as they. And a conditional theology is being introduced, the sound of which is surely foreign to our Protestant Reformed truth.

The statements to which I refer above have never been openly challenged, still less contradicted. And as long as they are not given the lie, I have no choice but accept them as true.

Are you surprised, then, that on this twenty-fifth anniversary, I rather mourn than celebrate with rejoicing? (S. B. Vol. 26, pages 268, 269)

Our churches, and *The Standard Bearer* likewise, were preserved by the power of God throughout that stormy period, to remain a witness of the Reformed heritage in the church world. The work continued, the witness remained faithful to its original purpose, the readers drank in the contents with a keener interest even than before.

I hasten now to the fortieth anniversary of the existence of *The Standard Bearer*. Those of you who own or have access to the early volumes of our periodical will find moments and even hours of joy in paging through them. At times you will silently weep, at times become deeply disturbed by the bitter struggles of the past, but always you will express in your soul the sentiment with which I began, and which is the theme of the meditation in Volume 41, page 4, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." (Psalm 103:2) In this volume it becomes evident that none other than Rev. Hoeksema's son, Prof. H. C. Hoeksema, has taken over the editor's tasks of *The Standard Bearer*. He writes: "In Retrospect — Forty Years." He speaks of looking back in the sense of reminiscing, which can

be both interesting and instructive. But he adds:

Nevertheless, our look backward must serve a better purpose.

That purpose should be, in the first place, to take stock. We should look back to the very beginning of our *Standard Bearer*, examine its origin, its initial claim, its purpose and aim, in order to judge whether and in how far our magazine has been true to its claim and purpose down through the years. Moreover, in the light of this judgment we must determine whether our course is in need of correction or not; and, if not, then we must determine, if our course is a true one, to progress along that same course.

In the second place, the purpose of this anniversary stock-taking, this inventory, should be a *rededication* to that original purpose, and that too, on the part of editors, publishing association, and readers.

Concluding his article, he writes,

What now, must the end of this be?

Shall we boast, that is, of self and of our own work? God forbid!

In the first place, let us with humble hearts, — editors, publishing society, and readers, — give the thanks and all the praise to our covenant God. It is all of Him, and we have nothing whereof to boast, except our boast be in Him.

In the second place, let us be appreciative of our heritage as it has been preserved and enriched for us by our *Standard Bearer*. And by appreciation I mean not a mere empty sentiment of appreciation, but an esteem of such a kind that it moves us to be better and more thorough readers of our magazine, moves us to be more loyal and dedicated and generous supporters of it, moves us to instill in our children that same inclination to appreciate, to be instructed by, and to support this magazine.

In the third place, even as so often in the past our *Standard Bearer* has been of such great service in bearing the flag of the truth outside our immediate Protestant Reformed circles, so let it become more effectively and in greater outreach a witness for the Reformed faith in our times, — times of turmoil and crisis in the Reformed community, — we have a solemn duty to let our testimony be heard to the utmost of our ability. To achieve that purpose we need a greater outreach, more dedicated efforts, and even more generous support than we have had heretofore . . .

The time is certainly short. The night cometh, in the which no man can work. Let us labor while it is day!

And may the Lord our God bless our labors.

These are significant words, well spoken, that should not pass by unnoticed. They apply today with as much emphasis as ten years ago, and possibly even more so. This fiftieth anniversary of our *Standard*

Bearer, followed next year by the fiftieth anniversary of the existence of our churches, must be a time for reflection, dedication, with prayer and thanksgiving.

For time rushes on, ever more swiftly as the end approaches. And changes are the necessary result of passing time. This is certainly true in the unfolding of the work of the counsel of our God in these past fifty years. No generation has ever seen such sweeping, radical changes as we have. The slow, chugging Model-T has been replaced by cars that can eat up the miles in comfort, by planes that travel faster than sound. People who considered it quite an excursion to visit relatives and friends fifty or sixty miles away, and who would plan for weeks a trip any farther than that, now span the country and cross the seas. Modern cities with their bustling activities, huge factories belching smoke, and their busy shopping centers have replaced the quiet, sleepy towns with their neighborhood grocery stores. Inventions appear on the market that stagger the imagination, bringing amazing changes in our way of life. Man probes into the bowels of the earth, into the hidden mysteries of the sea, into the broad expanse of the heavens, into the marvels of man's physical being, and even tries to delve into the secrets of man's soul. Yes, times do change. We experience today a world-wide revolution in every sphere of life, politically, economically, socially, and even religiously. Upheavals that happened in certain local areas or countries now affect the whole world. God is openly denied, sin is no more sin, — man determines according to his own standards what is wrong or right. Pseudo-Bibles appear on the market, pseudo-religions arise

everywhere, often stressing the mystical that appeals to man's superstitious and carnal ambitions, flatter the pride, and create false hopes for a world free from warfare, poverty, sickness, pain, grief, death; yet a world without God. The times are evil. Pseudo-prophets, — preachers, — Christs make vain boasts. Satan knows that he has but a little while and is making the most of it.

Yes, there have also been changes in *The Standard Bearer*. That is only natural. The first editors, including the Revs. Vos and Verhil, have passed on into the Rest. Some of our former editors, who gradually took their places in the editorial staff, are still with us and are still contributing faithfully. But many new names appear in the masthead. For that too, we are thankful. The format has changed from time to time. The subscription list continues to grow. Our magazine travels to many countries besides our own, even to the far ends of the earth. That gives us great joy. But we are especially grateful that it can be said without reservation that the content has not changed. It is still founded foursquare on the infallible Word of our God. It still opposes every form of heresy that lifts up its head round about us, and that without compromise in the truth. It still develops the truth of God's covenant in all its riches. And it still covers the entire area of the believer's life in covenant relationship to his God and in his God-given place in the world. In all that our God has been good to us.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."



Forward In Hope

Rev. Ronald J. Van Overloop

When I was originally contacted to write this article, I was informed that it was planned to have Rev. C. Hanks write an article from the viewpoint of one who had personally gone through the rich history of the Protestant Reformed Churches. Such a one would confess with Samuel and the children of Israel, "Ebenezer: Hitherto hath Jehovah helped us." On the other hand, I was asked to look at the Protestant

Reformed Churches from the viewpoint of one who receives that history as a rich heritage and looks forward in hope.

As I considered this task I attempted to speculate what would happen to the Protestant Reformed Churches in the future. But during my speculation two thoughts kept recurring in my mind.

The first thought was that the Scriptures show us that the future of the Church of Jesus Christ is a dark future. It is dark because of the unknown of the future. It is dark because believers must live a life of continual death in the midst of the darkness of sin. That this life is really death is being more and more clearly revealed with the rapid development of sin and corruption. Also the future is dark because the development of sin will reach its climax in the great tribulation. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." That persecution will be most severe where the truth of God's Word is most clearly manifested. We confess, as every child of God on earth must be able to confess, that the church to which we join ourselves is the best manifestation of the three marks of the true church. Therefore we can look forward to the brunt of the persecution.

The second thought which kept interfering with my speculation was that "the end of all things is at hand." The end of all things includes, of course, the end of the Protestant Reformed Churches.

On the basis of this dark future and imminent end, why should we even look forward? The tendency to look forward is not only a normal one, but also is a command of Scripture. Christ commands us to do so in Matthew 24:42 & 44. "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Also Peter says, "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." (I Peter 4:7)

The necessity of our watchfulness is increased when we consider what a heritage God is giving to us in His rich grace. To preserve that heritage and remain faithful to God's Word we must be sober and watchful.

To what do we as Protestant Reformed Churches look forward? We can expect the fiery trials of persecution to try us. I believe that many of my generation will personally experience that tribulation. Until that great persecution comes we can expect constant harassment by the devil, trying to take from us our wonderful heritage.

Well, then, are we to be pessimistic as far as the future is concerned? To that we answer with an emphatic "NO!"

Are we filled with such fear and terror that we should smooth the sharp edges of the strong Biblical heritage given to us so that many will not be offended? Also, "NO!"

"Hitherto Jehovah hath helped us." God preserves

His church as it faces its Philistine opposition. Israel had gathered weaponless at Mizpeh unprotected from attack. Unprotected, that is, according to human standards. Only a sudden divine interposition could save them and such happened when God routed the Philistine army. The same wonderful divine preservation can be seen in the history of the Protestant Reformed Churches.

Such preservation in the past is the basis for our hope in the future, no matter how dark it may be. Very concretely, that hope is not in us — our wealth or wisdom — but our hope is based on Jehovah.

He is Jehovah, the unchangeable, covenant God. With us, as Protestant Reformed Churches, He has established His covenant in a most blessed way. Because He is the "I AM", He will not depart from us as we walk faithful to His Word in the future by His grace.

Oh yes, the future may be dark and foreboding and we may have to go through fiery trials. But remember "Ebenezer." Remember "They that trust in Jehovah shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so Jehovah is round about his people from henceforth even for ever." (Ps. 125:1, 2)

When trials and storms come upon us, let us run and hide under "the shadow of thy wings . . . until these calamities be overpast." (Ps. 57:1)

When we look forward to the unavoidable calamities, our safety and comfort is not to be found in suicide. It is not to be found in drugs, liquor, or in earthly pleasures. They last only a fleeting moment and their joy is so very temporary. A good stable job, a large bank account can be taxed away in a year and stolen in a moment. No, there can be found no safety or comfort in this world.

Our help is in Jehovah. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from Jehovah, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Jehovah shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore." (Ps. 121:1-3, 8)

What do we have to fear, then? Nothing. "Jehovah is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? Jehovah is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Ps. 27:1) And "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God." (Ps. 42:11)

Ebenezer. Jehovah HATH helped us and He will continue to do so. "Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from Him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock

and my salvation; He is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved. My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him. In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God." (Ps. 62:1, 2, 5, 7) "When my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me and a strong tower from the enemy." (Ps. 61:2, 3)

Therefore "trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah." (Ps. 62:8)

"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him; for He careth for you." (I Peter 5:6, 7)

Therefore "commit thy way unto Jehovah; trust also in Him; and he shall bring it to pass. Rest in Jehovah, and wait patiently for him; fret not thyself . . ." (Ps. 37:5, 7)

He who created the mountains around Jerusalem surrounds His people with His mighty arm. "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith Jehovah that hath mercy on thee." (Isa. 54:10) All things serve His purpose. Even persecution serves to try, purify, and strengthen us. "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found

unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." (I Peter 1:7)

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord." (Rom. 8:35, 37-39)

Therefore "rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (I Peter 4:13)

What about the future? "Jehovah is my shepherd; I SHALL not want. I WILL fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff comfort me." (Ps. 23:1, 4)

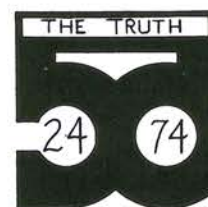
When we, as Protestant Reformed Churches, look forward into the future we can look forward in hope with our trust set upon our covenant God.

True, the way will not be easy, but we will be steadfast and immovable in Him. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." (II Cor. 4:8, 9)

The Standard Bearer In Retrospect

Rev. G. Van Baren

He closed his period of writing virtually in the same way he began in the *Standard Bearer*. The late Rev. H. Hoeksema wrote on page 1 of volume 1 of the *Standard Bearer* of "Jehovah's Goodness," pointing out that it was particular — that is, directed to the elect in Christ. In what was virtually his last article, a copy of the last speech he made a little more than a year before his death, Rev. H. Hoeksema was still strenuously defending the same proposition — only now against a development of the old "common grace" error as set forth by Prof. H. Dekker who insisted not only on a "common" grace to all but also a universal love for all and an atonement for all. The late Rev. H. Hoeksema had repeatedly warned that such would be the certain development of the common grace error — and he lived to see his prophecy fulfilled. Of this the speech speaks. Read it carefully and see: does it, or does it not, present what is soundly Reformed? Must we, or must we not, continue to hold to these old truths? Will there be a returning to the "old paths" — or increasingly a development in



apostasy? Here follows a positive presentation of the truth which has, without equivocation, been maintained by the *Standard Bearer*.

Rev. H. Hoeksema presented the following lecture to a class of Middlers at Calvin Seminary on May 1, 1964 at the kind invitation of Prof. H. Dekker. It is recorded in Vol. 40, page 364 of the *Standard Bearer*. In this reprint, it has been slightly edited in order to shorten it somewhat.

PARTICULAR THROUGHOUT

Rev. H. Hoeksema

I was rather pleasantly surprised when Prof. Dekker called me and told me that he would like to come over. I was still more surprised when he asked me whether I would speak for his class in Calvin Seminary. And, of course, I gladly accepted that invitation.

Prof. Dekker knows by this time that I do not and cannot agree with him on his main proposition that God loves all men . . . After I have briefly stated what are the main tenets of Dekker's theology, I hope to speak on the subject, "Particular Throughout." Under this, I expect to explain especially three items:

- I. A Particular Gospel
- II. A Particular Promise
- III. A Particular Love

First of all, I will briefly mention the main principles of Prof. Dekker's theology. This is rather easy because he mentions these in the very first paragraph of his last article in the *Reformed Journal*, that is, the issue of March, 1964. There he writes as follows:

THE GOSPEL IS GOD'S GOOD NEWS – THE GOOD NEWS that He 'so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son' (John 3:16) and that 'Christ Jesus . . . gave himself a ransom for all' (I Tim. 2:5). For whom is this news? For the world – for all men. God loves all! Christ died for all! It is our joyful task to tell all men the news.

In a note, Prof. Dekker mentions three things: 1) That there is a difference between hating sin and hating the sinner; and he mentions several passages of Scripture to prove this. With this exegesis I do not agree, but I have no time to explain all the passages which Prof. Dekker mentions here . . .

2) Prof. Dekker makes the statement that "hate" in Scripture sometimes means "love less." Under this proposition he mentions Mal. 1:1-5 and Rom. 9:13. Also with this I do not agree . . .

3) He makes the statement that "hate" in the Old Testament must be seen in the light of progressive revelation. And to prove this statement, he refers especially to Ps. 139:21 and 22 in comparison with Matt. 5:43-48.

Two more remarks I must make before I turn to my main subject. In the first place, Prof. Dekker always makes the distinction between *redemptive* and *redeeming* love. On this I remark:

1) That to me this distinction is false. *Redemptive* and *redeeming* to me mean the same thing. How can God love with a redemptive love that does not redeem?

2) That Scripture never speaks of redemptive love, but only of redeeming love.

In the second place, in connection with his proposition that Christ died for all men, he also speaks of the efficacy of that redemption of Christ. Christ died for all men, but that redemption is efficacious only for the elect. However, in the context of his whole article, it is evident that this efficacy must be dependent upon the will of the sinner. For if efficacy is taken in the Reformed sense, namely that the author of our salvation and of the efficacy of the death of Christ is solely and only the Holy Spirit, His work being not dependent upon the will of man, then it is impossible to maintain that Christ actually died for all men and that it was His intention to die for every individual.

But now I turn to the main subject of my lecture. And first of all, I speak on the *Particular Gospel*.

What is the gospel? The Bible speaks very frequently of the gospel, either directly or indirectly. In a sense, we can say indeed that all of Scripture is the gospel. Scripture speaks of the *gospel of God*. Thus in Rom. 1:1, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God." (Cf. also: II Cor. 11:7; I Thess. 2:8, 9; I Pet. 4:17.) The meaning of this is very plain. The gospel is God's gospel, not ours. He conceived of it in His eternal counsel. He realized it in time. It is He, too, that causes the gospel to be proclaimed by men. Consequently, if we would preach the gospel, it may be regarded as of prime significance and importance that we learn from Him, that is, from His Word, what are its contents and how it ought to be proclaimed. And let us not forget that among the evil tendencies of our age that are destructive to the church of Christ and subversive of sound doctrine, I consider the fact that the gospel is corrupted in our day one of the most sinister. Men pretend to preach the gospel, but certainly not the gospel of God, namely, *that God saves His people through His Word and Spirit and by irresistible grace*.

As to the contents of the gospel, it is called the *gospel concerning the Son of God*. Thus we read in Rom. 1:3, where the apostle writes that the gospel of God is the gospel "concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." (Cf. also Rom. 1:9 and Mk. 1:1). In the gospel, therefore, God declares something about His only begotten Son. We must be anxious that by our presentation we do not distort the image of the Son presented by it. It is also called the *gospel of Christ*, according to Rom. 15:19, where the apostle writes that he has "fully preached the gospel of Christ." (Cf. I Cor. 9:12; Gal. 1:7; II Cor. 2:12; 9:13; 10:14.) It is further described as the *gospel of the glory of the blessed God*. And our presentation of it may not tend to mar or bedim that glory. I Tim. 1:11. And the glory of Christ shines forth from it and must be declared by it. II Cor. 4:4. It is also the *gospel of the kingdom*. Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 24:14. And this kingdom as to its idea, origin, realization, and future must be correctly set forth whenever the gospel is preached. And such further definitions as the *gospel of grace*, of the grace of God, the *gospel of your salvation*, the *gospel of peace*, Acts 20:24; Eph. 1:13; 6:15, further serve to impress on our mind the fact that he that deals with the gospel has to do with something divine, very precious, exalted in origin and contents, which may easily be marred and corrupted by the handling. And considering that it is incumbent upon the church of Jesus Christ to preach the gospel, this gospel of God, of His Son, of Christ, of the kingdom, of grace, of salvation, of peace, of the glory of God and the glory of Christ to all creatures, according to the command left her by her Lord, considering that at all times, and especially in our own, there are many would-be preachers of the gospel that present it as if it were the cheapest article on the public market, you will readily admit that the subject of the gospel is a very important subject.

This gospel of Christ and the gospel of God is a *particular* gospel. By this I mean especially, first of all, that Jesus, according to the Scriptures, actually and fully saves. He is Jesus not because He offers salvation or created an opportunity of salvation, but simply because He actually accomplishes our salvation from beginning to end, and that too, through the Spirit of Christ and by His Word. In the second place, I mean that Jesus, according to the Scriptures, actually saves not all, nor is intending to save all, but only His own people, the elect, given to Him by the Father from before the foundation of the world. And in the third place, this Jesus, according to the Scriptures, must indeed be preached, to the ingathering of the elect and to the condemnation of the powers of darkness and of the reprobate. And through the preaching of the Word He certainly saves all those whom the Father hath given Him, and no

more. In that sense of the word the gospel of God and of Christ is particular.

We can also say that, briefly, the main contents of the gospel is the promise. The Word of God frequently employs two terms that are as closely related in their significance as they are in the original Greek similar in sound. They are the words *epangelia* and *euangelion*, the first meaning "the promise," and the second being the word we translate by our "gospel." That they are closely related in our thoughts is evident from the rather common expression that is frequently used and is employed, too, by our confessions, that is, *the promise of the gospel*. It emphasizes that the gospel contains the promise . . . Directly this is expressed in Gal. 3:8 and Acts 13:32. In the former text we read, "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." Notice that in the last expression you have the promise. Now according to the text, when this promise was given to Abraham, the gospel was preached unto him. The gospel and the promise are therefore inseparably connected. In fact, we may say, as I said before, that the gospel *is* the promise. In Acts 13:32 we read: "And we declare unto you glad tidings, (or: 'preach the gospel unto you, ' *euangelizometha*), how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again." It will be evident that the promise made unto the fathers and realized unto us, their children, is the same as that mentioned in Galatians 3. And it is also evident that here, as in the former passage, the apostle speaks of declaring that promise as being the preaching of the gospel, or proclaiming glad tidings. The gospel, then, is essentially, according to its idea, the gospel of promise.

Very often the Bible speaks of the promise. Sometimes it refers to it in the plural, to express the riches of its implications. More often the singular is used, to denote its unity and identity. But always it is the same promise. It is the promise that is given to Abel, Enoch, Noah, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For, having mentioned these saints of the old dispensation, and having spoken of their life and death or translation by faith, the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews tells us, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Heb. 11:13. And having reviewed the life and battle by faith of many more of the great cloud of witnesses, and including them all in his view, the author of the Hebrews finally states, "And these all, having obtained a good report

through faith, received not the promise." Vs. 39. It is evident from these passages that all through the old dispensation there was a promise given unto the saints which they embraced and believed, by which they lived and died. Gal. 3 is a classic chapter on this subject of the promise. It emphasizes that the promises were made to Abraham and his seed, and that this seed of Abraham is centrally and essentially Christ. Cf. Vs. 16. It is plain that Christ, the Seed, Who is the fulfillment of the promise, is at the same time also the chief recipient of the promise. It states that the law, which came four hundred and thirty years later than the promise to Abraham, could not possibly make the latter of none effect, vs. 17; and that God gave the inheritance to Abraham by promise, vs. 18. It reaches the conclusion that if we are Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise, vs. 29. And as to the contents of this promise, Scripture speaks of it as the promise of the Holy Spirit which is given to Christ, Acts 2:33, and to them that are of Him by faith, Gal. 3:14. It is the promise of life, I Tim. 4:8; II Tim. 1:1. It is the promise of eternal life, I John 2:25. It is the promise of Christ's coming, II Pet. 3:4. It is the promise of entering into His rest, Heb. 4:1. It is the promise of becoming heir of the world, Rom. 4:13. It is the promise of raising up a Savior from the seed of David, Acts 13:23. Hence, it also speaks of the Spirit as the Spirit of promise, Eph. 1:13, of the children of the promise, that is, of children that are born in the line of the promise, by the power of the promise, according to the promise, and upon whom the promise rests, Rom. 9:8. It points out the heirs of the promise and co-heirs of the promise. For not all men have received the promise. Heb. 6:17; 11:9. And at the beginning of the new dispensation it announces: "For unto you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts 2:39.

Now the question is: is this promise for all men, or is it, even as the gospel, particular? My answer is that also the promise is not for all men, but only for those whom the Father hath given to Christ. In a way we may say that this ought to be already plain from the nature and contents of the promise. The promise is by no means the same as an offer in the modern sense of that word. I know very well that also the *Canons* speak of an offer of salvation. But this evidently has the meaning only of *presenting* salvation. But the modern sense of the word *offer* is quite different. Usually by "offer" in the modern sense we mean something that is indeed presented to us, but that we can refuse or accept. And that is not the offer of the promise. It is true also in the latter, the person who makes the offer declares his willingness to give something to the person to whom the offer is made. But for its realization the offer in the modern sense

of the word is contingent upon the willingness of the second party, upon his consent to the offer. But a promise is quite different. It is a declaration, written or verbal, which binds the person that makes it to do, or forbear to do, the very thing promised. It is an engagement, regardless of any corresponding duty or obligation on the part of the person to whom the thing is promised. A promise, therefore, implies the declaration of a certain good, together with the positive assurance that this good shall be bestowed upon or performed in behalf of the person to whom the promise is made.

This certainty of the promise is emphasized by the fact that it is *God* Who makes the promise. God conceived of the promise. He it is that realizes the thing promised. He declares the promise. This implies, in the first place, that the promise can not be contingent. For God is God, and His work certainly cannot be contingent upon the will of the creature. And, secondly, this signifies that the promise is as faithful and true as God is unchangeable. He will surely realize the promise. For He cannot deny Himself. And the idea of the promise necessarily implies that it is made to a definite party. An offer, that is contingent upon the acceptance and consent of the second party, may be general. A promise, that binds the promising party and that is certain of realization, requires a definite second party. And thus it is in Scripture. For the promise is centrally made to Christ, and through Him to the seed of Abraham, to the children of the promise, to those that are called heirs and co-heirs of the promise. (Cf. Heb. 6:13, 14, 17.) To the heirs of the promise the promise is certain because it is rooted in the immutable counsel of the Most High.

From this it follows necessarily that the promise is particular. The promise of God is not for all, but for those whom the Father hath chosen from before the foundation of the world. It is not true that Christ died for all. It is not true that Christ intended to die for all. For He knows His sheep. And His sheep follow Him. And no one can pluck them out of His hand, or even out of the hand of the Father, John 10. One must choose between these two. Either the promise is for all, and Jesus purposed to save all, in which case, however, He is only a possible Saviour; or Jesus came to save His people, the elect, unto eternal life, and in that case — and in that case only — He actually saves. Scripture abundantly testifies that salvation is of sovereign grace and that Jesus saves the elect only and unconditionally. This is emphasized already when the angel announced the name He shall bear. "For," says he, "he shall save his people from their sins." And always the Scriptures set forth the name Jesus, that shall save His people, that is, the elect, from their sins. For God "hath blessed us with

all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Eph. 1:3, 4. That is, the bestowal of the spiritual blessings in Christ takes place according to the standard of eternal election. And this election is not because of foreseen faith or goodness in the elect. For He chose us not because we were, but "in order that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. 1:4. And again, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." Eph. 1:5, 6. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. 1:11. And again, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Rom. 9:11-13. "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy . . . Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Rom. 9:15, 16, 18. "For whom he did foreknow [that is, in sovereign, causal, divine knowledge of love], he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 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." Rom. 8:29, 30.

In contrast to the unbelieving Jews at Capernaum, Jesus refers to His own when He says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 6:37-39. The unbelief of the Jews that had seen so many miracles of Him is explained by the words of Esaias: "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them." John 12:37-40

Nor is it different in the Old Testament. For He saith to His people: "Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen: Thus saith

the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." Is. 44:1-3. And again, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." Is. 43:21. "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me." Is. 43:10.

In the light of the Word of God, therefore, we come to the conclusion that the gospel is glad news about the promise of our salvation, about the sure promise of God that He will surely deliver us from all sin and guilt, corruption and death, and translate us into the highest conceivable, — or rather, humanly inconceivable, — bliss of His heavenly kingdom and covenant. And the gospel declares, in the first place, that God objectively realizes all the fulness of His salvation in and through Christ Jesus, His humiliation and exaltation; and, in the second place, that God subjectively realizes and applies all the blessings of salvation through the Spirit of promise and through His Word; and, in the third place, that He realizes His work of salvation to whomsoever He wills, that is, His people, the elect, they that believe in Christ, the humble and brokenhearted, the weary and heavy laden, all they that mourn in Zion.

Whatever is true of the gospel and the promise of the gospel is, as stands to reason, certainly true of the love of God. God does not love all men. What is the love of God? In answer to this question, I would briefly remark the following:

1) First of all, as also Prof. Dekker reminds us, God *is* love. This means that love is the most essential virtue, or attribute, of God. This implies that God loves Himself; and as the Triune God He lives the life of the most perfect and intimate fellowship within Himself. And He loves the creature for His name's sake.

2) Secondly, God loves Christ, His only begotten Son in the flesh. Repeatedly God announces this from heaven: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And in that high-priestly prayer which we find in John 17:23 we read: "That the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." And in vs. 24 of the same high-priestly prayer we read: "... for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

3) Thirdly, God loved not all men, nor does He love all men, but His people, those whom the Father hath given to Christ. For thus we read in I John 3:1;

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." That this love is not for all men is evident from what follows in the same verse, "therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." In I John 4:9 we read, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." And in vs. 10 of the same chapter we read, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." And that the personal pronoun in all these verses does not refer to all men is very evident from the context. For there we read of "false prophets, that are gone out into the world," vs. 1. And in vss. 5,ff., we read, "They are of the world [the world of evil men is meant]: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." From all this it is perfectly clear that God does not love all men, but loves only His own people, those whom the Father hath given to Christ our Lord.

I know that Prof. Dekker quotes John 3:16 in order to prove that God loves all men. God loves the world, so he says, and that world is all men. I will not take much time to contradict this explanation of John 3:16. If you consult Scripture, you will find that the word "world" has many different meanings. It means the world of evil men in more than one passage of Holy Writ. I will only refer at this time to II Cor. 5:18-21, "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the word of reconciliation. Now then we

are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." And that in these verses the pronouns "us" and "we" are not all men is evident in itself. For *we are reconciled*, and *God does not impute our trespasses unto us*. If this refers to all men, then it stands to reason that all men *are reconciled*, that God does not impute trespasses unto any man, — in other words, that all men *are saved*. And that certainly is not Scripture.

Hence, we conclude that not only the gospel is particular, not only the promise is particular, but that also God's love is particular. God does not love all men. To maintain that all men are the objects of the love of God is a denial of the truth of reprobation. It is universalism. It is Barthianism. Barth, as you know, maintains that Christ is *the* Reprobate, and that as such He died on the accursed tree. Hence, by His death He forever removed reprobation. And although Barth denies that he is a universalist, the fact remains that if there is no reprobation, and that if by the death of the cross Christ removed reprobation, all men are elect. Christ died for all men; and all men are saved. The same is the case with the doctrine that God loves all men, whether you call this universal love redemptive or redeeming.

And therefore, I stress once more that the gospel is not universal, but particular, although the preaching of the gospel is promiscuous; that the promise of the gospel is not universal, but particular; and that also the love of God is not for all men, but only for the elect. This is Scriptural. And this is the truth as it is expressed in our Reformed Confessions.

WELLSPRINGS OF RENEWAL, Promise in Christian Communal Life, by Donald G. Bloesch; Eerdmans Publishing Co.; 124 pp., \$3.25 (paper). [Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko]

The book contains an interesting survey and evaluation of the recent phenomenon of Christian communal life throughout the world. Its evaluation is, on the whole, sympathetic.

THE KEY TO GOOD NEWS, by John Piet; Eerdmans Publishing Co.; 62 pp., \$1.00 (paper). [Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko]

The sub-title of the book reads: "A thematic guide to the reading of the New Testament based on 'Good News For Modern Man.'" It offers little more than a brief introduction to each New Testament book along with a sketchy outline. It is intended to promote a faulty and dangerous translation of Scripture.

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STEPS AFTER ABORTION

When the discussion concerning abortion arose in this country which eventually led to a liberalization of abortion laws, there were many who protested against abortion on the grounds that this was only a first step in a campaign to be waged against human life in general. At the time, pro-abortionists scoffed at this and derided those who raised the alarm resorting to unethical tactics in the battle against legalized abortion.

Recent events however, have proved that those who opposed abortion were not alarmists at all.

Christianity Today recently contained an editorial in which recent developments along these lines were spelled out.

The editorial points out first of all that the advocates of abortion are concentrating their attention on euthanasia. Some liberal thinkers are openly advocating it. Bills are being presented in state legislatures to legalize it. The distinction is made (and properly) between "passive euthanasia" and "active euthanasia". The former means that a person is allowed to die without making use of life-supporting equipment. The latter refers to speeding death in a person with terminal illness by drugs or other techniques. The supporters of euthanasia argue that passive euthanasia has been used extensively for many years; that there really is no great difference between passive euthanasia and active euthanasia. The position is supported by all kinds of specious arguments. It is said that a man ought to have the right to die as well as the right to live. Zero population growth is advanced as an argument. And so on. But no one mentions the fact that murder is involved.

The editorial points out further that there is a concerted campaign to force parents in one way or another to regulate the size of their families. A certain Martha Willing is referred to in the editorial who proposes, first, tax disincentives for parents who have more than two children. But then the state would proceed to penalize those who had more and eventually set up controls to prevent violations. Martha Willing is quoted as follows:

After the third child is born, both mother and father will have to present themselves at the hospital to undergo sterilization procedures. If the couple does not appear, or if only one appears, there will be no birth certificate issued to the third child, but instead a third child paper. The mother can be

tattooed or marked to signify a third birth to any subsequent doctor. Instead of the missing parent, the child can be sterilized on the spot, insuring that this undue share of the gene pool will not be carried forward.

The editorial also quotes men who advocate infanticide. At a population-control conference in Washington, D.C., the following remarks were made: "There is no reason why anyone who accepted abortion should balk at infanticide" and "no newborn infant should be declared human until it has passed certain tests regarding its genetic endowment; if it fails these tests, it forfeits the right to live."

The editorial also pointed out that already tax-payers' money is being spent for various propaganda purposes in favor of population control and for programs in the schools to introduce children to these ideas.

It is difficult to say anything about these things. The terrible evil of them is so obvious that it ought to be evident to anyone who has any concern for human life that we live in terrible times and face even more terrible days ahead. But one thing is certain: the nation which callously murders her future citizens will reap the awful judgment of God. The child of God must see in all this the same age-old plot of Satan to destroy the Church. God's people must remember that only when the whole Church of Christ is born will Christ return. To us is given the privilege of bringing forth that glorious Church of Christ. No evil plans can prevent that from happening.

STATE EDUCATION AND OUR CHILDREN

In the *NACA NEWS*, edited by Rev. Norman Jones from Sutton, Nebraska, the following interesting article is found, which we quote in part. It was originally taken from *Applied Christianity*.

The Scriptural admonition, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6), was not intended as a Biblical commandment for the State or Federal Government or even the Church. The admonition was directed expressly to parents. Parents, more than anybody else, are responsible for the education of their children. Psalm 127:3 says: "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord." Children are given to parents by the Lord. They are not community, state or federal property. Parents, under God, and no one else, are responsible for their children.

If you are a parent who sends your youngsters to a Christian school, and takes them regularly to a Bible believing church, I am confident you will believe in the above Biblical position regarding parental responsibility. However, there is a large socialistic anti-Bible segment of our society that believes that children are "an heritage" of the state and that the state is responsible for the education of children. This idea has reached such proportions in the U.S. that the State of Ohio has revised its education code to read as follows:

"... the natural rights of a parent to custody and control of their children are subordinate to the power of the state to provide for the education of children. Laws providing for the education of children are for the protection of the state itself."

This simply means that the state has primary right to children in the area of education. In the state of Ohio, the state authorities can legally insist that a child be educated in their way, while ignoring any protest of the parents.

LIBERALISM AT THE FREE UNIVERSITY

Our editor has written from time to time concerning the liberal trends in the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands. Recently an interesting article appeared in the *RES Newsletter* which demonstrates that there are still those who are raising their voices in opposition.

The periodical "Waarheid en Eenheid" (Truth and Unity), that serves as the voice of those who are disturbed by what they see as an accelerating erosion of traditional Reformed standards in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN), reacted strongly to that Church's decision on the 'Wiersinga' issue. It warned that the GKN were threatening to disappear as Reformed Churches.

That Dr. G. C. Berkouwer sided with the report which was finally adopted at the Synod and that he himself spoke in favor of continuing dialogue with Wiersinga seemed to the periodical to be the last straw. The faculty of the Free University, it said, has become the headquarters and mobilization point of humanizing theology. At present, the professors of the Theological Faculty of the Free University automatically serve as pre-advisers at the Synod. If this continues, "Waarheid en Eenheid" warned, the

churches will commit suicide. It, therefore, called on the GKN to break official ties with the Theological Faculty of the Free University.

At a recent Synod new regulations for the relation of the GKN to the Theological Faculty of the Free University were adopted. At that time there were no efforts to sever the ties. The views of "Waarheid en Eenheid" then had little if any spokesmen at the Synod.

AN OBSTACLE TO UNION

The *RES Newsletter* also carried an article which pointed out a serious obstacle to the proposed merger between the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod.

The 41st General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church opened May 17 in Palos Heights, Illinois.

The Assembly battled through and approved most of the proposed plan for union with the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod. However, that work may be all for naught. Rejected were proposed alterations to the longer Westminster Catechism which were designated to ensure "eschatological liberty". A number of Reformed Presbyterians hold premil views and feel that the original wording of the Catechism excludes that interpretation.

DEVELOPMENTS IN MISSOURI SYNOD

The controversy between the liberals and the conservatives in the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod goes on unabated. After the firing of Dr. John Tietjen, a large number of students and faculty from Concordia Seminary walked out and began Seminex. Since that time, some of these students have graduated and are looking for Churches to serve. Church rules prohibit this without the approval of the Board of Control at Concordia. This approval was not, quite naturally, forthcoming. Some Churches have gone ahead in spite of this lack of approval and ordained students who graduated from Seminex. This has become another major issue in the Church and is of such importance that many feel the issue has come which will bring a split in the denomination.

Last reminder: Don't forget the annual meeting of the R.F.P.A. to be held Thursday evening, Sept. 19th, at 8 P.M. at our Southwest Prot. Ref. Church. Nominees for the Board are A. Dykstra, Wm. De Krakker, C. Kalsbeek, G. Holstege, J. King and Harry Zwak. Prof. H. C. Hoeksema will speak to us on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of our Standard Bearer. We are planning on a good turnout, which means that we are planning on each of you attending.

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[Note: In this volume there is a very serious printer's error in the page numbers, with the result that it will take a little searching to find some of the articles, due to the fact that some page numbers have been repeated. Perhaps the following explanation will serve as a guide to any who wish to look up articles listed in the index. The March 1 issue (No. 11) includes pages 241-264. The March 15 issue (No. 12) jumps to pages 275-298. The April 1 issue (No. 13) repeats pages 241-264; these will be designated in the index as pages 241a-264a. The April 15 issue (No. 14) includes pages 265-288, thus including page 275-288 for the second time; the latter will be designated as pages 275a-288a. The May 1 issue (No. 15) includes pages 289 to 312, thus including 289-298 for the second time; the latter will be designated pages 289a-298a. In this index, therefore, any page number followed by "a" designates the *second time* that page number occurs in the volume. Confusing? Pity the poor indexer! HCH]

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News From Our Churches

First place in the news for this issue must certainly be the fact that three of the calls mentioned in the last issue have been accepted. Rev. Dale Kuiper has accepted the call to serve as a second home missionary (with Maine as his first designated field of labor); Candidate Arie den Hartog accepted the call to serve as pastor in our church in Prospect Park, New Jersey; and Candidate James Slopsema, the call from Edgerton, Minnesota. They surely have our prayers that the Lord's blessing may rest upon them as they take up their new labors.

* * * * *

In Holland's bulletin Rev. Heys reported concerning the death of one of the ministers in the Protestant Reformed Churches of Jamaica. Rev. Frame, he writes, became ill while preaching in one of the congregations there. His text, on that particular Sabbath, was Psalm 16:1 — "Preserve me, O God: for in Thee do I put my trust." Apparently realizing he was very ill, he assured his congregation, "My soul is prepared." He died on the way to the hospital. Thus the Lord removed one of the two veteran ministers serving the nine congregations. Rev. Elliott remains, along with the four newly-ordained young men, trained for the ministry of the Word through the work of Rev. G. Lubbers.

* * * * *

Our Hull congregation, as you might remember, has for some time been considering the possibility of establishing its own school. A Protestant Reformed School Society was organized there in June of 1973. The board set to work immediately making studies of transportation, building and finance, and curriculum. From mid-January to May of this year, the board distributed weekly newsletters, written by Rev. Kortering, "spelling out some of the principles involved in having our own Protestant Reformed School." The final newsletter concluded with an expression of the conviction that "our school is necessary and that it is our sacred obligation before God to work for it now." The writer added his hope "that the newsletters have been helpful in viewing the school from the perspective of the covenant, both as to a privilege and duty."

The board intended to submit to the society a proposal to "set the target date for opening our own school to be September 1976." How the board's proposals fared at that May 30 society meeting, we haven't heard; but we were gratified to read in the August 11 bulletin, that the "Hull Prot. Ref. School Society took a big step forward yesterday afternoon

(continued on back page)

The AACS And The Kingdom

by Prof. H. Hanko

In response to numerous requests for additional copies of this significant article in our September 1 issue, we have prepared a *Standard Bearer Reprint* of it. These reprints are free while the supply lasts. Write to: The Standard Bearer

P.O. Box 6064
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

(Donations to cover expense are welcome.)

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

We of the Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church are very happy to invite *all* the friends of our pastor, Rev. C. Hanko, to an open house honoring his 45 years in the ministry.

The congregation will celebrate the occasion on Friday evening, September 20. All others are invited to come on Saturday evening, September 21, from 5:00 to 7:30 P.M. at the Hudsonville Church.

IMPORTANT NOTICE!!!

Rev. D. H. Kuiper, pastor of the Pella (Iowa) Protestant Reformed Church, has accepted the call of our Protestant Reformed Churches to be Home Missionary.

The Lord willing, Rev. Kuiper will preach his farewell sermon in Pella on Sunday, September 22, 1974. He is to be installed as Missionary in the Hudsonville (Mich.) Protestant Reformed Church on Wednesday evening, September 25. All members and friends of our Churches are invited and urged to attend this Installation Service.

The Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Consistory
Henry Boer, Clerk

NOTICE

Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Churches will convene, D.V., on October 2, 1974 at the Hudsonville Prot. Ref. Church. Material to be treated at this session must be in the hands of the Stated Clerk at least ten days prior to the convening date.

Jon Huiskens
Stated Clerk
Classis East

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Priscilla Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids expresses its sympathy to three of its members, Misses Agnes, Jessie, and Jean Dykstra in the loss of their mother, MRS. BERT DYKSTRA. "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him." Psalm 103:17

Mrs. G. Bol, Pres.
Mrs. S. Looyenga, Sec.

and decided to purchase the 6 acres of land including the house on second street. We are grateful," the announcement continued, "for the good discussion and willingness to financially support this decision." One can sense, I think, the enthusiasm of the writer of those lines. "We are on the move," he says. "We urge all of you to become involved as we make important decisions that affect our future generations. May God bless these efforts so we may soon have our own school here in Hull." A reminder, this surely is, of how richly blessed are those of us who live in communities in which our own schools have already been established.

* * * * *

The August 11 bulletin of First Church carried excerpts of a letter received from Candidate Arie den Hartog. He wrote the letter shortly after he had received the call from Prospect Park, where he was spending the summer. He wrote that he was enjoying the labors there very much. Members of the congregation, he says, "appreciate so much the preaching of the Word, that it is a joy to preach here." In describing the congregation, he writes that "the group is still small. The services are attended by 25 to 30 people, usually more in the evening than in the morning. There are only five families that are members yet but at least three families attend very regularly. So by the grace of God there is hope that in His time more will join us."

In reflecting on his call, Candidate den Hartog notes that "we receive this call with great joy because it is the objective call of the church of Jesus Christ that confirms the subjective call that I believe I have had through my years of preparation. Consideration of this call will be very difficult, however. One is impressed by the awesome responsibility that God places before us and we are made to realize more than ever that we out of ourselves are surely not sufficient for these things . . ."

* * * * *

Word from Rev. Harbach, our home missionary, is that "the 'church-in-principle' here in Houston is moving along, in the right direction, and with zeal for God's truth." He writes that "we enjoy preaching, teaching and visiting here." Part of the reason, no doubt, is that "the people respond enthusiastically also to the preaching. We have hopes that the mid-week meeting will also prove to be a gathering of mature and lasting enthusiasm for the Reformed truth."

According to the printed cards which serve as invitations to attend the Protestant Reformed Church Services, the meeting place is the Memorial West Community Club. The little cards advertise a 9:30 a.m. meeting for Bible Study (All Ages), a 10:30 a.m.

Morning Worship, and a 3:30 p.m. Afternoon Worship.

Our missionary's address is:

Rev. Robert C. Harbach
9075 Gaylord, #84
Houston, Texas 77024

D.D.

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