

The Standard Bearer

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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Safe In God's Crucible

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Ye Are My Witnesses

Love, Only Love

(see: The Strength of Youth)

All Around Us:

Congress on Evangelism

Sex Education in the Schools

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THE STANDARD BEARER

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

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

Editorial Office: Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

1842 Plymouth Terrace, S.E.

Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

Church News Editor: Mr. John M. Faber

1123 Cooper Ave., S.E.

Grand Rapids, Michigan 49507

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Business Office: The Standard Bearer,

Mr. H. Vander Wal, Bus. Mgr.

P.O. Box 6064

Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

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Meditation**Safe In God's Crucible**

Rev. M. Schipper

"But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not over flow thee: when thou walkest through fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

Isaiah 43:1, 2

Fear not!

At least twelve times in this prophecy alone we read this blessed refrain — Fear not! And the Lord Jesus addresses His disciples in the gospels at least thirteen

times with these same words — Fear not! Certainly then there must be a reality that can cause such fear to come upon the children of God. There would be no need for such an address if there were no objective

reality that could cause the hearts of the people of God to tremble with fright.

It is the reality we think fitting to call — God's crucible! A crucible in the most literal sense is a vessel in which ore or metal is melted over a fire of intense heat. Here we use the term figuratively as referring to those experiences in life in which God leads His children through ways of severe trial and testing; where He tries them, as the Scriptures love to use the expression, as silver or gold is tried in the fire.

There is indeed the reality of fire and water, powers which in themselves have the capability of destroying. They are powers quite naturally to be feared. Who is not afraid of the awesome power of water who is acquainted with the sea? Who does not tremble in fear who has been touched by the flame? Just as really in the figurative sense there is the reality of trial and testing which God in His providence and according to His all-wise counsel causes to come across our pathway of life. The sufferings of this present time are a reality for the children of God as well as for the world. Because he is a child of God does not mean that somehow he is immune to suffering in body and mind. Also he is required to lie down upon a bed of affliction, sometimes with bodies that are racked with pain, so that he despairs even of life itself. He is not immune to the ravages of disease that slowly but surely tear away at his vitals and bring him to his grave. He, too, suffers the loss of dear ones. His sons also go to the wars, and return often maimed or lying in a box. He, too, sits through long and anxious moments when his dear ones pass under the knife of the surgeon. And who has not experienced the dull pain clutching at his heart while he sits through long and weary hours in the funeral home?

But there is more — very much more!

And it is particularly this which the Lord had in mind when He says: Fear not!

Jacob-Israel knows of a suffering, of a trial of which the world knows nothing. A suffering which is inflicted upon the people of God, just because they are the people of God, and with the world being God's instrument to inflict that suffering.

Jacob-Israel, according to the prophet Isaiah, is now or is about to be brought to Babylon. Also the prophet Jeremiah had forewarned them that this would happen because of their sin; but he also told them that if they would not fight their captors and go along peaceably, no harm would come to them there, and after seventy years they would return to their own land. And we know how many of these captives, those who were carnal minded, got along well in Babylon. So prosperous were they that many did not even desire to return to their own land when the time of their captivity expired. But there were others who passed through the fire even in the most literal sense of the word. Think of the three friends of Daniel, who were

cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Was it perhaps because they by faith could lay hold on the words of our text that they were so fearless and able to succumb to the edict of the king? We like to believe this is exactly what they did. But many others there were who passed through the figurative fire and water. They lamented because of their sins which had brought them into God's crucible. They mourned the sad estate and condition of Jerusalem and their home land. When the citizens of Babylon mockingly required of them a song, and that they should play skillfully upon their instruments of music, they exclaimed: How can we sing and play so long as we are in a strange land. There, indeed, they hanged their harps upon the willows, for their spirits were low, and their hearts heavy with grief.

This was God's crucible of water and fire for them! It was the time of Jacob-Israel's trial and testing, the time of suffering and persecution!

And to them Jehovah says: Fear not!

Mind you, it is quite easy to rejoice in the words: Fear not! when the water is only ankle deep, and the smell of fire has not even touched your clothes. When everything is rosy, it is comparatively easy to sing: With God we shall leap over the wall, and when ten thousand rise up against us we will not be afraid. But it is quite different when the water mark already reaches your lips, and the flame licks at your naked flesh. To experience the latter is to be in God's crucible!

When thou passest through the water — when thou walkest through the fire — this cannot refer to a remote possibility, but only to an objective reality.

Then: Fear not!

Jacob-Israel!

How beautifully these names describe those whom God places in His crucible! Both are ascribed to the God-fearing children of Judah, now in captivity. And both clearly indicate why it is that particularly this people is not to fear.

Jacob — that is, heel-holder, wrestler. Even while still in the womb, he clung to his brother Esau's heel, as if to trip him and pull him back into the womb, in order that he might be born first and inherit the birthright. Unwittingly to be sure, nevertheless prophetically indicating that his whole life would be spent in striving for the things of God's covenant.

Israel — that is, perseverer, contender of God. The real commentary on this name as well as the first is to be found in Hosea 12: 3-5, "He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength, he had power with God: Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us. Even the Lord God of hosts: the Lord is his memorial." The historical reference is to that incident when Jacob, the heel-holder, wrestler, at the Jabbok wrestled all night with the angel of God and would not let him go until he was blessed. And this was done in

prayer, that is, with weeping and supplication. There he obtained the name Israel. And here the full name — Jacob-Israel — refers to those spiritual descendants who like Jacob contend for the things of God's covenant, and through perseverance attain!

In Babylon Jacob-Israel wrestles with the powers of darkness as they threaten the children of God, as they pass through the water and fire of God's crucible. Imposing powers these are, and against them God's people are expected to contend. Babylon and the world are intent on destroying them from the face of the earth. And if Jacob-Israel should look at this power of destruction as it so often envelops them in the history and development of God's covenant in the world, there would indeed be cause for much fear. But Jacob-Israel must be reminded that the crucible is not Babylon's to provide. It is God's crucible in which He is trying His people and Babylon is only the fire and water through which He ordains they shall pass.

Fear not! For I will be with thee!

Saith the Lord!

None other is He than Jehovah, the God of the everlasting covenant, the unchangeable, covenant-making and covenant-keeping God!

Who created thee, O Jacob!

Who formed thee, O Israel!

O, indeed, He is the Creator of all things, Who commands you not to fear. He made the heavens and the earth and all they contain, and He upholds them all by the Word of His power.

It is that same Creator Who has created and formed thee, O Jacob-Israel! This He did according to His sovereign and elective love. This He did by sending His Only Begotten Son into the world, to redeem His Jacob-Israel. And unto that Son Who suffered in their stead and for their transgressions, Whom God raised from the dead, and brought Him to His own right hand, He gave to Him His Spirit without measure so that He could work in that people with His grace and Spirit to form them into children of light. He made us His own covenant friend-servants, who, as to their part in His covenant, could love and serve Him. So by His grace Jacob-Israel becomes a new creation in Christ. It is this Creator-God Who has through His Son redeemed Jacob-Israel, and Who called this people by their name.

Not, you understand, by the name of our natural birth, for that would be: Son of Adam; but by their new name, and according to their true spiritual essence. And, therefore, to that people He declares: Thou art mine!

He made us for Himself!

We are entirely His property! We are not our own, but belong unto Him with body and soul, for time and eternity. This Creator, Redeemer-God has a claim on us. And shall He not be able to care for His possession? Can anyone or anything ever separate us from His love, or snatch us out of His hands? O, you know the answer to these questions, don't you, child of God? The apostle Paul puts the words in your mouth and we say it together: "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."

What assurance He gives!

I will be with thee — the waters shall not overflow thee!

Thou shalt not be burned — the flame shall not feed on thee!

Hear the Word of the Lord, O Jacob-Israel! When Jehovah, thy God, puts you in His crucible, it is not that you may be consumed, but through that very water and fire He purges from you all the dross, all the sin, guilt, and corruption, that, like the gold in the refiner's fire, you may come out pure and holy in His sight.

And remember, too, the fire and water are not accidental, a happen-stance that befalls us unbeknown to Him. For the fire and water also are His — His purging instruments wherewith He operates upon us. He has redeemed us and called by our name, in order that we might become and forever remain: Jacob-Israel. And remember, too, that Satan, the world, and all the powers of sin and death have no claim on us. What He redeemed and made into His precious possession, shall come to stand eternally before Him, without spot and without wrinkle, in the assembly of the elect in life eternal.

And we shall shew forth His praise!

Speaking beautiful words of peace, the sinner makes war. Boasting of righteousness, the natural man hates the righteousness of God. Claiming to labor for a better world, the enemy of God destroys it.

Editorial

Ye Are My Witnesses

Prof. H.C. Hoeksema

[The substance of an address at the annual meeting
of the Reformed Free Publishing Association]

Beloved Brethren:

I do not intend to deliver a sermon tonight, though my remarks will be closely connected with the passage of Scripture which our chairman read, Isaiah 43: 1-13, particularly vss. 8-13: "Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears. Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth. 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. I, even I, am the Lord; and besides me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God. Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?"

Nor do I intend merely to deliver a speech just because it is the custom to have a speech at this annual meeting, nor even generally to try to "inspire" you. But it is my purpose *to stir you up*, if possible, — to stir you to action. And I am not discouraged in this purpose, but rather strengthened by the very fact that we have tonight, if I am not mistaken, hit a new low in attendance for an annual meeting. And I want to do this on the basis of the emphasis in the passage from Isaiah 43, speaking on the subject, "Ye Are My Witnesses."

Witnesses of Whom?

The entire significance of our being witnesses, also as a Reformed Free Publishing Association, is wrapped up in this question and its answer.

And the answer is that we are witnesses of God, the Mighty One, Jehovah, the Savior, Who is God absolutely alone. Let me briefly call your attention to each of these aspects.

God is the Mighty One. A God must be strong. A weak God is an absurdity. For He Who is God is the Sovereign, Who rules over all. He must, therefore, be mighty, the Almighty, the Omnipotent One. And in this passage which speaks of our position and calling as witnesses, the emphasis is on this truth, first of all. Our

God is the Mighty One. You can trust in Him: for He can surely deliver and save. There is none that can deliver out of His hand; and there is none that can prevent His work. Of this ye are witnesses. Fear not, then!

In the second place, He is Jehovah, the I AM. This is strongly emphasized in the passage: "I, I, am Jehovah." And the deepest meaning of the name Jehovah is that God is the I AM. He is the God Who alone *is*. All else exists, becomes, is borne and upheld, is dependent. But God is the I AM, the Self-sufficient One. And as such He is the eternally unchangeable God. All else is changeable and changing. But our God is the changeless and unchangeable One. And therefore, He is the absolutely Faithful One and Dependable One. He is the covenant God, Who keepeth covenant and mercy, the God Who is faithful to Himself, faithful to His own perfections, faithful to His counsel, faithful to His promise, faithful to His Word, faithful to His people! And therefore, once again: you can trust in Him and depend upon Him. No witness who ever does so and who bears witness of Him shall ever have to be ashamed of his witness. Fear not!

In the third place, our God, of Whom we are witnesses, is the Savior. A Savior is one who saves, who delivers. And salvation means that we are rescued out of the greatest evil, the hopeless misery of sin and death, and that we are made partakers of the highest good, eternal life, the bliss of God's covenant friendship. A Savior is one who accomplishes this. Mind you, a Savior is not only able to do this, or willing to do this. He *does* it! And this is our God. As such He has revealed Himself to us in the face of Jesus: Jehovah salvation! And this has the strong emphasis in the passage from Isaiah and in its context. He is the God Who will be with His people when they pass through the fire and the water. He is the God Who gave men for them, and peoples for their life. He is the God Who will surely bring them to Jerusalem, to the eternal inheritance, Who will speak to the whole world, to the ends of the earth, "Give up; keep not back; bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth!"

Moreover, He is God *absolutely alone*! This also is strongly emphasized in the passage from Isaiah. Before

Him there was no god formed, neither shall there be after Him; that is, eternally He alone is God. Beside Him there is no Savior: all your salvation is only in and of Him! And this is, of course, in the nature of the case. If God is not God alone, then He is no God. This concerns His very divinity. If there are also other gods — whether they be the idols of ancient times or the idols of the modern day — if there are also other gods, other powers next to Him, those who also possess might and wisdom in themselves, then the whole matter of God's cause becomes dubious, hazardous, uncertain.

Of Him, therefore, we are witnesses: Him, the Mighty God, the I AM, the Savior, the only Lord God!

Witnesses — Who?

“Ye are my witnesses,” saith Jehovah.

The setting is that of a trial, a case at law. It is an on-going trial, a trial whose scene is repeated again and again in history. And in that trial there is a confrontation between two parties, the witnesses of Jehovah and the witnesses of the idols, who are no gods.

The one party is described as “the blind people who have eyes and the deaf who have ears.” These are God's people, His witnesses. And they are described thus not without great reason. This description is a realistic one, one which accurately pictures God's people as they have often appeared and do often appear in the course of history, and one which only too often is an accurate picture of us. God's people have eyes to see and ears to hear, that is, to perceive and to apprehend spiritual things, to perceive and apprehend that He is the Mighty One, Jehovah, the only Savior. But they are often blind and deaf for the testimonies of the greatness of the Lord. Because of the weakness of the flesh, they become dim of sight and hard of hearing. And when they have no eye for the greatness of Jehovah and no ear for His wonderful saving power, then, of course, they also become *dumb* and they fail to bear testimony of Him and for Him, though they are of God's party in the midst of the world. And then, of course, they must be called and stirred up and reminded of their calling: “Bring forth the blind people who have eyes, and the deaf who have ears. . .”

The other party is that of the adherents of the idols. They are here described as “all the nations.” that is, the Gentiles at that time in distinction from Israel. They are those who follow one or another of the idols. They are those who deny that God is God alone, who deny that He is the I AM, who deny that He is the Savior.

And the case at issue in this trial is this: it must become plain who is God. Or, better stated: it must become plain that Jehovah is God alone. And God's people must be made to know this and to acknowledge

this and to live in the consciousness of it. Moreover, the decision and outcome of this trial centers on this question: who is able to prophesy, to declare something before it comes to pass, but in such a way that it also indeed comes to pass? In the language of Isaiah 46: 10: which God is able to say, “My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure?” Which God is able to declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done? He who is able to do this is God indeed and God alone! This, therefore, is the issue. And this issue is to be determined on the basis of past performance, on the basis of past words and works. The witnesses are called upon to demonstrate from the past that their God has ever declared anything beforehand which has also come to pass. The adherents of the idols must do this; or, if they cannot do this and cannot justify themselves and their gods, they must keep silence; they must hear the witnesses of Jehovah, and say, “It is truth.” And the latter, of course, is the case.

But God's people testify for Him, testify of His words and works in the past. They are His witnesses that He alone is God. Of this all the history of the old dispensation testifies. God is the God Who has declared and Who has saved. God is the God Who has shewed, when there was no strange god among them. God is the God Who is before the day was. God is the God from Whose hand none can deliver. God is the God Whose work none can prevent. And how much richer and more glorious is this revelation in the new dispensation, now that all the promises of God have been centrally fulfilled in and through our Lord Jesus Christ!

Hence, the outcome of this “trial” and the content of the testimony of God's witnesses is surely always centrally this: God alone is God! He is the Mighty One! He is the Sovereign! He is the I AM! He is the God Who works irresistibly, the God Whose work stands, so that no power can prevent it or withstand it. He is the Savior of His people! There is none who can save as He!

It is against this background that we must consider for a moment the question: what is a witness?

In the first place, a witness is one who sees and hears and who therefore has personal knowledge of anything, — in this instance, of the truth that God is God.

Such is our highly privileged position. It is ours because, as Isaiah puts it, God has chosen us and called us to be His servants. And He has done this in order that we should know and believe and understand that He is God. In other words, He has revealed Himself to us; He has caused us to know and believe and understand that He is God. This is the work of His grace. The knowledge of God has become for us a personal thing, a matter of the living, spiritual knowledge of experience. We know first-hand, know by

seeing and hearing, know by experience, through His mighty work of salvation which He has wrought for us and in us, that He is God, the Mighty One, the I AM, the Savior, and that there is none beside Him. Such is our position as Reformed, as Protestant Reformed believers. And this is the sole reason why we are believers, that we may be His witnesses, that we may show forth the praise of Him Who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

And that brings us to the second aspect of a witness, namely, that he *attests to* and *bears testimony of* that which he has seen and heard and of which he has personal knowledge. A dumb witness is a contradiction in terms. A witness not only knows, but he testifies, speaks, makes known, establishes that of which he has personal knowledge. Such is also our proper position and calling as witnesses of God. In this on-going trial, in distinction from and over against all who adhere to their idols, it is our high calling to speak out and to bear testimony of that which we have seen and heard, that which we know by personal knowledge: Jehovah, the Mighty God of our salvation, the only Savior, is God alone!

“Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, that I am God!”

Witnesses — How?

You might say that *The Standard Bearer* is such a witness. This is true from the point of view of the fact that our magazine has always contained that testimony. This has always been its character. The keynote of all the testimony which *The Standard Bearer* has always borne has, from its very beginning to the present day, been the testimony that God is God alone!

Behind that testimony of *The Standard Bearer* there are, of course, the writers, the editorial staff. The testimony carried by our magazine has been *their* testimony, the production of their pens. Behind that staff, in turn, is the Board of the R.F. P.A. They have been responsible for seeing to it that the witness of the editorial staff was published and spread abroad. Without their labors there would be no *Standard Bearer*. And it is important, too, that they always understand their work as being something much more than the mere hum-drum, mechanical labor of getting a magazine published. That can soon become tiring, become a thankless task, — especially when it is all volunteer work. But the moment they and we see that work in its proper perspective, i.e., as the work of WITNESSES, then it is no more a hum-drum labor and thankless task, but a high calling and a divine privilege!

But behind all of these — the magazine, the staff, the board — is you, the Reformed Free Publishing Association. Ultimately it is this organization who are the witnesses, through the agency of the Board and the Staff, and through the instrument of our magazine. This is obvious from the simple fact that if there were

no R.F.P.A., there simply would not be *The Standard Bearer*.

And thus we have arrived at the point I wish to drive home and apply concretely for a few moments: You, the members of the R.F.P.A., are God’s witnesses, to bear testimony by means of the printed page that Jehovah, the God of our salvation, is God alone. That has always been and still is the sole reason for existence of the R.F.P.A. If that is not your character, then you have no right of existence. If it is, then you have a high calling, and one to which you must, for God’s sake, be obedient.

In this light let us evaluate and examine ourselves and our witness.

Let us ask the question whether we are, and to what extent we are, blind people who have eyes and deaf who have ears, and therefore whether we have allowed, and to what extent we have allowed, our testimony to become silenced. That this happens, you know, is very easily the case, on account of our sinful flesh. We can become accustomed to the most wonderful things. We can begin to take them for granted. And then we become complacent, self-satisfied, unenthusiastic, content to let things be as they are, content just to keep going (which means inevitably to run down!)

And if I may answer this question for you, for a moment, my answer is in the affirmative. This is true of us all in a measure, also as far as the R.F.P.A. is concerned. Attendance at these meetings is one sign of this. Even when I allow for the fact that there was a conflict of dates and of other meetings, I must come to this conclusion. And when I scan my audience, I must point to another fact, namely, that there are mostly older men present, and very few younger men. This is not to discredit our older men; on the contrary, it is to their credit. Besides, I love our older men; they are veterans in the cause and in the labor. But it is not a healthy sign that our younger men do not take as active a part as they should! Steps must be taken to get them here and to get them to add the enthusiasm and vigor of their younger years to this labor.

There is another fact to which I must call your attention. That is the fact that the chief business of the R.F.P.A. and its Board has gradually become merely to keep *The Standard Bearer* in existence, to keep it running, to keep it solvent. My point is not that the latter is not necessary, but that is not enough! And my point is, too, that as this is our chief business and as we concentrate on it more and more, it also becomes more difficult as times goes on. We tend to become negative and pessimistic and struggling in our whole outlook, rather than positive and zealous and vigorous.

A third fact to which I call your attention is the fact that we tend to become introverted, inward-looking. For one thing, we become content merely to direct our witnesses to ourselves in the main. We are satisfied to have our readership and our membership among our

own Protestant Reformed people. This is fine! This is necessary! Surely, the witness of our *Standard Bearer* ought to be in every Protestant Reformed home (and there is something wrong with the home where it is missing. Surely, that witness must be diligently read and studied. This is essential! It is essential especially for up-coming generations. For if they are not solidly instructed and well-founded in the truth, the witness will surely die out! But my point is that this is not *sufficient*! Nor was only this the purpose of *The Standard Bearer* from its inception. A witness must speak out! He must speak not only to his fellow witnesses, but also before all those who in any way deny that Jehovah is the only God and the only Savior! And on this score, we fall short! The readership of our magazine includes only a small minority of readers beyond the pale of our churches. This is simply a fact. And I am not referring now to the mere lack of subscribers outside our churches. I am referring to the lack of readers. And I do not lay the lack of readers to those readers, but to *our own failure* to reach them with our witness, our own failure to speak out, our own very meager attempts to gain readership outside our churches.

A fourth fact, closely connected, is the large measure of inactivity on the part of the R.F.P.A. membership. Once per year we pay our membership dues, sometimes we attend the annual meeting. At our annual meetings we listen to and approve the annual reports, vote for three new board members, and listen to a speech. That's all. In other words, our membership is largely *inactive*. They are not even so much as called upon to approve a proposed budget, much less given an opportunity to have a part in any other activities of the association.

In parentheses, let me remark that there are many items on the positive side of the ledger which might also be mentioned; and I surely do not wish to leave the impression that there is nothing good about our R.F.P.A. Far be it from me! If that were the case, I would not even see any hope in speaking about these things tonight. But I have purposely laid the stress on the above items in the hope that when we see these indications that all is not as it could be and should be, we will also take steps to do something about it.

And therefore I want to conclude with a few suggestions for improvement.

The principal solution, of course, is a spiritual one. We must open our eyes and our ears, fight against the blindness and the deafness which so easily comes upon us. This is essential. If we become blind and deaf, then our witness is silenced also. And to the extent that we become dull of hearing and dim in vision, to that extent we become silent witnesses. Hence, this is fundamental. And the more that we have a keen spiritual vision and hearing, the more vocal will be our witness. Let us fight, therefore, to maintain a high

calibre of sight and hearing. The Lord our God has given us a blessed heritage of the truth, as He has given to no other communion of believers. In the light of that fact, we ought to be the most zealous and the most vocal witnesses on the face of the earth! Let us never forget it!

Given the above principal solution, I propose the following practical measures.

In the first place, steps must be taken to rejuvenate this organization. I have in mind, first of all, that we must do this as far as size is concerned. All of our men in this area should have a part in this work. They should all be members, active members. And this annual meeting should be a high-keyed, exciting, enthusiastic gathering. To my mind, this involves, secondly, that we take action to get the membership *involved* both in the spirit and in the activities of the association. From a certain point of view, I can understand that our membership can become so inactive that they do not even attend the meetings. They never hear much about the R.F.P.A. or have anything to do with it except when they are notified of this annual meeting, a meeting at which they have very little to do. It is almost axiomatic that if you want an active organization and enthusiastic participation, you must give the membership something to do! This ought to be done, and our Board must give attention to this.

In the second place, we must take systematic and well-planned action to get our witness out, — I mean beyond the reaches of our own churches and people. This is of the utmost importance today because of the critical situation in the churches today, and because our *Standard Bearer* is about the only clear and unequivocal witness on the scene. Think about that latter fact! What a privilege! What a calling!

I do not mean by this chiefly that we must get more subscribers. That would be fine. But I think that will take care of itself, once we take steps to get our witness spread abroad. My point now, however, is that WE must get our witness out. We are the witnesses, and it is our calling and responsibility to witness, not to sit and wait. And I believe that in recent years we have not paid enough attention to this. I know that various objections have been raised on this score, — objections that it is useless and that it is fruitless, etc., etc. I don't "buy" those objections, for more than one reason. Objections like that don't show much faith, for one thing. But neither are they realistic: for there are vast segments even of the Reformed community which we have not even tried to reach with our witness on any consistent or extensive or systematic basis. It is simply a fact that especially in the last couple of decades we have not done a great deal of this kind of work. Let us begin anew! This must be planned. It must be done systematically. Perhaps we can only, because of limited means, begin this on a small scale. But begin we

MUST! For example, let us (instead of allowing these copies to gather dust in storage) use the over-run or the mailing margin of each issue for this purpose. Let us mail these out on a systematic basis, accompanied by an appropriate cover-letter. This takes only a little work and a small lay-out of money for postage and envelopes. Who knows what it will accomplish? And if funds permit, let us print more copies and mail them out. But, please, let us begin!

In the third place, we must in this connection take steps to get The Standard Bearer on a better financial footing and a more even keel. Our people have supported the cause royally; and I am confident they will continue to do so, and will do even more if the need is made known. But the fact remains that we operate at present on a hand-to-mouth basis, just barely remaining solvent, and constantly fighting inflation as far as publishing costs are concerned, — even though, I dare say, our magazine is published more economically (for its size) than most. The fact remains, too, that our subscription-rate of \$7.00 meets only half of our expenses, the rest being met by gifts and collections.

But the fact is, too, that it takes funds to get our witness out to others. Perhaps gradually there will be an increase of subscribers. This will help. But it would require 2500 to 3000 subscribers to make *The Standard Bearer* financially self-sustaining. And it is obvious that this is not the first solution. Nevertheless, this is one area which must be emphasized: more subscribers!

Nor do I profess to have all the solutions. Negatively, I do not believe there is a lack of money nowadays — in spite of the inflationary trend. For

there is money for many things nowadays. Well, the witness of the R.F.P.A. needs it too, needs it more than many other things. Positively, I would suggest that a step in the right direction would be to have a proposed budget as well as a financial report. And in that proposed budget there should be an item devoted to the spreading abroad of our witness. And the R.F.P.A. should pledge itself to meet that proposed budget.

I am proposing that steps in the direction of financial stability be taken, not, mind you, because we aim to be a profit-making organization. But, for one thing, our Board must not always be preoccupied with financial matters and struggling to “make ends meet.” They must have the funds and the time and the energy to devote to spreading abroad, as far and wide as possible, our Reformed testimony.

In all these things our Board must furnish leadership. I hope that our Board will devote much time and effort during the coming year to these matters. I hope they will come to the society with some forward-looking, positive proposals. They need not even wait until the next annual meeting. Let them call a special mass meeting of our men; yes, and of our women too! In all these matters our membership must also become involved. And in all these matters the staff must lend real support, and in the meantime do their utmost to make and to keep our *Standard Bearer* a faithful witness.

All this must be done not out any carnal motivation, but only out of the motivation of the knowledge and confidence that we are His witnesses.

“Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah.”

Are you?

All Around Us

Congress on Evangelism Sex Education in the Schools

Prof. H. Hanko

CONGRESS ON EVANGELISM

Evangelicals in this country have always insisted they are conservative in distinction from liberal on questions of theology and the preaching of the gospel. They have not wanted to be called “fundamentalist” because this term, in their opinion, implied lack of scholarship in defense of the faith and radical resistance to any kind of change. But they have marked sharply their differences from liberalism by their insistence on preaching the gospel as the only way “to save souls” and by their avowed distrust of any kind of

social gospel or social involvement which becomes a substitute for preaching.

It seems as if all this is about to change. The occasion was the Congress on Evangelism which met September 8-13 in Minneapolis. It was a large gathering glittering with all the shining lights of the evangelical cause. It was also an broadly ecumenical gathering. There were some forty-five hundred delegates representing ninety-three denominations. There were, according to *Newsweek*, present at the meetings Mennonites, Nazarenes, Salvation Army Officers, five

kinds of Baptists, four kinds of Lutherans, Wesleyan Methodists, Free Methodists, United Methodists, two distinct Churches of God, various Assemblies of God and a host of Churches of Christ. There were also representatives from Presbyterian and Reformed Churches including some seventy-five members of the Christian Reformed Church. Billy Graham was there. So was Oswald Hofman (Lutheran radio minister), Leighton Ford (evangelist and brother-in-law of Graham), Tom Skinner, Pat Boone and representatives from the world of sports: Bobby Richardson and Bill Glass.

The theme of the Congress was: "Much is given; Much is required." This was expressive of the purpose of the Congress which, in the words of Billy Graham, was called together to stimulate a spiritual revival in the country and bring about a reorientation in the church. All this meant, as soon became apparent in the speeches, that the evangelicals had to become more involved in the social problems of the day if they were to have any influence and bring about any kind of spiritual revival. Particularly, this was interpreted to mean that evangelicals had to get involved in the racial issues which are tearing this country apart and bring the gospel to the ghettos where live the downtrodden and oppressed. Nor were the estranged youth to be ignored — the hippies and campus rebels, the revolutionaries and social outcasts. And the only way to reach all these was said to be by way of adapting the gospel to a language which speaks directly to the social ills of the times.

There were evidences of this increasing social emphasis in some of the happenings. At one point in the meetings a group of hippies tried to force their way into the meeting. They were summarily ousted; but later they received an apology from the Congress and were given an invitation to attend the sessions — something which apparently did not interest them a great deal.

In the opinion of many the high point came with the address of Rev. Ralph Abernathy, successor to Martin Luther King Jr., and head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Tossing aside his prepared speech he spoke of the long history of suffering of the blacks in this country and hit hard at the Church which, in his opinion, had failed in her calling. He asked the Congress to advocate admission of Red China into the United Nations, support withdrawal of U. S. troops from Viet Nam and full support for his own efforts to lead the Negroes to equal rights. His speech was received with what *Newsweek* described as "a standing, stomping ovation."

Christianity Today spoke glowingly of the Congress and expressed the fervent hope that the meeting would awaken evangelicals to their calling and be the spark to set afire the nation in the cause of Christ. While *The Banner* presented a detailed report of the Congress,

there was no evaluation. *Newsweek* expressed mild surprise that the Congress should become so socially minded.

While one cannot give a detailed report of the proceedings and a detailed evaluation of what took place without having been there, it seems nonetheless that evangelicals forfeited their claim to hold fast to the gospel against the attacks of liberal social theology. The very fact that the Congress could not only permit a liberal such as Rev. Abernathy to address the assembly but give him a standing ovation besides indicates that he struck a chord of deep response in the hearts of many who were present. The evangelicals in this country took a sharp turn in Minneapolis. And this sharp turn is away from the gospel and in the direction of liberal social emphasis.

But this is not very surprising. One characteristic of "evangelicalism" in this country is its open and unabashed Arminianism. It has always been thoroughly Arminian in theology and in the preaching. This has not improved over the years. And Arminianism is always the kernel of modernism. The man who walks the Arminian path walks a road to modernism. The Congress on Evangelism was startling proof of this.

SEX EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOLS

One of the more spectacular controversies raging in the country today is the controversy concerning the teaching of sex in the public schools. There is scarcely a religious or secular newspaper or magazine which one can pick up which does not have something to say about the subject. Radio speakers are addressing themselves to the problem and books are being written about it. All kinds of organizations are being formed, some in support of the thing; some violently opposed to it. Those who support such programs point to the obvious fact that kids are getting sex education anyway and some of it is pretty bad. They argue that parents and churches have failed to provide the needed education and that the schools must do what the homes and churches have failed to do. They are very pious in their assertions that children ought to be given right views of sex instead of ideas picked up on the street corners and in the school rest rooms. Those who oppose the whole business insist that sex education is immoral, pornographic, subversive, a not very subtle plot to destroy the whole system of moral values on which this country was built, and probably communist-inspired besides.

It is possible that some will say that this whole controversy is of little or no concern to us since it involves what takes place in the public schools where our children do not go. There is some truth to this, of course. We could dismiss any discussion of the subject with the remark: "Let the dead bury their dead." But there are nagging reasons why a brief discussion at least might be in order. One of these reasons is that it could

be conceivable that our schools will also some time in the not too distant future have to face the question. This might be through decisions of school boards or school societies; or it might also come through some kind of requirement which the government makes mandatory for our schools to retain their accreditation. Another reason why a discussion is in order is the very real possibility that we could lose the battle for the minds of our children through default. Maybe silence becomes irresponsible in this miserably sex-saturated age. Maybe also in this respect the people of God have got to speak out.

At any rate, there are a few things about this controversy which need to be said.

In this first place, it is a question worth asking of those who so vigorously defend the need for sex education in the schools how in the wide world they anticipate teaching any kind of a wholesome and holy attitude towards sex which is according to the principles of God's law when they have already banned any mention of religion from the classroom. If the prevailing religion in the public school system is atheism and evolutionism, it goes without saying that the sex education given will be very wrong. There cannot be any two ways about all this. And the proponents would be more honest if they would forget any pious platitudes about teaching wholesome attitudes about sex.

In the second place, the whole emphasis on sex education itself seems to me to be utterly wrong. Is there really a need for sex education at all — of any kind? I am not saying, and do not want to be interpreted as saying, that children should be told nothing about sex. This is not only impossible, but is an abdication of covenantal responsibility. But when we speak of "sex education" we are talking about formal courses in all such matters as male and female physiology, embryology, gynecology, birth control, venereal disease, dating practices, ethics, not to mention sex deviation and eroticism.

We are, it seems to me, by engaging in the controversy, conceding a very important argument that ought not be conceded. And that argument is that people of God who are to live as glorifying God also within the marriage state must be experts in the whole field of normal as well as abnormal sex. This I deny. Is it not just possible that the whole controversy arises in the first place because of the fact that sex in our present day culture has been so idolized and emphasized that it appears sometimes as if the most important things people do are related to matters sexual? This is horribly and profoundly wrong. And if indeed, as I suspect, it is true that the controversy is only a part of the unholy emphasis on sex and a rather natural result of such emphasis, we had better get at the root of the problem if we intend to right any wrongs. We had better not engage in any arm-flailing as

we enter the arena of the sex education controversy. It is better to raise our voices against the perverted and immoral culture in which we live.

But, of course, this is not the whole story. The trouble is that we live in this culture. And there is apparently not much that can be done about changing a sex-blinded generation of adulterers and fornicators. The result is that we and our children are bombarded day and night with the perversions of this modern Sodom. What then must be done? Shall we close our eyes to it and make believe our children do not read the movie ads in the daily press — not to mention the Ann Landers columns? Shall we live in the blind faith that our children do not hear dirty stories? do not come into contact with the foul-mouthed people of our times? Shall we cross our fingers and hope for the best? Or shall we be satisfied that we have fulfilled our obligations with some innocuous stories about "the birds and the bees"? This, of course, will never do. It is a vexing thing that the devil forces us into the position where we have to deal openly and forcibly with such sacred and holy things. But silence pleases our adversary. And by silence we may lose the battle.

So our children have got to be told what God's Word says about all this evil. And they have got to be told what is holy and righteous in the sight of God. And they have got to be told in such a way that they are emphatically left with the impression that sex is, after all, but a small part of life — a significant part no doubt; but a small part nonetheless. And they have to learn that even this small part is a part which must be sanctified by the grace of God. This is no easy task.

Now then, is this the business of the schools? of our schools? I emphatically insist that it is not. There may be a great deal of truth in the assertion that parents are very neglectful in teaching their children about these things. But this does not alter the fact that the responsibility belongs to the parents and to them alone.

There are reasons for this.

The most important reason is that we erect schools in order to provide instruction for our children which we cannot give them. This means two things. It means on the one hand, that we admit without shame, that we are (for various reasons) unable to give our children the education they need to be men of God in the midst of life and in their own particular station and calling. We erect schools and hire teachers to take care of this matter for us. But, on the other hand, we may not (and the word "not" ought to be underscored a few times) hand over to our teachers any of the work of instruction which we are able to do ourselves. There is altogether too much of this nowadays. Parents are the only ones responsible before God for covenant instruction. They must assume this responsibility. They must assume it willingly and cheerfully and not easily push

off on teachers tasks which they ought to be doing themselves. "Sex education" is most decidedly one of these things.

But there are other reasons. The home is the proper place for such instructions because only parents can gear the instruction which children need in this area of life to the mental, emotional, physical and social development of the child. They know when the child is ready to be taught certain things; the teachers do not. The home is the only proper place for this because parents are suited to teach *their* children and are miserably unsuited to teach somebody else's children. They can teach their children within the context of the home where the family is all together, where babies are born and enter into the life of the family, where sons and daughters, brothers and sisters date, where family love prevails, where the Scriptures are read and studied,

where such instruction in such holy matters can be given naturally and "matter-of-factly" and where it need not be a forced education in the abnormal circumstances of the classroom where the third period is set aside to discuss this particular aspect of sex education on Wednesday morning. It is this very abnormal classroom situation which is precisely conducive to leaving the impression with the child that the world is after all right: sex education is of towering importance and sexual matters are more important than anything else. It is in the home that the children can be taken aside and talked to individually if the need arises and where a mixed class in an open forum does not become the platform for such discussions.

Maybe our parents have to assume more forcibly this aspect of their calling. But by all means let it be done in the home.

Contending for the Faith

THE DOCTRINE OF SIN

THE THIRD PERIOD-730-1517 A.D.
PROTESTANT DOCTRINE OF SIN
ACCORDING TO CALVIN

Rev. H. Veldman

In our preceding article we called attention to the breadth and scope of the doctrine of Common Grace as set forth by John Calvin in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. In this article we will call attention to the fact that Calvin's doctrine of a common grace, although broad in its content, is nevertheless also very limited. We realize that we are now calling attention to the writings of Calvin and that the question is more important as to what appears in our reformed confessions. Nevertheless, it must certainly be of interest to call attention to what the Genevan Reformer has to say on this subject.

And then we would immediately declare that there is a tremendous difference between Calvin's doctrine of Common Grace and this doctrine as set forth in our present day.

It can hardly be denied that Calvin, by God's grace is the man who maintained the Special Grace of God which is bestowed exclusively upon the Church of God. In support of this we quote the following. First, we read of Calvin that there is no love of God except in Christ Jesus. We read in III, 2, 32: "Therefore, when the Lord by His promises invites a man not only to receive, but also to meditate on the effects of His goodness, He at the same time gives him a declaration of his love. Whence we must return to this principle,

that every promise is an attestation of the Divine love to us. But it is beyond all controversy, that no man is loved by God but in Christ; he is the 'beloved Son,' in whom the love of the Father perpetually rests, and then from him diffuses itself to us; as Paul says, that we are 'accepted in the beloved.' " Perhaps one may object that Calvin here is speaking of the saving love of God in Christ. Even so, let it then be understood that, according to the Reformer, this love of God is exclusively particular. Secondly, the grace of God which delivers us from the curse and wrath of God is wholly particular, as we read in III, 22, 7: "Judas, therefore, in his unfaithful exercise of the apostleship, might be worse than a devil; but of those whom Christ has once united to his body, he will never suffer one to perish; for in securing their salvation, he will perform what he has promised, by exerting the power of God, who is greater than all." And we read emphatically in III, 22, 1 (Calvin, in this chapter, is speaking of God's gratuitous election, over against those who would maintain that the Lord, foreseeing what would be the respective merits of every individual, makes a corresponding distinction between different persons, adopting as His children such as He foreknows will be deserving of his grace, and condemning and rejecting those whose dispositions He sees will be inclined to

wickedness and impiety):

For the truth of God on this point is too certain to be shaken, too clear to be overthrown by the authority of men (Calvin here is speaking of the truth of God's sovereign election, H.V.). Others, neither acquainted with the Scripture, nor deserving of any attention, oppose the sound doctrine with extreme presumption and intolerable effrontery. God's sovereign election and grace, and preterition of others they make the subject of formal accusation against Him. But if this is the known fact, what will they gain by quarreling with God? We teach nothing but what experience has proved, that God has always been at liberty to bestow His grace on whom He chooses. I will not inquire how the posterity of Abraham excelled other nations, unless it was by that favour, the cause of which can only be found in God. Let them answer why they are men, and not oxen or asses: when it was in God's power to create them dogs, He formed them after His own image. Will they allow the brute animals to expostulate with God respecting their condition, as though the distinction were unjust?

And then Calvin proceeds to quote from the Scripture in support of the truth of God's absolute sovereignty. Of interest is also what we read in III, 22, 8, where Calvin quotes Augustine:

But, it will be said, Ambrose, Origen, and Jerome believed that God dispenses His grace among men, according to His foreknowledge of the good use which every individual will make of it. Augustine also was once of the same sentiment; but when he has made a greater proficiency in scriptural knowledge, he not only retracted, but powerfully confuted it. And after his retraction, rebuking the Pelagians for persisting in their error, he says, "Who but must wonder that this most ingenious sense should escape the apostle? For after proposing what was calculated to excite astonishment respecting those children yet unborn, he stated to himself, by way of objection, the following question: What, then, is there unrighteousness with God? It was the place for him to answer, that God foresaw the merits of each of them; yet he says nothing of this, but resorts to the decrees and mercy of God."

And then Augustine continues in this reference to Augustine by Calvin, in the same vein. Indeed, that God is sovereign is certainly taught throughout the writings of Calvin. This can never be denied.

We would now call attention, briefly, to the present doctrine of Common Grace, as set forth in the Three Points, and which doctrine is emphatically rejected by Calvin. It might be well, in this connection, to quote these Three Points:

POINT I: "Relative to the first point which concerns the favorable attitude of God towards humanity in general and not only towards the elect, synod declares it to be established according to Scripture and

the Confession that, apart from the saving grace of God shown only to those that are elect unto eternal life, there is also a certain favor or grace of God which He shows to His creatures in general. This is evident from the Scriptural passages quoted and from the Canons of Dordrecht, II, 5 and III, IV, 8 and 9, which deal with the general offer of the Gospel, while it also appears from the citations made from Reformed writers of the most flourishing period of Reformed Theology that our Reformed writers from the past favored this view."

POINT II: "Relative to the second point, which is concerned with the restraint of sin in the life of the individual man and in the community, the Synod declares that there is such a restraint of sin according to Scripture and the Confession. This is evident from the citations from Scripture, and from the Netherland Confession, Arts. 13 and 36, which teach that God by the general operations of His Spirit, without renewing the heart of man, restrains the unimpeded breaking out of sin, by which human life in society remains possible; while it is also evident from the quotations from Reformed writers of the most flourishing period of Reformed theology, that from ancient times our Reformed Fathers were of the same opinion."

POINT III: "Relative to the third point, which is concerned with the question of civil righteousness as performed by the unregenerate, synod declares that according to Scripture and the Confessions the unregenerate, though incapable of doing any saving good, can do civil good. This is evident from the quotations from Scripture and from the Canons of Dordrecht, III, IV, 4, and from the Netherland Confession, Art. 36, which teach that God without renewing the heart so influences man that he is able to perform civil good; while it also appears from the citations from Reformed writers of the most flourishing period of Reformed Theology, that our Reformed Fathers from ancient times were of the same opinion."

Common Grace, as expressed in the First Point, teaches that God, in the preaching of the gospel, shows a certain favour or grace to all who come under the preaching of the gospel. Over against this stands the clear teaching of Calvin, that the gospel is a savour of death unto death, and that the reason why the unbeliever does not believe lies in this, that the arm of the Lord is not extended to him. Concerning this, Calvin writes in Calvin's Calvinism, page 96:

But the apostle carries the matter much deeper and higher than this, both as to man and as to God, showing that there is that "foolishness" and "ignorance" in *man* that he *cannot* understand the things of the Spirit, and that the wisdom and counsel of God decreed the whole. For (saith the apostle), "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, and who hath been His counsellor?" No one (argues he) can know the secrets of God, but by His Spirit only. Whence he fully concludes, that those alone are the scholars of God who are gifted, not with the spirit of this world, but

with His own heavenly Spirit, that they may know the things that are freely given them of God (1 Cor. 2:12).

And on pages 97-98 of the same book Calvin writes that the gospel is a savour of death unto death because the arm of the Lord is not revealed to them:

From this state of things flows the conclusion (and this we hold fast) that the Gospel, which is, in its essential nature, "a savour of life unto life, and ought to be so to all that hear it, becomes "a savour of death unto death in them that perish," who thus remain in their darkness and unbelief *because* "the arm of the Lord" is not revealed to them. If, then, amidst so universal a corruption and depravity of our nature some few do believe the Gospel, to ascribe the faith of such to their own goodness would be perfectly impious. No! Let thanks, on the contrary, be given to God continually (according to the admonition of the apostle), "*because* He hath from the beginning *chosen* such believers unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," in which words the apostle traces faith and sanctification to the eternal election of God as its

source and cause. What shall we say then? Were these *chosen because* they had sanctified *themselves* and rendered themselves meet or worthy to be chosen? The apostle asserts most expressly that this sanctification was the work of the Spirit of God. And as the nature of faith is the same, and equally the gift of God and the work of His Spirit, it incontrovertibly follows that those who are illuminated unto faith *are* thus illuminated and gifted with faith, *that* their election of God may be *manifested* and ratified by these its very effects.

This is Reformed language. It is Scriptural, and Calvinistic. Notice that Calvin writes at the beginning of this quotation, "and this we hold fast." To this presentation of the truth, therefore, the Genevan Reformed held fast. And we should also notice how logical Calvin is in his reasoning, speaking of that which "follows incontrovertibly." If, in the present day, our churches are often accused of being logical in our reasoning, Calvin does not hesitate to speak of that which "follows incontrovertibly." The Lord willing, we will continue with this in our following article.

Come Ye Apart... And Rest A While

Rev. C. Hanko

No one need remind us that we are living in significant times, the like of which this world has never known.

We are experiencing upheavals, change, revolution of every sort.

We see changes everywhere; we experience upheavals in every sphere of life, in governments, industry, commerce, society, and church. We witness revolutions in every nation, among young and old alike, in the ghetto and on the campus of the university, terrifying in their proportions and in their number.

Life will never return to what we once called normal. The changes we see today will have their lasting effect, introducing a new age and an entirely new way of life.

God has given man over to the desires of his heart, so that every vestige of outward restraint is rapidly being withdrawn.

And as far as man himself is concerned, the dream of the ages is being realized. Gen. 3:5.

Man claims to have become as *God*.

Mere man today boasts of undreamed power approaching omnipotence.

We have earth movers that grind and groan as they cut through mountains and level out valleys, removing every obstacle from man's path. We have long ribbons of highways reaching from coast to coast to improve

travel and give faster speed to the millions of automobiles, each intent on going somewhere and in a big hurry.

We have cities with sky-scrapers of dazzling height, huge factories belching steam and smoke, beautiful homes, large recreation areas, thousands of bright lights to make the night as bright as day.

We have machines to run machines to simplify man's life. The greatest effort often required is but to press a button that controls the machine that does man's work for him. We have every conceivable convenience in the home and in the shop. We even insist on taking these conveniences along with us when we want to "rough it" for a few days in the great outdoors. And we also have power driven toys for our children.

We are able to span the seas in ships, to travel under water, and to cut ourselves a path through the ice fields of the north to speed up navigation. We carry hundreds of passengers in planes through the air from one end of the earth to the other in a mere matter of hours.

We have even put men on the moon.

Man has pencilled out the word impossible. We now say, if we can go to the moon we can do anything.

We are well-nigh almighty.

And we have also become all but omniscient.

Science has made great advances in these last years. We may not quite know where we are going, at times we even realize that this is a dead-end road, but we are making progress just the same.

We have discovered the hidden powers in creation, atomic energy and other powers that grip the heart with fear. These can be harnessed to good use, but they can also destroy every living creature on the earth in a very short time. We still are testing these powers, mostly underground, in order to determine just how much power is available to us and how we can use it.

We have measured the speed of sound, the speed of light, and even the distance of the heavenly bodies with uncanny accuracy. We search out the bowels of the earth. We probe into the hidden depths of the sea. We reach out beyond the moon to the planets.

We have made wonderful advances in the fields of medicine and surgery. We have practically eliminated many infectious diseases. We cure many ailments. We are working on the transplant of human organs to extend man's life as long as possible. We already have extended man's life span a bit, often even adding to the misery of those whose life hangs on a thread. Although we worry about population explosion and practice birth control openly, we nevertheless try to create life in a test tube, and, if it were possible, we would overcome the power of death completely.

We have our own means to determine the age of the earth and the moon. We have come to our own scientific conclusions about the origin of the human race. Both are quite different from the account that God gives us in the Scriptures, but we prefer to let "science" dictate to Scripture.

We have our own opinions on man's psychological make-up, based on our findings as to man's origin from the lower animal. We do venture to cure man's psychological and mental problems on the psychologist's couch.

Yes, we have made great advances in learning.

But God is not in all our thoughts.

For man has all but become omniscient.

We even cherish the dream of omnipresence.

God once asked Job: Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, "here we are?" Job only blushed in helpless silence. But the modern man boasts: "Yes, we can." He has discovered the

power of electricity and has been able to harness it for many useful purposes.

We now have computers that work faster and more accurately than the human brain.

We send our voices across the whole expanse of the earth, and even to the moon. We not only send astronauts to the moon, but we watch them as they walk on the moon's surface.

We have television that can be seen by millions at the same time. We have satellites in the sky watching the enemy and outsmarting them in their maneuvers. Soon no one will escape the searching eye of man's uncanny devices. The future world power will know every move we make and every word we speak.

Man has the world at his fingertips. It is as if he were present everywhere at any given moment.

Does not all this make man sovereign of the universe?

Is he not self-sufficient? Why should he not boast: "O man, how great thou art?"

And does he not have good reason, far better than Nebuchadnezzar had, to make himself an image extolling his greatness, sixty cubits high and six cubits wide. (see Daniel 3:1; Rev. 13:14, 15; and note the number 6).

"For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: . . . I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High." Isaiah 15:13, 14.

A shorter work week with more pay; less work and more time for pleasure seems to be the goal almost within man's reach.

War must still be eliminated from the earth, wealth must be shared to banish poverty.

We are rich and enriched and have need of nothing, especially no need of God, nor of His Christ, nor of His Word, nor of a life beyond.

But He who sits in the heavens laughs. The Lord holds them in derision. Psalm 2.

He has His own name for all this: The Abomination of Desolation. Matthew 24:1.

Or if you will: The Man of Sin. The son of Perdition. II Thes. 2:3, 4.

Or: The Beast. Revelation 13.

And his number is 666.

Many indeed are the modern Jesuses, all of whom are characterized by this, that in order to come to them the sinner does not have to renounce the pride of his sinful heart.

Our Seminary

A Visit To The School

John M. Faber

The Opening Exercises of our Seminary was an exciting time for the two professors, the six students and the two Theological School Committeemen. Exciting it was, for it marked the first day of a busy year, but also solemn, in that it was the introduction to a school year of ardent studies — all of which would lead to that day when those young men would be declared eligible for call to be some congregation's minister!

Before starting time all hands were gathered about a new projector that had been set up for inspection. This device enables the instructor to present a prepared sketch and notes upon an overhead screen visible to the whole class. It will save much classroom time, and is considered to be of inestimable value to professors and students alike.

Prof. Hoeksema led in opening devotions, reading from Psalm 119, and choosing the 105th verse for his meditation, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." The speaker developed his talk from the total darkness in which man finds himself to the glorious light in which redeemed man can bask — the light of God's Word. He noted that the Psalmist spoke of a personal feeling, not of a cold dogmatical fact. The professor called attention to the meaning of "The Word of God" in its objective and its subjective sense: that it speaks of God — God speaking concerning Himself; that it speaks of the God of Salvation, hence: the Covenant God; That the Word was given by revelation and recorded by inspiration; that it (the sixty-six books) is one whole Word of God.

The exegete further distinguished that Word to be a Word of promise (the Word for our salvation), and the Word of precept, (the will of God for our walk). That the Word is a light upon our path was explained to mean a light to reveal the stumbling blocks which we must avoid, and as a lamp which shows (or explains) the way so that the child of God who walks in that light can clearly perceive that "all things work together for good to those who love Him."

The professor applied the text to his students in a very practical way: the Bible is a lamp for those who know it; it must become a part of their mind, and they must spiritually appropriate its essence. So in a short sermon (and we gave only a small part of it) the veteran preacher propounded that text for the spiritual benefit of his hearers, and at the same time gave the students a splendid example of proper exegesis which will be the most important tool of the profession. Both of the professors then gave out their assignments; displaying the

school calendar marking the dates of term papers and semester exams.

Rev. Schipper and Rev. Lubbers were the School Committee representatives, and Rev. Schipper was asked to make some observations. He, too, spoke of the Word of God as a light upon the path of the warriors of God's battles, showing from past history the strength of those who stood in the battle firmly rooted in the lighted pathway of the Word of God, advising the students to be valiant in following those examples, making this their central effort and aim. When that Opening Day session drew to a close it might well have been said (as the old saw has it), "a job well begun is a job well done."

But there is only one Opening Day in the school calendar and all the succeeding days march on in their relentless way. We paid a visit to our school on Friday morning, Sept. 19, to observe one of those ordinary, in-the-harness kind of work days. That morning we elected to visit the class of Prof. Hanko for a very cogent reason: his were of that sort that might be intelligible to a layman. Prof. Hoeksema's schedule called for classes in Latin and Hebrew reading — hardly the kind we would enjoy, nor which we could relay to you!

The first class of the day, Exegesis, was called to order and Prof. Hanko led in opening devotions. Rod Miersma, Jim Slopsema and Ron Van Overloop comprised the student body for this class. The professor called upon Mr. Miersma to read Eph. 6:4 in the original (Greek), to translate it into English and give the interpretation thereof. Then Mr. Slopsema was asked to recite his work of this assignment, and thereupon the professor offered his comments on the text and on the interpretations given by the neophytes in exegesis.

The instructor's observations ran along these lines: The long sentence (verses 1 to 7) and particularly verse 4, pointed to the subject as God and His Attributes, and in which our deep depravity is the background upon which the glorious light of His Mercy and Love are imposed. The "mercy" and "love" were said to be nearly synonymous, but that "mercy" is an anthropomorphic term describing a feeling of intense pity for His people who are enmeshed in sin and cannot save themselves, nor can even will to do so. But this "mercy" is not human, but Divine, in that it is also a power to save. The richness of that mercy is revealed in its power to lift us from the depth of our helplessness

and give us a salvation far in excess of Adam's rectitude — in fact, give us a heaven "which eye hath not seen nor hath risen in the heart of man." When discussing the concept, "love," in the text, references quite naturally drifted to the love of Abraham for his only son, Isaac, and, inevitably, to the three-fold question of our risen Lord directed to Peter at the beach-breakfast of bread and fish. When professor and students were investigating the shades of Greek grammar involved in the text, words like cognitive accusative, double accusative, relative pronoun, participle and finite verb rolled off their tongues as though they, at least, knew of which they were speaking.

The second class bell (imaginary, like the equator) rang at 9 o'clock and Marvin Kamps and Mark Hoeksema answered the roll call (imaginary, like the bell). This was a class in Psychology. It took but a few minutes for this reporter to realize that this subject was carried out in a language almost as foreign as in the classes of Latin and Hebrew in the next room. Terms like "id" and "ego," "ego catharsis" in comparison to "object catharsis" and "anti-catharsis" were bandied about quite effortlessly; and the glib talk of a process whereby a surplus energy of the id is siphoned off unto the ego only engulfed us in denser fog of confusion. We came to the happy solution that if one is to derive any profit from a recitation in a class of Psychology one had better study the text book before coming to class. One thing became very evident: the reason for a course in Modern Psychology is extremely necessary for a would-be minister if he is to counsel young people who are bombarded from every side with half-truths and outright lies of Satan, our arch-enemy. It is this modern psychology which is so prevalent in the educational and in the judiciary systems of today: man is not sinful — but sick! We learned that Freudianism is so deceptive in that it uses terms which are near to the truth, but is not the Truth of Scripture. In all his instruction the professor profusely referred to Scripture passages as basis for true psychology. By this infallible method he refuted the teaching of The New Morality (a natural result of Freudianism) which claims that there are no absolutes, no "true" or "false"; only "good" and "bad" according to the mores of the society of which we are a part.

A short recess, providing a coffee break, lasted from 10 to 10:15 and then the class of Modern Church History was called to order, with Wayne Bekkering, Marve Kamps, Rod Miersma, Jim Slopesema and Ron Van Overloop ready to recite and take notes. The day's lesson dealt with Luther's conception of the Authority of Scripture and the authority the Pope wielded. From boyhood on Luther had learned the Roman Catholic claim of "Apostolic Succession" and the resulting claim that the popes were "vehicles of revelation" like

the Apostle; of the pronouncements of the Fathers which were considered "The Authority of Tradition"; of the Pope's authority surpassing that of the Scriptures; of the Church's denial of the Office or Believer; and the laity were unable and were denied the right to interpret Scripture. These all Luther slowly discarded when he came to the realization that the Scriptures were perspicuous, not obscure, and that they were written clearly and understandably, for the laity to grasp. The professor also found a direct providential act of God recorded in history whereby the Pope was prevented from taking Luther's life, and therefore giving freedom for Luther's teaching to flourish.

The next class, Logic, followed at 11:15 with Wayne Bekkering and Mark Hoeksema sitting at the professor's feet. This class discussion was also a bit (!) over this reporter's head as it dealt with considering the concept of the word, "man." Mention was made of connotation — which was said to describe the elements or features of a thing or idea; and, denotation — which refers to the individuality of the object under scrutiny; and, that when one broadens the connotation of a word one narrows the denotation. In class discussion of the question, "how do we form concepts?" the instructor pointed to the contemplation of the great gifts we have from our Creator when He made us in His Image: the powers of abstraction, conception and sensation. The last named power was more fully discussed, and as an example: to know what an apple is one must not only "see" (its shape and color) but also "feel" (its hardness), "hear" its crispness (when biting it), "smell" its aroma and "taste" its flavor. And, as in all his classes, the professor gave thanks to God for his gifts — in this instance, the gift of our five senses whereby we may learn God's creation and be enabled to "subdue" it for our use and to His glory. After a closing prayer of thanksgiving to God Who so graciously gave us this Scripture-orientated instruction, the school was dismissed for the day. Don't you wish you could have been there?

Our only criticism was not of the Staff, nor of the student body, but of the ventilation of the school-room. The only ingress of fresh air is the lone window near the ceiling. Though all our students are legally free from the Armed Forces Draft they surely are subject to the north-wind-draft which drops down their necks as they sit at their tables. The visitor that day was observed to have had his coat collar turned up for his protection. The most welcome news the staff and students could possibly hear would be that a suitable Seminary building (re-modeled house) or a new school (fit for their needs) would be supplied soon. Are you listening Theological School Committee, Synodical delegates and constituency?

The Strength of Youth

LOVE, ONLY LOVE

Rev. J. Kortering

Covenant youth should consider it a challenge to try to understand the reasonings that lie behind modern day behavior. I'm confident that responsible young people, who love the Lord and desire to be students of His Word, view life seriously. If we take a superficial attitude, we will quite naturally be stirred emotionally by rock music, by the bold "realism" of the cinema, or by the sincerity of the draft dodger. Yet, if we pause a moment to analyze the reasoning and motivation that lies behind them, we will conclude that they are not only wrong but satan's attempt to destroy us.

At a time in our lives when emotions tend to dominate our conduct, we must, "try the spirits whether they be of God," I John 4:1.

To help you in this venture, I would like to take a behind the scene survey. Come with me and let's try to find out why so many people today no longer regard sin as *sin*, but glorify it as good and worthy. How is it that men in the church no longer condemn this, but advocate it for young people. How can so many young people who call themselves Christians, have the "luxury" to sin without feeling guilty.

The answer lies in their acceptance of situation ethics.

In the year 1963, Bishop John A.T. Robinson wrote a book, *Honest to God*. Decades prior to the publication of this book, leaders in the Christian church were corrupting the truths of the Word of God. They denied the infallibility of the Scriptures. They rejected the cardinal doctrines of Scripture, e.g. the trinity, the virgin birth of Christ, the divine atonement, etc. What they did however, was use traditional Christian terminology, only they poured a different meaning into it. They continued to speak of the trinity, but they did not mean three Persons in the one Godhead; they spoke of three manifestations of the one God. Soon they reduced God to an abstract power and denied His personality. This process continued and soon the doctrines of Scripture, maintained by the historic Christian Church, were distorted. Bishop Robinson came forth and said this was not honest. So, he published his book and stripped away the pretension and openly developed his wrong ideas of God, Christ, the universe, and morals. Robinson openly and willingly became an honest heretic.

Amidst the furor that followed, these heresies, that so long lay cuddled in the depraved breast of these church leaders, were developed. Harvey Cox of Harvard University came forth in 1965 with his well

known book, *The Secular City*, in which he criticizes the institute of the church for her failure to get involved in society and proposes specifically how situation ethics can benefit society. A year later, 1966, Joseph Fletcher of the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge, wrote his book, *Situation Ethics*. In this work he reasons out the basic idea involved in the ethics of this new movement.

Situation ethics is the illegitimate child conceived by the immoral union of pseudo Christianity and Existential philosophy. For many years she lay in the womb of the church, but now the "church" has given birth to this rebellious offspring. The faithful Church denies any association with her and labels her properly as a harlot, who prostitutes herself and all who follow her in the ways of hell. The apostate church praises her, and calls her sinful life virtuous.

Since Fletcher's book, *Situation Ethics*, is representative of the rationale of the ethical system, we will lean heavily on his material in presenting this viewpoint.

The closest thing that one can find of a definition of situation ethics is on page 158, "Christian ethics or moral theology is not a scheme of living according to a code, but a continuous effort to relate love to a world of relativities through a casuistry obedient to love; its constant task is to work out the strategy and tactics of love, for Christ's sake."

To make this explicit, Fletcher develops six propositions. For the sake of brevity, we will quote them and offer a few comments. Criticism will await a future article.

The first proposition is quoted on page 57, "Only one thing is intrinsically good, namely, love: nothing else at all. He reasons this way, "Hence it follows that in Christian situation ethics, nothing is worth anything in and of itself. It gains or acquires its value only because it happens to help persons (thus being good) or to hurt persons (thus being bad)," p. 59. There are no *things*, deeds that are per se good or bad. They become either, through helping or hurting the neighbor. The idea that love is intrinsically good, according to Fletcher, rests in God Himself, "Only in the divine being, only in God, is love substantive. With men it is a formal principle, a predicate. Only with God is it a property. This is because God *is* love. Men, who are finite, only *do* love. . . . And in the Bible the image of God, man's model, is not reason, but love. 'God is not reason but love, and he employs reason as the

instrument of his love,' " page 63. This leads him to write, "If a lie is told unlovingly it is wrong, evil; if it is told in love it is good, right," p. 65. It is eye opening that Bishop Pike is not radical enough for Fletcher because Pike, "ends with the opinion that a justifiable violation of a sound principle (e.g. homicide is wrong) is never *good* however "right" situationally!" Fletcher maintains that such a violation is also good.

This is evident in the second proposition, "The ruling norm of Christian decision is love: nothing else," page 69. In explaining this point, Fletcher reveals his attitude toward the law of God. "But here lies the issue. Is the summary (of Christ, Matt. 22:37-39) to be taken as a compendium or as a distillation: Legalists take it as a compendium, as a collection and conflation of many laws, obedience to all of them being implicit in their coming together as a summary. Situationists, however, take it to mean a distillation, i.e. that the essential spirit and ethos of many laws has been distilled or liberated, extracted, filtered out, with the legal husks, or rubbish, thrown away as dross," p. 71. Love is supreme over law, for, "We follow law, if at all, for love's sake; we do not follow love for law's sake." Quoting Gal. 5:14, "But the whole law is fulfilled in one word, love thy neighbor as thyself," he insists that the law of the Old Testament is past and impossible to be observed today. Besides, our "real motives can hide effectively behind rules as behind free contextual choices. Law is a common camouflage, and makes a much better disguise. It is harder to hide double-dealing when you have no protective cover of law. Being legally right may mean nothing at all morally, as any acquaintance with money lenders and technical virgins will show," p. 85.

His third proposition is, "Love and justice are the same, for justice is love distributed, nothing else," p. 86. He explains this as follows, "How are we to love justice, how are we to be just about love, how are love and justice related? If to love is to seek the neighbor's welfare, and justice is being fair as between neighbors, then how do we put these two things together in our acts, in the situation? The answer is that in the Christian ethic the twain become one. Even if we define justice as giving to others what is their due, we must redefine it Christianly. For what *is* it that is due to our neighbors? It is love that is due — only love (Owe no man anything, except to love). Love is justice, justice is love," p. 88. Employing the metaphor of ballistics, he distinguishes our love of the neighbor from that of a rifle bullet (one neighbor) to that of a shotgun blast (many neighbors). The justice of love has to be determined by the greatest number of neighbors receiving benefit. "On a vast scale of 'agapeic (Greek for love) calculus' President Truman made his decision about the A-bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki." This idea of love and justice being one, forms the backbone for a defense of civil disobedience as practiced today,

"We have a moral obligation to obey civil law, for order's sake; and we have a moral obligation to be situational (even disobeying the law) for love's sake. . . . Law and freedom from law can be duties, but love is the basic principle," p. 101.

The fourth proposition is, "Love wills the neighbor's good whether we like him or not," p. 103. At this point Fletcher makes a few comments of his idea of love, "Agape's desire is to satisfy the neighbor's need, not one's own, but the main thing about it is that agape's love precedes all desire, of any kind. It is not at all an emotional norm or motive. It is volitional, conative." Fletcher does not take into consideration the content of the love of God and its relationship to us, nor does he do justice to the relationship between the Old and New Testaments. He limits the scope of love to our own rational ideas of it. This allows him to offer this evil counsel, "A young unmarried couple might decide, if they make their decisions Christianly, to have intercourse (e.g. by getting pregnant to force a selfish parent to relent his overbearing resistance to their marriage). But as Christians they would never merely say, 'It's all right if we like each other!'" Loving concern can make it all right, but mere liking cannot," p. 104. Since Christ teaches us in Matt. 5:43-48 that we love our enemies, Fletcher concludes, "What more, that is to say, do you accomplish with philic love than anybody else? Friendship, romance, self-realization — all these loves are reciprocal. Agape is not. It seeks that good of anybody, everybody," p. 107. (Note *philos* and *agape* are Greek terms for love, and indicate a different quality of the love expressed.)

His fifth proposition, "Only the end justifies the means; nothing else," p. 120. In explaining this point, he does not say *any* end justifies the means, rather the only end that is of concern for the Christian namely, love. "What else could make a thing lawful, according to the only law left in the New Testament, i.e. Jesus' Summary? The answer is clear. Nothing. Nothing makes a thing good except agapeic expedience; nothing can justify an act except a loving purpose," p. 125. In judging each situation, there are four basic questions to be raised in every case. We must ask what is the end or purpose, what are the means to acquire the end, what is the motive in doing so, and finally what are the consequences. In each instance the guide line of love must prevail. If it does, no matter what the deed may be, it will be justifiable.

Fletcher's sixth proposition is, "Love's decisions are made situationally, not prescriptively," p. 134. According to Fletcher, rules, laws, codes are childish attempts to make life simple. He taunts, "They cannot trust themselves too much to the freedom of grace; they prefer the comfortableness of law." The tragedy is that a so-called love without its roots in the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ, expresses itself in sin

under the pretense of love. Such a love is not really a love, it is the license to disobey God. The end of such love, the means of expressing it, the motive, and the consequences are determined by man, not God. When this prevails, man slumps into the cesspools of depravity, thinking he is standing upon the mountain of faith.

The Lord willing, we will criticize this position in our next article. If nothing else speaks to us, let the

fruits of this ethics bear testimony before God. Throughout this book, the author, justifies murder, abortion, adultery, fornication, stealing, lying, and all the rest.

All this supposedly in the name of love.

Be not deceived, God is not mocked, whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

In His Fear

Sowing The Seed

(Continued)

Rev. John A. Heys

Thus far we gave you part of the report of the emissaries to Jamaica of 1968. In that report the days from June 25 through July 7 were treated and now we continue from there as the labours shift to the western end of the island, some 100 miles away from Islington. We kept in contact with Rev. Elliott and his churches, however, as will soon become plain. But it emphasizes a statement which we made on several instances of reporting to different groups. If the Lord would give us the men, we could use three teams, one in the Lucea area; one in the Westmoreland area and St. Elizabeth district, and one in the east around Islington, Port Maria, Fellowship Hall, and by all means Mahoe. The report now continues.

Rather than weary you with too much detail, but to show you that we had a rather full schedule, let us list the work of the weeks in broader steps. Monday we returned to Lucea to the place that we had arranged for on our first visit there. We got our first mail that day since leaving home. We had left June 24, and now it was July 8. While we were eating our somewhat impromptu evening meal, for the electricity went off while preparing the meal and while things were only half cooked, Rev. Frame came with a telegram from Grand Rapids. The clothing would arrive at Kingston somewhere between July 11 and 16. So we decided to move back to Montego Bay the next day if we could find a place. We had expected the shipment to arrive much later, and it did; but we had no way of knowing that at the time. We were told in the telegram to wait for the papers; and these we expected to receive shortly after July 16. We did get a place in Montego Bay, the same place as that of last year under a different arrangement. We had tried to go there from the start but were told, before we left home, that they would not be able to have us because they planned to add a second story to the building and would close up the entire villa. But they were delayed in their building

program, which now fell through till the next year. And so the Lord provided us with a suitable place for the rest of our stay on the island. On Wednesday, July 16, we had a service at Johnstown and Thursday one at Waterworks. Both services were enjoyable. The morning of Thursday was spent again in an act of mercy. We got Rev. and Mrs. Ruddock from Porters Mt. to bring them to the eye doctor for an examination. We gave them bus fare to get back home, but the bus was too late in the morning for them to keep their appointment with Dr. Margetson. On Friday we investigated customs at the Montego Bay airport, where the customs offices were located. They advised us not to go to Kingston for the clothing when it comes but to contact the railway company and to have them take care of the details and to ship it to Montego Bay by rail from Kingston. They also informed us that we were working without a permit, and instructed us to apply for such next time.

We were in Lucea Sunday and witnessed a Sunday School class led by an elder. Rev. Heys preached on Lord's Day XXIa in the morning to a very attentive audience. It seems as though this congregation is able to grasp the deeper truths more quickly than some of the other congregations. After going down hill for lunch and up again we began our informal afternoon meetings. We got on top of the hill just before a very heavy downpour of rain fell. Because of the noise on the tin roof, we were not able to hear each other speak until after the rain stopped. We then played the Hope Herald's tape (Their contribution to the work consisting of instructions in regard to learning to sing the Psalter numbers), having played the Mission Committee greetings already on June 26. We then discussed Psalm 23 with the brethren and sisters. We were happily surprised that morning to find that most of the Reading congregation, where we had been the Sunday morning before, had travelled all the way to Lucea to

be at the services. They said that they again enjoyed the discussion on Psalm 23. The evening sermon by Rev. Heys was based on Proverbs 28:13 and was well received.

Having received another \$1,500 from the Hudsonville diaconate we travelled to Lucea Monday to deposit it in the bank. Rev. Heys had the task that week of getting a *Standard Bearer* article in the mail, and the one, "Blest with Hunger" was written. The mid-week services were at Mt. Lebanon — high on the mountain again — and Shrewsbury. The sermon at Shrewsbury on John 1:12 received an enthusiastic response from Rev. Frame and much reaction from the audience. Wednesday we had gone to see Mr. Graham, a retired judge, about the legal aspect of the church buildings. He agreed to help us, and we already sent you his advice. Friday again was an errand of mercy. The examination revealed that Mrs. Ruddock needed an operation on her eye — and in six months on the other one — to preserve her sight. We got them and brought them to the hospital, waited till after the operation was over and then drove them back home. They do think differently in Jamaica; and she was eager to be back home with her children. We also gave them money for the medicine to be applied to the eye. The operation cost \$25 and was paid for out of a sum that Rev. Heys received from a member of First Church in Grand Rapids to spend on the poor. The medicine expenses came out of the collections from the Poor Fund. Hearing nothing, and now it was July 20 already, about that shipment of clothing, and receiving no papers yet we went to the railway company, and they suggested that we go to Kingston to inquire there. We planned to go on Monday.

Sunday we spent with Rev. Ruddock at Fort William. The morning sermon was well received, but the evening sermon was not. The audience was simply worn out — as we surely were — of Sunday School in the morning and a service and then a long drawn out Sunday School in the afternoon before the evening service, without anything to eat or drink since noon. The hard seats did not make it easier. We were almost too weary to drive the hour and fifteen minutes home.

Because of our weariness the night before — which the heat of the next day did not remove — we decided not to go to Kingston that day. And since it is an all-day drive up and an all-day drive back, and since we had to be in Santa Cruz for a service Wednesday evening, and Santa Cruz is on the way back from Kingston, we planned to go Tuesday and make it all in one trip. As it was Rev. Elliott came over Monday morning and Rev. Frame Monday afternoon to see us. We were glad that we did not miss them and make their trips in vain. On Tuesday we did leave for Kingston and with an added reason. A certain Rev. Brown of Kingston, Saint Andrews, had written Rev. Heys inviting him to a conference to be held in

Kingston beginning August 18 — the day we had our farewell service at Lucea. He had gotten Rev. Heys' name off a pamphlet of the S. Holland Church Publication Committee, which sends regularly 25 copies of each pamphlet to the three ministers in Jamaica to distribute. Rev. Heys' daughter forwarded this letter to him just in time for our trip to Kingston. Because of his interest in us, we decided to visit him. We did not find him home but told his wife that we would stop in the next morning on the way home. We then looked at manifest after manifest of the shipping companies trying to locate the clothing. A broker offered his services, and we took his name and address in case we would need him. He advised us to go back home, since we could do nothing until we got those papers. On Wednesday we did visit Rev. Brown who seemed very sincere and desirous of affiliating with us. We promised to send him some literature so that he might know more of us and of our doctrinal stand. The service at Santa Cruz was held with a quiet but attentive audience while Proverbs 28:13 was treated for the sermon text. Thursday's service was at Grange Hill. This is one of Rev. Elliott's congregations but is served by Rev. Williams. The congregation listened attentively to an exposition of Revelation 22:12. Very good contact with the people was established early in the sermon and kept throughout. Last year we had a very enjoyable service here, and again this year. Friday we went to see Rev. Ruddock upon receiving a letter about a woman in his congregation at Mt. Lebanon who needed an operation. We gave him money to take her to the doctor in Savannah Lamar for an examination.

Sunday, July 28 we will never forget. We left "home" at 6:45 A.M. to be at Hope Hill for a river baptism at 8 A.M. of 8 young women and one young man. We then had to climb by foot, and at times it seemed almost like on all fours, for 20-30 minutes up a steep grade and winding trail where the church was located. Sunday School was first and the sermon did not begin till well after 12 noon. We got down to our car about 2:15 and quickly ate our packed lunch and then left for Belmont. Here we discussed Psalm 23 finding it simple enough for them. We have a recording of this group discussion. Some very enthusiastic responses were obtained in the evening service. And we arrived home about 9:30 P.M. after a tremendously busy and eventful day.

Tuesday we went to Cave Mt. for an evening service. Here as well as at Hope Hill we were disappointed in the reception of the sermon. Rev. Heys preached at Hope Hill in connection with that river baptism on Lord's Day XXIIa, but the people were so weary of all the walking to and from the baptism and the lengthy service from 7 A.M. till almost 2 P.M. that they could not listen, and we were very weary ourselves. At Cave Mt. it was, perhaps, the text, which for them was too

doctrinal. It was II Corinthians 5:21, "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." These children need milk and are not ready for solid meat with few exceptions. We all were somewhat blue about the events of Sunday through Tuesday evening, wondering what went wrong. But Thursday evening we were again greatly encouraged by the response at Galloway. The text was more on their level. It was the miracle of Jesus stilling the stormy sea. The text was Matthew 14:22-33, and we have a recording of the sermon on tape. The service scheduled for Wednesday evening was called off due to the heavy afternoon rain.

Rev. Elliott met us at the bottom of the hill and warned us not to try to climb it. The people themselves likewise were not able to come to church. Earlier in the week, it was Tuesday, the papers of the shipment of clothing came in the mail. The shipment had arrived on the Jamaica Provider at Kingston the 27th of July, which was 11 days after that date of July 16. So Friday we went to the Railway Company and arranged to have it brought to Montego Bay. A few days later we paid the broker's fee, the wharfage fee and the over-time penalty which begins shortly after unloading. This is unavoidable, unless one lives in Kingston and gets the papers on time.

Pages from the Past

Believers and Their Seed

Rev. Herman Hoeksema

CHAPTER VI (CONTINUED)

THE HISTORICAL REALIZATION OF THE COVENANT

We state this once more because we are indeed of the conviction that here is one of the most fundamental principles of a Scriptural and Reformed presentation, and because a thoroughly unscriptural and un-Reformed view has already for a long time found acceptance among our people. The so-called covenant of works is then a kind of agreement between God and Adam, an agreement which really was concluded in an altogether mechanical manner. That agreement consists, then, — according to many a catechism book, — in a condition, a promise, and a threat. The condition, then, is obedience, consisting especially in this, that Adam might not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The promise is supposed to have been that Adam would be able to merit eternal life in case he obeyed. And the threat consisted in this, that he would surely die in case he transgressed God's commandment. Over against this mechanical conception of God's covenant, we propose that the covenant consists essentially in a relation of friendship, that God the Lord had placed Adam in Paradise in that relation to Himself already through his very creation after the image of God, and that in that relation he possessed life and was blessed. Of course, Adam would be able to keep life in the way of obedience: for only in that way could he enjoy the favor of God. He was the servant of the Lord. Servant of God he was with his entire existence and with all things. Hence, he was God's prophet, God's priest, God's king. If you consider his friend-servant relationship from the viewpoint of his intellectual faculty and

life, then he stood in Paradise as God's prophet. With all his knowledge he was servant. And as that knowing servant, he had the calling to know his God rightly in all the works of His hands and then to speak of Him and His virtues, to magnify Him, and to stand and to fight for His honor. If you view that friend-servant relationship from the viewpoint of the life of his will and his desires, then Adam was God's priest. For also with all the life of his heart and will he was servant of God. And as such he had the calling to will and to love the Lord his God and to consecrate himself, with all things, to God. And, finally, if you consider that same servanthood from the viewpoint of Adam's power in relation to the creation in the midst of which he was placed, then he was king under God. Also as king he was servant. And it was his calling in the first Paradise to reign over all the works of God's hand in the name of the Lord and under Him and according to His ordinances. As such Adam's place in God's covenant required absolute and unconditional obedience. If he became disobedient, then he thereby broke God's covenant, as far as he was concerned; then he forfeited God's favor and he lost life; then he must surely die. To this must be added that Adam must be all this and must live in this position in an antithetical manner. The choice *for* his God must stand thus before his consciousness, that at the same time he chose *against* Satan; he must serve God with rejection of all that was not according to the will of God. For this reason the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was there. For this reason also the temptation through the serpent

took place. Adam stood as the friend-servant of God in Paradise the First for the *antithesis*, and as of the party of God he lived the life of the covenant antithetically.

Now Adam stood in that covenant of God with and for and at the head of his seed, the human race. The human race does not consist of a mass of individuals, wherein each one stands and falls his own master. Thus it is, as far as we can infer, in the angel-world. There is indeed also in the world of the angels order and rank and affinity, but not in the same manner as is true among mankind. God did not create the angels in *one*; but He did thus create the human race. God created the human race in Adam, presently forms the woman out of that one man, and then allows the whole human race to come forth, not through creation, but through organic development out of that one human pair. The entire race of men, therefore, is literally in that first pair of human beings and comes forth organically out of them. Adam, therefore, also stands in the first Paradise as the bearer of the human nature. He is that as the root of the entire organism of our race. All that shall ever blossom forth on the tree of our race and that shall come to manifestation in the life of the race is present in him as in a seed, and comes forth from him as from the root. It was indeed all present in him; but in Adam personally all this could never develop and manifest itself. Only then, when out of him the human nature would unfold and reveal itself and be borne by thousands and millions of human individuals, would it develop itself in all its riches of gifts and powers. And in connection with all this, the first Adam stands in God's covenant also as the head of our race in the *judicial* sense of the word. He represents our race before the face of God. There is in our race not only an organic unity and affinity, but also a judicial solidarity, which finds its bond in the first man as he stands at the head of all before God. All this is evidently the truth as it is revealed to us in Scripture and as it is confessed by the Reformed fathers, and is also the testimony of history and experience. As far as the latter is concerned, history and experience teach that not one man, either presently living or ever having lived, is good and without sin. This is simply an undeniable fact. To want to explain this fact from a once-given bad example, as the Pelagians would have it, is not only altogether too superficial, but it is also not in harmony with the experience of all ages. It is simply not true that human nature improves itself through a better example or in the midst of a more favorable environment. In fact, the contrary is true. No, the nature itself has become corrupt, and that, too, in the one man who was the bearer of the entire human nature. Only this explains the universality of sin and corruption. But what is more, thus the Scriptures instruct us. For we are conceived and born in sin and iniquity, and the imagination of the man's heart is wicked from his youth up. And all this Holy Writ

explains by teaching us that all have sinned through the one man, and that through the disobedience of that one man guilt has come upon all men unto condemnation. And all this is only true if both in the judicial and the organic sense of the word the human race is included and comprehended in the first man Adam. Hence, Adam stands in God's covenant with and for and at the head of his seed, the entire race of men.
(To Be Continued)

BOOK REVIEW

Prof. H. Hanko

CAPTIVE TO THE WORD, by A. Skevington Wood; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969; 192 pp., \$4.50.

The title of this book was taken from Martin Luther's words spoken before the Diet of Worms: "I am bound by the Scriptures . . . and my conscience is captive to the Word of God." The book is not intended to be a history of the Lutheran Reformation. Nor is it a biography of Martin Luther. It is rather a detailed discussion of the influence of the Scriptures upon Martin Luther personally, upon the Reformation which God wrought through him, and a discussion of Luther's own profound reliance upon the Scriptures and views of the Scriptures.

The book is divided into two main sections. The first section is mainly historical and deals with the importance of Scripture in the early years of Luther's life. The second section is divided into two sub-parts: the first speaks of Luther as commentator, preacher, translator and reformer. The second deals with Luther's views on the authority, the revelation, the inspiration, the unity, the interpretation and the Christ-centredness of Scripture.

The book is very well written, is filled with extremely valuable information, is scholarly and comprehensive and is highly recommended to our readers as an especially worth-while addition to their libraries. One excellent accomplishment of the book (although it seems unintended) is the vivid portrayal of the magnitude of Luther's break with Rome. This was refreshing in these days when evil ecumenicity seeks by every means to minimize the difference between Rome and Protestantism.

IN MEMORIAM

Early in the morning of October 9, 1969, at the age of 63 years, it pleased our Lord to take unto Himself, after a long illness, our beloved sister and aunt

MISS ANN FLIKKEMA

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28.

Sisters, Brothers, Nieces and Nephews.

News From Our Churches

REPORT OF CLASSIS EAST

October 1, 1969

At Hope Church.

The Rev. R.C. Harbach, who presided over the July meeting of Classis, led in the opening devotions. After the Credentials of the various delegates were accepted, he pronounced the Classis properly constituted, and turned the hammer over to Rev. J.A. Heys, who then addressed the Classis with a few chosen words and presided over the rest of the session.

All of the churches were represented by two delegates each. Three of the delegates attended the Classis for the first time, and were therefore required to sign the Formula Of Subscription.

Much of the work of Classis was routine: the reading and approval of minutes, and reports of the Stated Clerk and Classical Committee, the asking and answering of the Questions of Article 41 of the Church Order, and the decision re the time and place of the next meeting.

Classis also received a request from Classis West and of Southwest Church to help fill their vacant pulpits. The latter church was in need of supply because Rev. Lubbers is planning to serve once more for several months in Jamaica, at the request of the Mission Committee.

Classis adopted the following schedule:

SOUTHWEST: Nov. 9-Professor Nov. 16-Schipper Nov. 23-Harbach Nov. 30-Van Baren Dec. 7-Professor Dec. 14-Heys Dec. 21-Professor Dec. 28-Harbach Jan. 4-Kortering Jan. 11-Heys. HULL: Oct. 12-19-26-Van Baren Dec. 21-28-Jan. 4-Veldman PELLA: Nov. 30 - Dec. 7-14-Kortering. SOUTH HOLLAND: Oct. 12-Veldman Oct. 26-Schipper Nov. 9 Heys Nov. 30-Heys Dec. 14-Schipper Dec. 21-Harbach Jan. 11-Schipper Jan. 25-Harbach.

Classis also treated Committee Reports of two committees appointed in the July Classis which took up most of the time of this session, which ended after 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

The Church Visitors also tendered their report, which gave clear evidence that the Lord is blessing our churches in this area of our denomination.

Classis decided to meet next time, the first Wednesday of January, in Southeast Church.

Rev. G. Van Baren and Rev. M. Schipper were chosen to serve on the Classical Committee along with Rev. G. Lubbers whose term had not yet expired.

Classis enjoyed its stay in Hope, and especially the fine catering service of the Martha's of Hope Church.

Rev. G. Lubbers was asked to offer the concluding prayer of thanksgiving.

M. Schipper, S.C.

Rev. R. Decker, of Doon, Iowa, has accepted the call extended him by our church in South Holland, Ill; and, Doon has already named a trio from which they will choose one to fill Rev. Decker's place: the Revs. D. Kuiper, D. Engelsma and H. Veldman.

Our brethren and sisters in Jamaica will be happy to learn that the consistory of Southwest Church has granted Rev. Lubbers permission to labor among them for a few months. They, no doubt, will welcome their good friend back with open arms and grateful hearts, showing their usual eagerness to learn more of the truths of Scripture as they have been set forth in the Reformed Confessions. Let us remember this faithful servant of the Lord in our prayers as he ministers to His people in a strange land. "... the isles shall wait upon me, and in mine arm shall they trust." Isaiah 51:5

The Men's League scheduled its Fall meeting for Oct. 13 in Holland Mich. Rev. J.A. Heys was the speaker; his topic, "The Church and the Space Program". During the course of the speech the men were increasingly appreciative of the fact that the Church has a Faith Program instead of a space program.

Rev. Schipper, of our Southeast Church, enjoyed a "day-off" Sunday, Oct. 5 through the gracious offer of Prof. Hoeksema to conduct the two services of the day. This was prompted by concern for his pastor "in the midst of a very heavy schedule" in which he was involved.

From Loveland's school principal we learn that one-third of the student body are from three families from two churches outside of our denomination. In the school paper, "The Loveland Ledger" Miss Hoekstra informs her readers that she has some students who ask for more assignments; others who voluntarily work ahead; and some, who have considered themselves to be behind in their work, who conscientiously volunteer some of their play-time to catch up! This would seem to be the modern anti-establishmentarianism *in reverse!*

The P.R. High School Circle invited the Rev. Schipper to speak at their meeting of Sept. 22. The High School Choir, under the direction of Mr. Petersen, led the membership into the praise of God by singing a few choice selections from their repertoire of sacred music.

The Adams St. School Mother's Club meeting of Oct. 2 featured Seminarian Rodney Miersma as speaker; his theme: "And thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children". Deut. 6:7. Mr. Miersma is also engaged in pre-ministerial "interning" as he teaches some catechism classes for First Church.

... see you in church

J.M.F.