

# The Standard Bearer

**A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE**

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## THE STANDARD BEARER

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## Meditation

## Following After Jesus

Rev. M. Schipper

*“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”*

Matthew 16:24

Then said Jesus!

Indeed, it was the proper moment that He should speak!

It was a moment of conflict! Of conflict between the Spirit and the flesh, between the kingdom of heaven and that of this world, between the praise of

God and the honor of men, between light and darkness, between Christ and Belial. It was a moment when light must judge the darkness, rebuke it, overcome it, and put it to shame. A moment it was when the Light must point out the way to them that are called to walk in it.



And what was it that brought about this conflict? What was it that moved the Lord to speak as He does in the words of our text?

It was the total misconception which the disciples had of His mission and their own relationship to Him. They had only lately professed a good confession through the mouth of Peter, the implications of which they themselves did not even comprehend. When the Lord had asked them: Whom say ye that I am? then Peter answered and said: Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. But this was a confession which flesh and blood had not revealed unto him. This was completely the work of the Father. But the disciples understood not the implications of their own confession. The name "Christ" was to them synonymous with glory, honor and power. And discipleship for them was considered from the viewpoint of the question: Who shall be the greatest? When the Lord began to reveal to them how He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day — this prophetic pronouncement militated diametrically against their conception of Him. And when Peter began to rebuke Him by saying: Be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee; Jesus could not let this go. Not only does Jesus identify the speech of Peter with that of Satan, but he also informs him that he is a stumbling block to Jesus, and was not mindful of the things of God, but those that be of men. Christ's declaration concerning His suffering and death clashed with their earthly conception of Him. Such false notions Jesus must sharply correct. First, by rebuking the evil of it. Secondly, by instructing in the right conception not only of His mission, but also of the requirements of those who would still follow Him unto the end.

If any man will come after me!

To come after Jesus is to be His disciple!

To be Jesus' disciple you must, first of all, hear and receive His word. Not merely that part of His word which may appear acceptable to you, but all of it.

That word of Jesus which condemns all your own righteousness, which closes the kingdom of heaven against all whose righteousness does not exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees. That word which insists that all your righteousnesses are as filthy rags before God. That word which reaches down to us to declare in our natural and hopeless condition that there is a righteousness which God Himself prepares and gives to you of mere grace — a righteousness which is merited for us through the death and resurrection of Jesus, and imputed to us as an eternal gift of grace, and wrought in our hearts by the Spirit of His Son, and which reckons us to be in perfect harmony with God's will as if we had never committed one sin and had always obeyed all His commandments. It is that word which justifies us freely and sanctifies us wholly, that

makes you to become a citizen of the kingdom of heaven, and demands that you stand in the battle of faith and fight the good fight of faith even to the end. It insists that you mortify the flesh, put on the new man, and live as those who are of the party of the living God in the midst of the world, and in every phase and department of life.

To be Jesus' disciple one must not only hear, but also receive the word. It must be a controlling principle in your life. So that you cannot walk without it. It must guide you, shed light on your pathway. It must take such strong influence upon you that you are impelled by it to walk in the light, and are opposed to all that is of darkness.

Moreover, to be Jesus' disciple one must also will to come after Him!

It should be quite evident to us that no man can will to do this as he is by nature. And strange as it may seem, he who wills to come after Jesus is already after Him. To will to come after Him is the result of His efficacious call. He irresistably says: Follow Me; and the disciple says: I come.

And you follow the Jesus of the Scriptures — not a Jesus of your imagination. It is possible, you know, to make an illusion of Him. And many today, no doubt are doing exactly that. Who prate about their discipleship, their following after a noble leader, a beautiful example; but who find it revolting when you remind them that the Jesus of the Scriptures is the One who traveled the way of the cross, where He suffered the reproaches of the world of evil men while He stood under the vials of God's holy wrath because of our sin, in order to remove that wrath, and to give unto us also a cross to bear after Him. They sing a different tune when it is made plain to them what true discipleship requires of us.

To be Jesus' disciple requires complete denial of self!

Let him deny himself, Jesus said!

This is, of course, the very opposite of maintaining oneself, looking after your own interests. Self denial is that act whereby one becomes nothing in his own eyes. It is that will that does not insist on one's name and position, one's own honor and glory, that is willing to lose all his possessions, yea, his very life for Jesus' sake. We ought to take special note that Jesus does not say here: let him deny himself something. If the Lord had said that, it would be comparatively easy to be one of Jesus' disciples. That kind of self denial one finds even in the world. Men will deny themselves food and drink when their health is at stake. They are willing to deny themselves certain pleasures when their ambition in life is threatened. And many would-be disciples of Jesus are quite ready to deny themselves many things in order that they may boast that they are Jesus' disciples. But this is not what Jesus said.

The disciple must deny himself!



The requirement is absolute! To deny oneself before God is not to insist on your own righteousness, but to confess that you are utterly lost in sin, that you have no worth or merit as you stand before His holy face; and that you find all your righteousness only in Jesus Christ and grounded in His perfect sacrifice on the cross. To deny oneself before men means that you never seek the praise and adoration of men, but are willing and ready to suffer reproach, persecution, even death if necessary for Christ's sake. It is the very opposite of and contrary to the spirit of the world. The world wants men that have ambition, who desire to make for themselves a name, and who use every means energetically to gain their objective; while it offers riches, fame, and pleasure to all who will follow her. Christ demands the very opposite. He offers no inducement to self ambition, but condemns it. He requires complete banishment of self, shall we be His disciples.

And take up his cross!

To take up one's cross implies that one is willing to bear that cross and to suffer its reproach. And the cross here is related to the cross of Christ. Indeed there is a sense in which the cross is uniquely Christ's. As such it is the emblem as well as the means of our atonement. In this sense Christ only could take up the cross and bear it; in order that we would never have to bear it. But as the emblem and expression of the hatred of the world against God and His anointed the cross is also to be ours — to be taken up and to be borne. In this respect also the servant is not greater than his Lord. If they hated Him, they will also hate them that will bear their cross. His cross is reflected in the crosses they bear who follow Him.

And follow Me!

This means, first of all, that Jesus leads. Never is the order to be reversed. He must speak and we must listen. He must command and we must obey. He must tell us first of His cross before there can ever be a cross for us to bear. It means then that we follow. Never are we to speak as Peter did: Lord, be it far from thee. But listening to His word of the cross we understand the necessity of His cross. And denying our

own selves, being humbled by His word, we see the need of taking up our own and following after Him, sharing His reproach.

Be not hasty to take upon your lips the refrain of the hymn writer!

Where He leads me I will follow,

I'll go with Him, with Him all the way.

If Jesus leads, and we follow, where will the way end? and what will you experience on that way?

The answer is simply: His way, and His end! His way is the way of reproach and shame, the way of suffering and death. Make no mistake about it, as far as the world is concerned, the end of following Jesus is His end. All those who partake of His anointing must partake of His suffering. "For unto you it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Would you come after Him, therefore, you must expect to bear the cross and with it the shame, reproach, suffering that are related to the cross, and ultimately death. Knowing all this are you ready to follow where He leads? Do you dare to take the refrain upon your lips: I'll go with Him, with Him all the way? Then you need not say morbidly with Thomas: Let us go with Him that we may die with Him. But with implicit trust in Him that He knows the way you must go, you will follow obediently in the confidence that in that way you with Him shall also attain unto the victory.

When you follow in the way He leads, you may be of good cheer!

His faithful followers shall exchange their cross for a crown! These two are inseparably connected. No cross — no crown. But the cross-bearers are relieved of that burden at last, and receive for it the crown of life and glory that fadeth not away.

The reason —

He who died on the cross, rose again, and ascended into the highest glory. And His glory shall be yours. If you deny Him He will also deny you. If you deny yourself and follow Him, He will lead you by His grace into eternal glory.

Be faithful, then, ye cross-bearers!

And you shall receive in due time your crown!

Do not delay; to get your copy of

## *Therefore Have I Spoken*

in time for Christmas, order it today.

Use the handy envelope.



## Editorials

### Editor's Notes

*A Word of Farewell and Hearty Thanks* to our faithful News Editor, Mr. J. M. Faber. Brother Faber has faithfully taken care of our Church News department for a little more than twelve years. At our annual staff meeting last June, he tendered his resignation, to take effect at the end of the volume-year, but he agreed to stay on as head of this department until we could find a suitable replacement. We have now obtained that replacement, and therefore Mr. Faber's contribution to the Church News department in this issue is his last. If my memory serves me correctly, in all those twelve years Mr. Faber missed only one issue, and that was for a pre-arranged vacation. And always he met the deadline for copy faithfully. An enviable record indeed! While we shall no longer hear from him in his capacity as News Editor, we shall continue to hear from him, however: for he is also reporter for our Theological School Committee. Thanks, "J.M.F."!

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*A Word of Introduction and Welcome* to the new editor of our Church News department. He is my near neighbor on Plymouth Terrace, a member of First Church in Grand Rapids, superintendent of its Sunday School, and Principal and teacher at our Adams Street Protestant Reformed Christian School. When I read this, I am almost ashamed to have urged such a busy man to accept this additional task. But I did so, and I succeeded. And hereby I welcome him to our staff, and introduce him to our readers: Mr. Donald Doezeema. Let me also take this opportunity to urge all concerned — ministers, clerks, stated clerks, schools, league secretaries — to send in their news promptly and regularly. Our News Editor has a disadvantage which distinguishes him from the rest of the staff: he can not very well manufacture news, and is therefore dependent upon others for the material of his department. Please cooperate, and I am sure you will find the significant news from our various churches reported in pleasant and readable format. From now on send all

items for this department to: Mr. D. Doezeema, 1904 Plymouth Terrace, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506.

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*As to Student Preaching.* In my dual capacity as editor and Rector of our Theological School, I am happy to announce that as of this date two of our students, Messrs. Wayne Bekkering and Marvin Kamps, have been licensed by the faculty to speak a word of edification in our churches under faculty supervision. Hopefully, before the end of the first semester more names will be added to this list. This is another milestone for our seminary and for these young men and for our churches. May the Lord our God continue to bless our seminary. Requests for student supply should, as usual, be addressed to the Rector.

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*Publication News.* "All systems are go" for the publication of the biography of the late Rev. Herman Hoeksema, "Therefore Have I Spoken," written by Gertrude (Mrs. H. C.) Hoeksema. We have been assured that the book will be ready early in December, which means that it will be available for those who are looking for a nice Christmas gift. This popular-style biography, covering the life of one whose personal history was so thoroughly intertwined with the history of our churches, will be 362 pages long, will be furnished with 38 interesting illustrations, and will be attractively printed on high quality paper. Perhaps I am biased; but I have been "in" on all the preparations for this book — from writing to publishing, — and I am sure that all our people will want a copy. Price: \$5.95, postpaid. Make use of the order envelope enclosed with this issue of the *Standard Bearer*. By the way, the Publications Committee still has available a limited supply of "Reformed Dogmatics" at \$14.95, and a goodly supply of "Behold He Cometh" at \$9.95. Why not order all three?

## Our Schools and Government Subsidy (10)

PAROCHIAID AND CONTROL

*Prof. H.C. Hoeksema*

In our previous editorial on this subject we found that the answer to the question whether government subsidy involves government control is affirmative.

This, in the first place, is the history of all government subsidy in general: whatever the government pays for it also controls to some degree. In the second place, we



found that already there are severe restrictions attached to federal funds granted to private schools under the 1963 Higher Educational Facilities Act. And, finally, documentary proof was adduced to show that state subsidy of private schools in Michigan would involve real government control, under every proposal thus far made. Incidentally, news reports of current proposals in the state of Michigan also report various controls which will be involved in any parochialism passed by the current session of the legislature.

There might conceivably be the possibility, however, that such government control would not necessarily be bad. Hence, we must also face the next question. *Is Government Control Good or Bad, Right or Wrong?*

In speaking of the right or wrong of government control of our schools, I wish to make it clear, in the first place, that my viewpoint is not that of the *political* right or wrong. There may indeed be room for criticism in this area. For it is a fact that there is a growing trend toward socialism and toward the welfare state. And as government reaches its long fingers into almost every phase of life, it is not difficult to understand how, eventually, the kingdom of Antichrist will exercise complete control of people's lives and will try to exercise such controls also over the lives of the people of God. But it is not my intention to discuss this broader question.

In the second place, let me emphasize once more that we are concerned about the question whether so-called parochialism is *principally* right or wrong. Is it right or wrong *before the face of God*, and therefore, *in the light of His Word*? This is the question, — really the only question. And let us clearly see the implications of this question. It means that if government subsidy is principally right, then no amount of practical arguments can make it wrong. And if, on the other hand, it is principally wrong, then no amount of practical considerations may move us to consider it right and to favor it and accept it. We must be men and women of *principle*, not of utility. Hence, the question which we are now facing is this: is it principally right or wrong to allow the civil government to control our schools?

And then my answer is that there is indeed a principle involved here, and that this principle makes it impossible for us as Reformed people to favor and to accept government subsidy because of the government control which is involved.

What is that principle?

It is the principle of parental control, or, better stated, the principle of parental authority and parental responsibility for the education of covenant children.

This is sometimes called the formal principle of our system of schools, in distinction from the material principle, that of the Word of God as the foundation of all education. We do not believe that it is the calling of the government to educate our children. Nor do we

believe that it is the calling of the church institute to educate our children (parochial schools). But we believe that it is the calling of the *parents* to educate the children given them by God, to train them in the fear of the Lord according to the demands of the covenant and in harmony with the Word of God. Hence, our schools are established by societies of like-minded parents who band together in order to accomplish unitedly what they are unable to accomplish individually. The society elects a board to administer the affairs of the school, a board which is beholden to the society for its authority and responsible to the society for its actions. And this board, in turn, appoints a staff of teachers to teach in harmony with the principles which that society of parents wish to have expressed in the instruction. Again, that staff is not an independent body, nor in any sense the controlling body of the school. The faculty are the servants of the society, to do its bidding as expressed and implemented by the board in harmony with the constitution and in harmony with the will of the society. This, briefly, is the idea of parental schools.

It may very well be that we lose sight of this in various ways. It probably is true that parents only too often abdicate their responsibility, imagining that when they enroll their children in a certain school, they simply give their children over entirely to the board and faculty of that school. The fact that parents frequently do not participate only to the point of attending the annual meeting of the school society is, I think, a lamentable symptom of such a frame of mind in parents. It is probably also true that school boards upon occasion transgress this principle and begin to think of themselves as the supreme authority of the school, able to act independently of the society after the annual election, and able to determine policy and principle without consulting the wishes of the society. If that is their frame of mind, they err seriously. Not the board is supreme, but the society. And personally, I think it a lamentable circumstance that our society meetings have largely degenerated into meetings where board members are elected and an annual operating or capital expenditures budget is adopted. The same is true of teachers and staff. The moment a staff begins to think that it is "in the driver's seat" in any school, they are on the wrong track altogether. The moment a staff begins to think of itself as a group of "professional educators" who independently set policies and determine the content of the education in the school, while "this people (board and society) that knoweth not the law is accursed," at that moment you have a staff which is in fundamental rebellion against the school society and against the whole principle of parental education. Covenant parents ought to feel very strongly about this; and our parents and boards ought to work very diligently to keep our schools parental



schools in a very real sense of the word.

You see, while we sometimes speak of this (properly, in a way) as being a "formal" principle, it is much more than a coldly formal thing.

Mind you, this is not our educational policy because we Dutchmen are rugged individualists, who value our freedom and do not want to have it infringed upon by state or by church.

No, it is a *Biblical* principle.

Always the Word of God lays the calling and responsibility for the instruction of the covenant seed squarely upon the *parent*, not upon the government or upon the church institute. This is the plain teaching of a passage like Deuteronomy 6:6-9: "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." These words, frequently quoted in connection with covenant education, are significant not only with a view to the question *what* our children must be taught (namely, the precepts of the Lord), but also with a view to the question *who* is responsible for the instruction. And the plain implication is that the authority to teach and the responsibility for the instruction is *parental*. Instruction must proceed from the home! And no matter how that home attempts to carry out that injunction to instruct its children, the inescapable responsibility for that instruction continues to rest upon the home. Abdication, before the face of God, is really impossible; and when parents nevertheless attempt to abdicate and to shift the responsibility, it is sin. Whether that instruction is given directly in the home, or whether that instruction is given through the agency of a hired teacher or group of teachers, it remains the parents who are answerable to God for that instruction; and the responsibility can never be shifted.

Now to the extent that, under the various provisions of parochial legislation, the parents of parental schools would surrender the control of their schools to the state, to that extent they themselves lose the control. And to the extent that they lose control and surrender authority, to that extent they are attempting to abandon and abdicate the position of authority in which they have been placed by God Himself. And to the extent that they attempt to abdicate their position of God-given authority, to that extent they *sin*.

This is the wrong of accepting parochialism from the

point of view of the "formal" principle of covenantal education. To put ourselves in the position of continuing to be responsible for the education of our children before the face of God while we ourselves have wilfully surrendered the control (or even part of the control) of that education is to put ourselves in an intolerable position. For remember: no matter how much control you give up, you can never escape the responsibility!

With all this, we have said nothing yet about the dire practical results involved. For government subsidy and control and the concomitant abandonment of parental control and responsibility work like a cancer. Or perhaps it would be better to say that they work like dope addiction. Gradually but inevitably, more and more government subsidy is craved. With such increased subsidy goes increased government control. With increased abandonment of control by parents goes a decreasing sense of responsibility. And with a decreasing sense of responsibility goes a decreasing interest and concern. And with decreasing interest and concern goes decreased financial support, which, in turn, leads to increased dependence upon subsidy. The final result is a large degree of dependence upon government money and an equally large lack of both control of and interest in what takes place in the school. Into the vacuum thus created steps a coalition of government bureaucrats and so-called educational experts; and when a school association, or some members thereof, wake up to the fact that there is something wrong with the school, there is neither the power nor the spiritual interest and impetus to stop the trend and turn back the clock. It is too late! The school has been wrecked! Something like this, according to reports coming from the Netherlands, has happened in a school like the Free University of Amsterdam, which is now 90% subsidized. True, that is not a grade school or a high school. But it is a school established and operated by an *association*. And the principle is the same. And therefore, don't say, "It can't happen here." It can! And it *will* happen if ever our schools choose to accept parochialism.

But there is still another aspect to government control. It involves the material principle of our system of covenantal education. For every proposal for parochialism thus far has spoken of a distinction between *secular* education and *religious* education. This is a distinction which our system of education does not recognize. But it is also a distinction which strikes at the very heart of our educational system. And therefore I hope to devote separate and special attention to this aspect of government control in a future editorial.



## All Around Us

# Liturgical Renewal

Prof. H. Hanko

### LITURGICAL RENEWAL

The whole question of liturgical revision is a subject for heated debate these days. It is, in a broad sense, part of the discussion which centers around the problem of making the Church relevant. Many are convinced that the Church is ineffective in our times because it has failed to adapt to the changing circumstances and is, consequently, speaking in a vacuum and reaching no one.

Such, for example, is the approach of Donald Postema in the March, 1969 issue of the *Reformed Journal*. He discusses the whole question of liturgical renewal and justifies his discussion with the remarks:

My conversations (with students) indicate that worship in churches of the Reformed tradition is not very vital to many students, young people, and even older people. In fact, some are bored, antagonized, embittered and embarrassed by it.

His discussion in this article summarizes rather well current thinking on the problem. Some of his suggestions are worth discussing in this column. They are worth discussing because of the fact that several important elements are missing from the article (and from most discussions concerning renewal of liturgy) which put the whole discussion on the wrong track. What is missing especially is the truth that at the heart of the liturgical practices of the Church is the believers' worship of God. God is worshipped. But the very nature of this truth implies that God alone can determine how He shall be worshipped. His Word tells us how we shall approach Him and what shall be our conduct in His presence. We have no right to determine this ourselves. This is the one vital ingredient absent from so much of the discussion.

This does not deny that there are various aspects of the liturgical practices of the worship services of the Church which fall into the area of Christian liberty. There are principles laid down in Scripture which forms the basis for worship. But Scripture does not spell out in detail precisely how, in every instance, these principles are to be put into practice. This area of the application of the principles of Scripture is left to the Church to decide on the basis of the general principle of the "edification of the congregation." Quite naturally practices which fall into this area are determined by the sanctified judgment of the Church. There will be differences between congregations in many matters. These differences will be determined by the community in which the Church lives as the

Church is called to manifest the body of Christ in a given place. They will also be determined by the nature of the times in which the Church lives.

But there are fundamental principles also which Scripture clearly teaches and which must form the basis for all worship if it is truly to be worship. Much thinking on liturgical renewal denies the existence of any principles laid down in Scripture. The whole of the worship service is open to question, to change, to "modernization" to make it relevant. Every signal aspect of the worship service is to be determined as suitable or unsuitable without any reference to the Word of God. The article of Donald Postema is a striking example of this. There is not one Scripture reference in the entire article.

After some preliminary remarks and a discussion of some aspects of the worship service, the author writes:

Since everyone in the congregation is a (potential) worshipper, everyone should have something to say about the worship, should be actively involved in the preparation and celebration of the liturgy.

I get the impression from reports about many churches, that this point is lost. Worship is "regulated" and "conducted" by consistory and minister. Liturgy becomes then a plaything of the clergy (but the consistory usually quickly snatches away his toy), and worship becomes a performance for an almost silent (except singing and dropping coins in the offering plate), passive audience.

Here the author states the basic thesis of his article. He is making an important point. He insists that the congregation as a whole should participate in determining what the liturgy of the church shall be. He also is insisting that the congregation should have an active role in the actual carrying out of the liturgy. Precisely how this shall be done he describes in the rest of the article.

Turning first of all to his assertion that the congregation should play an active role in the formulation of the liturgy, the author writes:

Each worshipping person should have opportunity to answer the question: What vehicles would help you express your worship, adoration, of God best? How would you like to say thanks to God in church? What makes or would make worship really meaningful to you? What kind of liturgy would edify you and those you know? By each person I mean young as well as old, simple and educated, weak in the faith and strong — ALL. The answers to these questions should be taken seriously and if at all possible incorporated sometime, somewhere into the worship



service; or an explanation should be given why they cannot be.

What can be and what can not be included in a worship service? . . . Since God is Creator of all, He expects creative use of His universe as our response to Him. There seems to be no limit to what can be used for worship, except the sinful. At least it will be a long time before we reach that limit.

This principle is intended to open us up to all the possibilities that can come from individual and corporate imagination.

It is not at all clear to me how the author can say with even a semblance of logic that the fact that God is Creator of all things necessarily implies that our worship of Him in Church must include a creative use of His universe. This is an example of the fuzzy thinking and bad logic that characterizes so much of this type of writing. But however that may be, the fact of the matter is that here the author implicitly repudiates Scripture as being in any sense the norm for our worship services. The people must determine how these services are to be conducted. Scripture has nothing to say about it. Specifically, God has nothing to say about it — about how He will be worshipped.

Correctly, the author speaks of necessary differences between various congregations in their liturgical practices.

Since each congregation will be trying to express its own worship, there can be no liturgy which is exactly the same for the whole Church. There can be much variety between the way one congregation worships and the way another congregation, in different circumstances, with different people, worships. Each congregation has to find its won mode of worship.

If the author limited these remarks to the area of "Christian liberty," we would agree. But he does not. He applies them to the entire structure of the worship of the Church. He discusses, for example, the use of liturgical forms such as the Baptism Form, the Form for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, etc. He writes:

The other question has to do with the use of formularies produced by ecclesiastical assemblies. Must we stick to them exclusively and strictly or not? I would hope the answer is no. Not that the content of the formularies is bad (though it could stand improvement), but when used often, the formularies limit creativity and imagination. Perhaps we ought to use them as guides . . .

He makes no mention of the fact that these "formularies" are basically creeds which express the truth of God's Word — although we usually call them "minor confessions". But that they are creeds implies that the Church believes that these formularies express the truth of Scripture which the believers want to confess. When these creeds are used in their approved form throughout the Church, they are used in such a way that the Church confesses the unity of her faith in

Christ. To leave such important matters as the confession of the Church to anyone who wants to compose a Form for Baptism or to use the present Forms as "guidelines" is to abandon the faith of the Church which is her only unity in the world.

That the author wants this is clear.

I implied that many members of the church should be in on the decision-making when it comes to worship and liturgy . . . This means that people of the congregation, individually and collectively, ought to write liturgies for both Word and sacrament services. If they feel incapable of composing such a service, they at least should be consulted for ideas that would make worship meaningful to them and their fellow worshippers. Let it be a project for Ladies' and Men's Societies, catechism and Sunday School classes, retreats, and the like. They should be able to make mistakes, and if what they try doesn't "work", be able to try again. This means an openness to experiment with new structures of church life, a commitment to flexibility of styles, and the courage to risk failure in order to discover new truths. . . . Once we do allow all members, young and old, the chance to voice their opinions, we will have to be ready to face the question of using silence, kneeling, conversation, poetry, drama, gospel songs, folk music, jazz, simple or complex liturgies, and whatever ways people may use for celebration.

There is absolutely no doubt about it that, if the suggestions of the author are followed, the results will be exactly as he describes them. But to call this the worship of God seems to be approaching near to blasphemy.

But the author has more to say particularly about this matter of audience participation in the worship.

But there is more for layment to do than prepare worship and liturgies. I believe there should be participation in all the elements of worship as well as preparation of them.

Certainly there should be participation in responses, hymns, the Lord's Prayer and the recitation of the creeds. . . .

If our prayers are really to be *congregational* prayers, shouldn't members of the congregation offer these prayers, at least some of the time? It is presumptuous of clergy to think they know the needs of people and the world better than the people themselves and can present them more acceptably before the Lord. Students in our church have offered many prayers, both from the pulpit and from the pew. I have found prayers by the congregation moving and worshipful.

It is highly presumptuous of the author to say that the reason why clergy offer the congregational prayers is that they think they know the needs of the people and the world better than the people themselves. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Why does the author introduce something so patently false? and cast aspersions on the clergy?

But he goes on:



I think we must face (the) questions directly — why not have lay participation in Scripture reading and preaching?

Another question about proclamation. The aim of proclamation is that the gospel lays claim on a man and calls to him for decision and commitment. Is the monological sermon the only way for powerful proclamation? Could not choral reading, poetry, drama, dance, film, dialog, whatever form of communication that is available, be used to proclaim the message of God?

Nor must this lay participation be limited to the preaching; it must extend to the administration of the sacraments as well.

But this raised a question among us, could they (laity) also preach, read Christ's word of institution, break, pour and pass the elements (of the Lord's Supper)? That would be complete participation in the celebration.

It is here more than anywhere else in the article that the author's radical break with Scripture shows through. He is opposed to the injunctions and principles of Scripture. He is not speaking of some liturgical renewal which touches on those aspects of the service which fall in the area of Christian liberty. He is

hitting hard at the very essence of the worship service and is attempting, with some appealing suggestions, to cut the heart out of the worship of God.

He does two things. He first attacks the offices in the Church. In other parts of the article it is apparent that his view of the offices of elder and deacon differ from the Reformed view. But here he attacks the office of the minister. The minister is an ambassador of Christ called by the Church and therefore by Christ Himself to bring the Word of the Lord officially, authoritatively and in the name of Christ. He alone can and must do this. And only when he does this can there be worship in any true sense of the word.

And only, in the second place, when a minister speaks is the gospel preached. This gospel, preached by the minister is the heart of all the liturgy. It is God speaking to His people. And only when God, effectively, powerfully, officially, speaks can the people of God respond in worship and adoration. The official preaching is "the power of God unto salvation." To destroy this is to destroy worship altogether and to introduce into the Church a caricature, a mockery which is detestable in the sight of God.

## Feature

# Mixed Marriages

*Rev. H. Veldman*

This article is a speech which the undersigned delivered at an office-bearers' conference delivered at our Hope church on Sept. 30, the evening before the meeting of Classis East. Some expressed the opinion that it would have been beneficial for many of our young people had they had the privilege of hearing it. Others advised the undersigned to print it in our *Standard Bearer*. What now follows is the speech as delivered at that office-bearers' conference.

Your committee assigned two subjects to me. The one subject reads: "Is it permissible for an elder or an ex-elder to serve lawfully in the Mission Field as has been done on the island of Jamaica?" And the other subject is as follows: "The relationship of a believing wife to the church and to her unbelieving husband in regard to the sacrament of baptism. If the husband forbids his wife to have their children baptized, and she abides under his rule, is she guilty of neglecting the means of grace?"

We did not choose the first subject. This question we would answer in the affirmative, provided that the elder merely assist the minister or missionary. Paul

even speaks of women who assisted him in the gospel, as in Rom. 16:3 and Phil. 4:3. And he also mentions other women in that sixteenth chapter of his epistle to the Romans. Having selected the second subject, I do not think I will be criticized for changing it somewhat — after all, it is rather lengthy. I believe I can express it very briefly by changing it into: Mixed Marriages. This also enables me to subdivide it and present to you a subject with a three-fold division. Speaking to you on "Mixed Marriages," I call your attention to three thoughts: I.—To Be Averted; II.—Sometimes Unavoidable; III.—Our Calling.

Calling your attention to mixed marriages, we first of all face the question: between whom? On the one hand, we can speak of mixed marriages between believers and unbelievers. This distinction is stated in the subject assigned to me; it mentions the relationship between a believing wife and an unbelieving husband. However, we would call your attention to the following. It is true that Paul speaks of such marriages in I Cor. 7:10-14, and we quote: "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife



depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife. But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." I will have opportunity to reflect briefly upon this passage in my last point. However, this does not really constitute much of a problem for us, it seems to me. The problem facing us at various times does not often concern a situation or marriage of this nature.

But we can also speak of mixed marriages between persons of different faiths and beliefs. This is a problem that does confront and trouble us at various times. This happens when our young people have dates with young people of other churches, in their courtships become infatuated with each other, plan on marriage, and then discover the differences between them in matters of the truth because they belong to different churches. This, I believe, is much more of a problem which often confronts us, especially in our churches because, numerically, we are small and of little significance in the midst of the world. Our young people often do not have too much choice within our own circles and they therefore must look elsewhere. And, incidentally, there is no principal objection against this.

Now we certainly take the position that mixed marriages, if possible, are to be averted. Two factors contribute to this problem. First, the young people themselves. How often it happens that these courtships violate a fundamental rule! This has been my experience, and I am sure that I am no exception in this respect. One can preach and admonish until one is "blue in the face," emphasize that young people must not become "thick" until the matter of the truth has been settled. After all, the question is not whether agreement has been reached with what church they will affiliate. The question is not whether a young man of another church will join our church, the church of his girl friend, or vice versa. Nobody may join a church because it is the church of her husband or his wife, and a girl is surely not obligated to join the church of her husband because, as the woman, she must follow her husband. It will happen that a young man promises his girl friend that he will join her church and then, after their marriage, refuses to do so and insists that, because he is the head of the home, she is forced to follow him. If this be true, then the woman could join any church, and the word of Christ would be of none effect: "Whosoever loveth husband or wife, etc, above Me is not worthy of Me." And, we must not be

unequally yoked, even though it be with one's husband. According to our Confessions, Art. 27-29 of our Belgic Confession, one must join a church only for the sake of that church. And it certainly is not true that a young man can prevail upon his bride-to-be to see the truth, or vice-versa. Only the Lord can cause a person to see and love the truth of His Word.

However, besides the factor of the young people themselves, there are also other considerations. And what I am to say now is not new, but very old. It is contended that these young people are decent, clean-cut, children of God, and I would not dispute this. It is also stated that they both love the Lord, that they agree in many things of the truth, that if we interfere with a courtship of this nature we reduce our churches to a sect. And it is certainly characteristic of a sect that the members are very narrow-minded. Or, it is said that people of God do not belong exclusively to our churches (with which, incidentally, I wholeheartedly agree), that they can serve the Lord in other churches as well as in our churches, and who knows what a wholesome influence they may exert within their new church. With this reasoning I disagree completely.

Mixed marriages must be averted, if at all possible. For this, I submit to you three reasons. First, a mixed marriage, where the husband and wife do not agree on phases of the truth but do agree to belong together to a certain church, is in violation of the confession of faith as taking place within the church of God. Notice the questions asked at their Public Confession of Faith, to which an affirmative answer is given before the face of God and in the midst of His Church. Question I reads: "Do you acknowledge the doctrine contained in the Old and New Testaments and in the Articles of the Christian faith and taught here in this Christian Church to be the true and complete doctrine of salvation?" Please note that this question declares that the doctrine taught here in this Christian Church is the true and perfect doctrine of salvation. The fathers do not speak of the purest manifestation of the Church of God, but they speak of the doctrine as taught in the church to be the true and perfect doctrine. For us, this means that when anyone makes confession of faith in our churches he declares very solemnly before the Lord and in the midst of His church that this doctrine is the perfect doctrine of salvation. To this perfect doctrine nothing can be added. Question II reads: "Have you resolved by the grace of God to adhere to this doctrine; to reject all heresies repugnant thereto and to lead a new, godly life?" In answer to this question it is solemnly declared that one will adhere to this doctrine and reject all heresies repugnant thereto. The Three Points of 1924 are heresies. This means that one making public confession of his faith within our churches declares that he will ever adhere to this doctrine and reject all heresies, also the Three Points. And the Third Question reads: "Will you submit to



church government, and in case you should become delinquent (which may God graciously forbid) to church discipline?" This delinquency refers to delinquency with respect to doctrine as well as to life. Here one declares that if he become delinquent in doctrine as well as in life, he will submit to the church discipline of his consistory and church. How often this is violated within the church of God! People usually leave before submitting to this church discipline. However, even if they leave, they surely violate this third question asked at their public confession of faith. Mixed marriages surely involves people in a violation of this public confession of faith. Joining, for example, the Christian Reformed Church, our young people certainly violate this solemn vow before God and His Church; they cannot and may not agitate against the official doctrine of that church, the Three Points. This necessarily implies that they violate their promise to reject all heresies repugnant to the perfect doctrine of salvation.

A second reason why mixed marriages should be averted, if at all possible, is because of the sacrament of baptism. Please note the three questions asked upon this occasion. Question I asks: "Whether you acknowledge that although our children are conceived and born in sin, and therefore are subject to all miseries, yea, to condemnation itself; yet that they are sanctified in Christ, and therefore, as members of his Church ought to be baptized?" Question II reads: "Whether you acknowledge the doctrine which is contained in the Old and New Testament, and in the articles of the Christian faith, and which is taught here in this Christian Church, to be the true and perfect doctrine of salvation?" This second question is identical to Question I at one's public confession of faith. And Question III reads: "Whether you promise and intend to see these children, when come to the years of discretion (whereof you are either parent or witness), instructed and brought up in the afore-said doctrine, or help or cause them to be instructed therein, to the utmost of your power?" Let us remember the following. It is not a question whether there are people of God also in other churches. I certainly believe this to be the case. But, when one joins a church with which he is in strong disagreement, he is responsible with that church for its departures from the truth, and he may never agitate against these heresies. And, incidentally, the Three Points certainly constitute radical and fundamental departures from the truth. The sacrament of baptism demands of him or her an answer which is contrary to his personal convictions in regard to the Word of God. And, I ask you, how must a Protestant Reformed young man or woman, having made confession of faith within our churches, having declared that he or she will reject all heresies, including the Three Points, feel in his soul when they now declare before God and His Church that they will instruct or

help instruct their children in these heresies, in these Three Points, and, if you please, do so to the utmost of their power? May this be tolerated by any Protestant Reformed Church? It is not a question whether there are people of God in other churches. It is simply a matter of one's solemn vow before the face of the Lord and in the midst of His Church.

The third reason why mixed marriages should be averted, if at all possible, is that in such mixed marriages one becomes responsible for the church's development in the way of the lie and of the antichrist. It is said that one will always remain Protestant Reformed, always continue in the truth and persevere in it, even though they leave our churches. I question this. What will happen when people leave our churches? First, this may happen, and it often does, that such people become wholly indifferent as far as the truth is concerned. They are completely swallowed up by their new church. They have repudiated what they know to be the truth, and they simply do not care. You simply cannot reach them anymore. A discussion of the truth leaves them wholly cold, does not interest them in the least. Or it may happen that such a person, never feeling at home in his or her new church, will vex his or her righteous soul. I know this to be true. They are never happy in their new church home. And, in the third place, if they continue to love the truth and realize what they are lacking now, they will suffer spiritually, even as anybody must suffer physically who does not enjoy a full and proper diet. This, I assure you, is very serious. And to this may or must be added: What about your children? You may believe that you will continue and persevere in the truth, but does this also apply to your children and their children? What will become of them? We therefore become a party to the development of the lie and the coming of the antichrist.

Sometimes, however, mixed marriages are unavoidable. This second point will be very brief, but it must be stated. This is true as far as I Cor. 7:10-15 is concerned. We need not quote this passage at this time. Please look it up in your Bibles. The situation as described by the apostle in this chapter of I Corinthians is easily understood. The Church at Corinth was called out of the darkness of heathendom into the light of God's truth and covenant. Prior to their calling out of darkness into the light, all these marriages were necessarily between heathen and therefore heathen unbelievers. But now Paul preached the gospel in Corinth, and the result was that, in certain instances, the woman believed and the man did not, or vice versa, and the result was mixed marriages.

These mixed marriages, however, also occur in the sphere of God's covenant. All we need do is think of our own split in 1953, and again in 1962, which, after all, was merely a part and further outgrowth of 1953. Indeed, prior to 1953 all these marriages were consum-



mated in the sphere of the Protestant Reformed Churches; Protestant Reformed young people married Protestant Reformed young people, and all these families began in the truth. But then the split occurred in 1953. And, although in most cases whole families left us or remained with us (which is usually the case in the sphere of God's covenant), there were also cases where families were disrupted, and mixed marriages resulted. These mixed marriages were surely unavoidable, and the faithful husband or wife can hardly be condemned.

In connection with this, what is now our calling? I now have the opportunity to try to answer the questions submitted to me in the subject as originally stated. There is, first of all, the first question or rather the first part of it. When the suggested subject speaks of the relationship of a believing wife to the church and to her unbelieving husband in regard to the sacrament of baptism, then I understand this to mean: how does the sacrament of baptism affect their relationship to each other within the church of God? It is, of course, my privilege to interpret these questions as I please, to interpret them as I believe they should be interpreted. To this, now, I answer as follows. There seemed to be no problem in regard to this baptism of the children in the church at Corinth. We read in 1 Cor. 7:14: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." This would seem to indicate that the unbelieving husband permitted the baptism of their children. And when we read that the unbelieving husband is sanctified by his believing wife, or the unbelieving wife is sanctified by her believing husband, the meaning is surely not that he or she is personally sanctified, inasmuch as they are and remain unbelieving. But the meaning is that their seed is sanctified; they are sanctified, not personally, but in their relationship to each other as husband and wife, and that their seed is holy, only, of course, according to election. However, should the father refuse the baptism of the child or children, and the believing wife desire their baptism, she certainly cannot be held guilty of the neglect of the means of grace, and this for the simple reason that she cannot do anything about it. What can she do if her husband refuse the baptism of their child or children? She may urge the baptism of her child or children, but she can never force it.

As far as the second part of the question is concerned, we read: "If the husband forbids his wife to have their children baptized, and she abides under his rule, is she guilty of neglecting the means of grace?" I take this to mean: should she continue to abide under his rule, that is, continue to live with him

and so abide under his rule." To this I answer as follows: In his epistle to the Corinthians, the apostle writes in chapter 7:10-13: "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife. But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: if any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him." Paul here commands the believing wife to remain with her husband. Why? And we answer: because this mixed marriage is of the Lord. The case is not simply such that the heathen woman repented and the heathen man refused to repent. Of course, this is also true. It is certainly true that the one repented of her sin and was received into the fellowship of the Church of God and that the other refused to repent and forsake his evil way. But this is not all. The case, fundamentally, is that the Lord converted the one and did not convert the other; the Lord called the one out of darkness into the light, and sovereignly, did not call the other out of that darkness into the light. Hence, this mixed marriage is of the Lord. Who can say, in such instances, whether the Lord might not use the wife to lead her husband to the Lord? This is what we read in verse 16. And we believe that this also applies to mixed marriages as they occur within the sphere of God's covenant.

For the rest, I say: exercise the greatest care and patience. O, it may be true that the relationship between a husband and his wife becomes spiritually so unbearable and impossible that separate maintenance may be the only way out. We read in 1 Cor. 7:15: "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace." If at all possible, let this proceed from the unbelieving husband. Struggle with this in your prayers and be upright in your walk and conduct. And, remember, this matter is not first of all the responsibility of the church or of the office of the ministry, but it is first of all the responsibility of the home. May we be diligent, in our homes, in the instruction of our children with respect to the holiness and sanctity of the state of marriage. May we be faithful and continue faithful in our task of instructing our seed in the truths of the Word of God. What do we hold before our children? What do we permit them to see and read? The home is surely basic and fundamental. But, if possible, avert all mixed marriages. Marry in the Lord, and this means, of course, in His truth.



## *In His Fear*

# Sowing the Seed

Continued

*Rev. John A. Heys*

The churches on the island of Jamaica where our labours have been confined belong to three chief or principal ministers. These are Rev. Clinton James Elliott, who has some eleven churches scattered from Mahoe in the east to Cambridge and Grange Hill (The Crowder District) in the west, Rev. Joshua E. Frame with five churches most of which are in the area of Lucea and in the Parish (county for us) of Westmoreland, and Rev. Stephen E. Ruddock whose five churches are also mainly in Westmoreland, which is the southwestern section of the island.

Thus far we have reported in regard to the labours in 1968 in the churches of all three of these ministers. And our report continues with what our experiences were from the date of August 4.

Sunday, August 4, saw us again at Fort William with Rev. Ruddock and at another river baptism. This time it was a young lady, the daughter of the leading elder. There is something so refreshing about these baptisms, and such a display of childlike faith. The "candidates", as they call them, stand in the water with the congregation lining the sides of the river. Often there are the unchurched who out of curiosity also stand there or sit on the bridge. Then each candidate in a very simple and sincere way gives answer to the question as to why he seeks baptism. Other questions are asked of him while he is still in the water, and after a satisfactory answer is given, he is immersed. Then the elder, who had also gone into the water, leads this candidate to the bank and to the congregation, bringing him into the fold now as a confessing member. Following a few moments of time, when the immersed, the minister and the elder can change into dry clothing, they walk to the church, a half-mile, a mile, depending on where they can find water for baptism. And as they go, they sing along the way on the public road. We have pictures of this as well as a recording of their song, "Converted Children, March on." They are NOT ashamed of their religion. And with them it is far more than a matter of one day in a week. After a hurried lunch under a ledge of an abandoned stone mill, while a hurricane rain poured down around us, we went back to the Fort William church to pick up Rev. Ruddock and to go up Mt. Lebanon to that church. We came up from the southwest this time, having come up from the northeast the time before, but now this road was open and shorter. Here we had a communion service. The singing

was from the heart, and it did us good to watch the children sing here. The text that night was II Corinthians 5:10 and the sermon was well received. Monday was the Jamaican Independence Day and we made use of it by looking up Latium and Sunderland — which we were to visit for a service soon — in order to know the way in the dark. We found a better road than the one we used last year.

Having heard a wild tribe in the cockpit country, and since Rev. Heys had a personal invitation from Colonel Robertson, their leader, to come and tour their city of Accompong, we decided to go Tuesday. We found them to be a very civilized and peaceful people, dressed like any other Jamaicans, and in this little village in some extremely wild country we not only found three churches, but even a church-school. It was Presbyterian. We ate our packed lunch in the school out of the rain. Wednesday we investigated that shipment at the railroad depot and tried to hurry up the shipment, telling them we had to have it SOON! That night we travelled to Lacovia to show our pictures to the Reading Church and to have a service there. We used the public school for electricity and Rev. Elliott invited the whole town. We had a near riot because of this, certain young men molesting by turning the lights on during the pictures and off when we gave up and needed the light to pack our equipment. The sermon was before the pictures, and then there was respect and quietness. We left to prevent a riot when certain elements became boisterous. The white man is not well received all over, and we were booed and ridiculed often. Thursday evening at Latium was better, and a quiet and attentive audience was assembled to hear a sermon on John 14:6. That morning we had inquired again at the railway depot about the clothing, and they advised us to take the train to Kingston to see what was delaying the shipment. The station master said that we should have had it a week ago already. We left on Friday at 6:45 A.M. on the morning train. And a wild ride it was! Over the mountains with sharp curves we went at full speed, throttle wide open. And we sat where we could watch the engineer. That it almost threw us out of our seats into the aisles on the curves meant nothing to him. That the wheels groaned and squealed on the curves and turns he did not hear. And apparently he went blind or lost all ability to see what we could plainly decipher on the sign: "Bring your train to a



complete stop and proceed (over this bridge) at 5 miles per hour." On the way home in the dark it was, shall we say, "More exciting?" At the freight house we were sent from office to office. And it became apparent that a phone call to Kingston would not have helped. It takes sometimes from 15 minutes to an hour to "wake up" the operator in Kingston. And then we would have had to make call after call, for they do not have a central switchboard in every establishment. Finally when we inquired at the right place, with the help of a trainman who rode to Kingston with us on the train, we got a big grin and the information that the freight train waiting at Spanish Town for us to clear the track before it could proceed, contained the goods. Arriving back at the depot that night at 8:30 we found that someone had let the air out of a front tire because we would not hire anyone to "watch" our car. They get you one way or the other.

Saturday morning was spent chasing from one place to another. First we went to the freight house and found the shipment and counted it. Then we went to the custom's officer at the freight house. He sent us to town for some forms to buy and fill out. We tried three places and could not get the one form. Back we went to the officer just before noon. Mr. Binns, the custom's officer, said that without the forms we could do nothing and the office closed at noon on Saturday. Understanding our position — and he did recommend that we get recognized by the government so that we could be on his list for duty-free importation — he showed us some pity and said that he would try to get the copies of the forms for us from a friend who was a broker. "Come back Monday" he said "and we will close this business."

The rest of this report if that of Rev. Heys alone, for Saturday afternoon Mr. Feenstra became very ill with chills and high fever, which on Wednesday was diagnosed as a very severe case of the flu. We took him to the doctor Wednesday and got him some medicine to go with his antibiotic shot. Mr. Feenstra was not with us again in the work until Sunday afternoon, August 18. The wives went along on the preaching engagements, however, and can verify the remainder of this report.

On Sunday we went to Waterworks in the morning. A very attentive group listened to a sermon on John 14:6. At Galloway in the afternoon we again discussed Psalm 23 and a lively discussion followed which they and we enjoyed. We also played the Hope Heralds' tape and the greetings from the Mission Committee. Then there was an evening sermon on Psalm 17:15 with some very emotional reactions.

Monday Rev. Heys was just leaving to go to the freight house and to finish the clearance of the clothing with customs when Rev. Elliott appeared. He went along, and his presence was invaluable in estimating the value of the clothing. We settled for duty of

35 shillings a bundle. Mr. Binns later on graciously cut it down to the minimum he could charge, which was 30 shillings a bundle or \$3.60 a bundle in our money. The total cost of the duty on 3,015 pounds of clothing was \$27. It did not go that easy however. We were sent back to the city to the customs offices there to get a signature. Then back to the freight house we had to go with the signature. Back for another signature. Back for examination of that signature. Back to pay the duty. Sent to another office to cool our heels waiting for the cashier, while she decided whether she was ready to take our money. We were told by her that we had to have a shilling stamp and that we should go back to the post office to get on. We sighed and obtained a little pity. "Give me a shilling," she said, "and I'll use one of my stamps." Sent then to another office in the same building and waited on at once. Told again, "You need a twelve shilling, six pence stamp." In all the stifling heat of the upstairs building, we were ready to call it a day. It was 2 P.M. and this had begun right after breakfast and as soon as the offices opened in the morning. This time it was a man, and he remained adamant. This is the rule: a 12 shilling, six stamp must be applied to the document! A helper in the office interceded and accepted the money instead of the stamp AND THE CLOTHING WAS OURS TO TAKE AWAY! Incidentally, this is not the end of the story. We still had to go back to the freight house on the other side of town for Mr. Binns to put his o.k. for removal after showing him all the signed papers. Thus it was late Monday afternoon when all was cleared for removal. This now was August 12, one week before our return home, but we still had to get trucks to deliver it to the churches. Wednesday we had Rev. Frame's and Rev. Elliott's removed but Rev. Ruddock's truck driver did not show up till Thursday. Wednesday evening an 11-store fire in downtown Montego Bay destroyed those customs offices upstairs where all of our signed papers were. Had this happened two days earlier, we could not have cleared it before leaving for home. The shipment was to come between July 11 and 16 but came July 27; we did not get our hands on it till August 12, and we did not get it to the churches till August 15; and we were scheduled to leave for home the 19th.

After all the hectic activities of that Monday we still went at night to Cambridge for that "rained-out" service. This is a small congregation, high on the hill, but it was an attentive group, and we enjoyed the service. We had sent telegrams that day to the three ministers to hire trucks to get the clothing, and while we were waiting for the men to load the trucks Rev. Heys had a serious talk with Rev. Elliott and Rev. Frame about our future work on the island and what we were going to suggest to the Mission Committee. Before Mr. Feenstra's illness we had done much talking together about what to do in this field. Both ministers



agreed that it was a good plan that we conduct services of our own under our control. And it was because of this that the next Sunday Rev. Frame offered his pulpit to Rev. Heys and said, "You conduct the whole service this morning." We thanked him but felt that we should first get the Mission Committee's opinion on this, and one service at the very end of our labours

would not change matters. We also put the question point blank to both of them, "If our churches have no money to give to you for your need and your buildings, will your people still want us to work here?" The answer of both was "Many followed Jesus for bread but not all." Some would leave, they said, but many would stay.

## From Holy Writ

# THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

Rev. G. Lubbers

### THE DEDICATION OF THE FIRST TEMPLE BY BLOOD — continued (Hebrews 9:18-22)

Here we may ask the question: what is the idea in Scripture of "dedication." The term in English is derived from the Latin "*dedico*". It is a term which is used especially in religious language. Thus it was already used among the pagans of old. It was used to dedicate, consecrate a thing to a deity or a deified person. Particularly, it was used of dedicating a temple to a deity. This is the term which is here employed in the KJV to translate the Greek term "*enkainizoo*." This is a term which is used rarely outside the Greek Bible. Perhaps it can be best translated with the term: *innovate*. (Thayer) Hence, it could be synonymous with: to initiate, consecrate, dedicate. This is consonant with the Hebrew term "*chanach*" which means to press in, or to narrow, to limit, that is, limit the usage to a certain cause or end. (Kittel)

With this in mind we can understand how, in the Old Testament, the temple was dedicated (I Kings 8:63; II Chron. 7:5. The temple was dedicated to the Lord by the blood of the altar. Such a dedication made the matter settled and binding, once and for all. With this in mind Luther translated here in Hebrews 9 "gestiftet ward." The entire matter of the covenant had to be placed on a firm foundation.

Here it is the covenant of God which must be made firm, unmovable and unbreakable. The promise must be sure to those who are called. Those who are called must receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. And this is not done without blood! It is done by the blood of the covenant. Thus it was in the Old Covenant!

The writer to the Hebrews makes special mention of the historic occasion at the time of the law-giving at Sinai. It is of importance to notice that this covenant consisted in words. Moses spoke "every commandment" according to the law. This law was the content of the Exodus 20-23; it was the constitution of God's

new relationship to His people, as this would be perfected in the heavens. The last jot and tittle shall be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but this constitutional law of God shall be established in the hearts of the elect people. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, the Jew first and also the Greek. (Matt. 5:17-20) And this is all in the mind of the Lord at Sinai. That is the spiritual nature and design of the law — of every commandment which was spoken by Moses as the Law-giver. (John 1:17) The spiritual import of this law is the "grace and truth" which became a reality through the suffering and death of Jesus Christ.

It is for this reason that Moses, speaking of these commandments, was really speaking the old command which is the new commandment! It is really the "new" commandment which is not new because when it came it was not there before (*neos*) but it was new (*kainos*) in the sense that it is new in *nature*! It was different from the usual, impressive, better than the Old, superior in value and attraction. (Kittel) Had these words of Moses been, in their intention and design, merely some legal precepts written in a book of law, then they could not possibly have been words to which "the people" said "All these things will we do."

Yet, the first matter that we have here is that Moses speaks "every commandment according to the law."

It was at this point that Moses takes the blood. It was the blood of goats, oxen mingled with water. It was blood half of which had been placed on the altar. This meant that the blood was dedicated to God. It was a burnt offering, a thank offering. The sin offering had been brought in Egypt on the door-posts. Israel's passover had been slain. (I Cor. 5:7) Now they have been brought up out of Egypt. They are God's peculiar possession. — a *purchased* possession! Hence, here they bring a thank offering. It is the perpetual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. And this blood is accepted by the Lord. He is already (typically-parabolically) propitiated. And thus the law is here given in such a way



that the seventy see the God of Israel in gracious theophanic form, and live! And Moses takes the blood here and puts it on the altar, and now takes the blood of the altar and sprinkles the people, the congregation of the redeemed, the purchased possession of the LORD! This makes this people a blood-sprinkled people, who can say "Amen" to "every commandment spoken according to the law." However, Moses also sprinkled the "book." It was not a large book. It was the content of the chapters 20 through 23 of Exodus. O, no doubt, Moses later incorporated this "book" within the compass of the entire book of Exodus. However, it was a complete book which gives us to see and "to approve what is the will of God, the good and well-pleasing and perfect." (Romans 12:2) It was a book which is blood-sprinkled! That makes these words covenant words. Without the blood they would not have been covenant words, but only a principle of law which could only be a letter which kills. But now are they covenant words. They are sealed with the blood!

Thus was the first covenant, with all the covenant words, dedicated, made strong and fast! This covenant of blood cannot fail. It meant that the blood-sprinkled congregation was entirely set in the service of the altar as a royal-priesthood. Now as the priests of God they will present their lives a living sacrifice of thanksgiving to God at the altar. They will have the law written in their hearts! And their hearts are consecrated, limited in their service and allegiance, to God alone! Pressed into the service of the living God they are with a pure conscience.

Yes, this was all in a typical sense here. It is the "first" tabernacle, the first consisting in types and shadows. It perfected nothing. That is true. Nevertheless, it had in it the full message of good things to come. Wherefore Moses says "this is the blood of the covenant which (covenant) is enjoined unto you." The term enjoyed (*eneteilato*) ought to be noticed. It is rather remarkable that the verb in the Hebrew text is "carath," which literally means "to cut." The text in the Hebrew should read therefore "Behold blood of the covenant, which *hath cut* Jehovah with you upon all these words." The idea here is that when a covenant was made then an animal or animals were sacrificed, and they were cleaved through the middle into two pieces which fit together. Thus Abraham was instructed by the Lord to do as recorded in Genesis 15:12-21. And this is the usage which explains why the Hebrews when they enacted a covenant "cut" a covenant. In this case here in Exodus 24 when Moses speaks to the people, the "covenant cut" refers to the same covenant which God made with Abraham. In this covenant Abraham "believed and was justified." This covenant was God's covenant in blood of the Lamb! God went through the darkness all alone in Abraham's vision, and God ever brings the sacrifice alone. Such is

the idea of God's covenant in Genesis 15. It is interesting to notice that in the Septuagint translation the Hebrew verb "carath" is translated by the Greek verb "to place," to "place through." It is the verb form of "diatitheemi." This means that it is a covenant which God somehow covenanted in relationship to Himself. He will bring it about. He will make the promise of the eternal inheritance to stand, and made sure unto those who are called. For the verb "dietheto" is middle voice. God made this arrangement of salvation is such a way that he emphatically made it. He made it and no one else, and he is the Lord; He will fulfill it.

Still, the Hebrew writer does not follow the Septuagint translation here, but renders the Hebrew "carath" (to cut) with the verb which means to give a charge, to command a new commandment. It means that this covenant is something which we are told "to behold." Writes Moses in Exodus 24:6-8 "Behold, the blood of the covenant. . . ." No, we must not ask with the Jews of Jesus' days: "what shall we do that we might work hard the works of God?" (John 6:28) Not at all. That is not implied in this "behold, the blood of the covenant. . . ." What is enjoined is that we believe in God and His sacrifice on the door-posts, and that we believe that we are a blood-sprinkled people, and that we can draw nigh unto the Lord with boldness. "For this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." That is the implication of the "behold, the blood of the covenant" in Exodus 24:6-8, even as it is in the mouth of John the Baptist when he says "Behold, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29)

Such is the enjoinder of the covenant of blood!

It is really the same as: this is the new Testament in my blood. Drink this cup of the New Testament in remembrance of me! Yes, it is the covenant which God has "cut," and He has made the arrangement and fulfilment all alone. Now He enjoins us: Behold it in faith! That is our part in this covenant: a walk of thankfulness! And even this faith is the "work of God!" All things are ready; come ye to the wedding-feast. . .

For without blood there is not historical realization of forgiveness of sins!

**THE NECESSITY THAT THE HEAVENLY THINGS THEMSELVES BE PURIFIED** Hebrews 9:23, 24

That blood must be shed, shall there be forgiveness of sins, is a general principle both for the Old Testament and in the New Testament. It is the one thing which makes any covenant of effect and power. This is a universal law concerning all testaments, even of men. Fact is, that with the exception of one or two ceremonies, everything was purified with blood in the Old Testament. It called for the *shedding* of blood!



There is a God-ordained relationship between the true tabernacle and the type. It is the relation of shadow and body. Here in this chapter the shadow of things to come is denominated: the *anti-type*! Thus we read of this anti-type as the *pattern* of the true. All that we read of this tabernacle, which was made by Bazaleel and Aholibah, is that it is merely a pattern. It is made after the pattern shown Moses on the mount during the forty days spoken of in Exodus. It was therefore not the *real* tabernacle. It was but a shadowy picture, a dim outline of things to come! This shadowy picture-tabernacle was under the necessity of being

sprinkled with blood. The tabernacle itself needed to be sprinkled with blood on each great, solemn day of atonement. It was *the Day*! It meant that priest, people and tabernacle all were clean and purified once more!

Copies, patterns of the true tabernacle needed to be cleansed!

The real tabernacle, the heavenly things themselves, too, need to be purified — with better sacrifices than of goats and bullocks. It calls for a greater sacrifice on a greater Day of atonement!

## Studies in Depth

# A Sabbath Day Movement

*Rev. Robt. C. Harbach*

The Lord's Day Alliance of the United States is the name of this organization. It is a coordinating agency, once of various Protestant ecclesiastical organizations, now of "Christian" churches, since the Roman Catholic church is included in its representation. It has been established for the cultivation and maintenance of the first day of the week as a day of rest, renewal, worship and religious education. As we read further in the Alliance brochure we learn that the first day of the week is regarded as much more than merely a day of rest and renewal, etc., for such a day could be on any day of the week, whereas observance of the Lord's Day could not. This is obviously implied in the name of the organization. That first day is also said to be "the Sabbath Day," a justifiable designation and valid synonym for "the Lord's Day," Judaism, Seventh Day Adventism and Dispensationalism to the contrary notwithstanding. For the fourth commandment, rightly understood, is a perpetual law.

The Alliance organized in 1888 with six major denominations participating: Presbyterian, U.S.A., United Presbyterian, Presbyterian, U.S., Reformed Church of America, Baptist and Methodist. Today, the denominational representation is as high as fifteen, including Christian Reformed, Reformed Episcopal, United Church of Christ and Roman Catholic. The presence of the latter representation is indicative of the amalgamating spirit of modern ecumenicalism. For the hierarchical church is not known for ever having maintained a comprehensive Sabbath day program. Two worship services, Sunday School and young people's societies convening every Lord's day have always been as unknown to it as they are now to practically all liberal churches. Rather it is known for

its early morning masses which allow the whole day for worldly pursuits. Apparently, the desirability of Roman Catholic representation on the Alliance's board of managers is not because of any strong reputation for Sabbath keeping, but as a legislative power source in lobbying for Blue Laws and Sabbath regulations in the state.

The Alliance claims that "the Divine command to keep one day in seven as the Sabbath Day . . . was addressed to all people . . ." Reference is, of course, to the fourth commandment. This, in turn, has its roots in the creation ordinance. The Sabbath was instituted with the creation. It therefore does not have origin in Judaism. "The Sabbath was made for man," not merely for some particular race or provincial aggregation. Whereas man has apostatized far from any concern for the Sabbath, nevertheless, "from the beginning it was not so." As a result of the Fall, Sabbath observance throughout the world early began to become a rarity, if not an oddity, and Sabbath-breaking the prevalent practice. Still, the Sabbath, as well as the creation ordinance of marriage, was kept by the covenant people, who originally were not Semitic, but Sethite. A sign of that covenant the Sabbath was and is (Ex. 31:13, 17). The basic significance of the Sabbath, therefore, is covenantal. It signifies that God is essentially a covenant God who eternally lives an intertheistic, trinitarian covenant life, and dwells with His people in the friendship of Sabbath rest. There in the idea of the covenant we have the key to unlock the secret to understanding the "spiritual dynamics" involved in the Sabbath. Although the Sabbath does have a creational and therefore an apparently universalistic origin, it nevertheless has, actually, a fundamen-



tally particularistic character. This is evident in the fact that it was always divinely imposed on a people who stood in relation to God by covenant. Sabbatarianism is of necessity of the party of God! Then no evidence is there that the Sabbath command was addressed to all people. The command was addressed to a redeemed people, as is patent from the authority of Exodus 15 and 16:23-30 (which reveal, incidentally, that the Sabbath is not geographically of Sinaitic origin — it is Edenic), and then from its formal legislation at Sinai (19:4-6; 20:2, 8-11). History reveals that the heathen adversaries of God's church "did mock at her Sabbaths" (Lam. 1:7). It also reveals the fact that the heathen of Tyre established in Jerusalem fish markets and merchandise marts which they opened on the Sabbath to lure Israel into profanation of the Sabbath. These adversaries were not admonished to keep the Sabbath. They were rather forcibly ejected from the city and banished from its very environs (Neh. 13:16-21).

The Sabbath and its undeniable and indispensable benefits are for man in covenant relation to God. To lay claim to Sabbath, or Lord's Day, rights and benefits is to claim covenant relation to God. To this right, man in heathendom or in modern pagan (Pelagian) civilization, has no right. The covenant is embrative of only those connected to Almighty God by relation of friendship, those to whom He says, "Ye are My friends." This does not mean that the man who fails to observe the Sabbath is excused from dedicating the day to the Lord, and that on the supposed ground, "he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth regard it" (Rom. 14:6). For all men are bound to keep the law of God, though it be not addressed to all people, and though some never had heard of it. Ignorance of the law is neither God's fault nor man's excuse. Man rebelled against God and His law from ever since incapable of doing any good. But though man has lost his ability to obey, God has not forfeited His right to demand perfect, personal and perpetual obedience. In illustration, many of the heathen do not pray. Further, what we have said being true, they are not able to pray (II Cor. 3:5). Even if they did pray, their prayer would be an abomination to the Lord (Prov. 15:8; 28:9). Yet God's fury is poured out on them for not praying (Jer. 10:25). The same applies to Sabbath-keeping. God holds all who keep not this law as Sabbath-breakers.

The "purpose" of this movement is expressed as follows: "The Lord's Day Alliance believes that the nature of man demands that he have at least one day in seven for renewal of body, mind and spirit if he is to function efficiently the other six days. This is strongly substantiated by Jesus' words, 'The Sabbath was made for man . . . ' (Mark 2:27)." Actually, this is only the statement of an opinion held, not a declaration of purpose, either of an organization or of the Sabbath

itself. A *mere* opinion it is, one which does not necessarily require more than passing notice, and one based on no foundation higher than "the nature of man." This anthropocentric opinion is drawn from what the nature of man is supposed to demand, as though the law of God only or especially demands what is indispensable to human nature. It certainly cannot be the main purpose of a Christian organization, to say nothing of the Sabbath itself, to provide for physical, mental and spiritual renewal after a rigorous and enterprising hexaameron. It cannot be the *main purpose* of either a Christian organization, or of the Sabbath, to secure such renewal that man may "function efficiently." Man's chief end, and therefore the Sabbath's too, is to glorify God. Everything is to be regarded as means to that end.

In another, and later, brochure the purpose of the Alliance is so stated as to lead one to believe that the former intended statement of purpose suffers from typographical omission, especially of what follows. "The object of the Alliance is to promote the first day of the week, the Lord's Day (the civil Sunday being also recognized in the Constitution of the United States, Art. I, Sec. 7, par. 2) as the Christian day of renewal and worship according to the Scriptures; and for that purpose to gather and diffuse information, to publish documents, to use the press, to cause public addresses to be made and to use other means as shall be expedient and proper to the end that the blessings of the Lord's Day shall be secured for all people." (By-Laws) It is further stated that "its primary function (is) educative rather than legislative" in order to understand "the spiritual dynamics present in a day set aside for worship, renewal and service. The Alliance is the only national organization whose chief responsibility is the providing of this understanding." That the "blessing of the Lord's day shall be secured for all people," according to the context in which these words appear, means all people of the United States. This, of course, is a common grace idea, temporal blessings accruing to the natural man as the result of firm establishment of the Christian day of worship in the land. The reprobate, who, according to Scripture already considered, are regarded as Sabbath-breakers, may also receive Sabbath day blessings. But the biblical record shows that Tyrian despoilers of the Sabbath are not blessed, but under the curse of divine wrath (Neh. 13).

The chief responsibility of this national organization is to provide "for understanding the spiritual dynamics present in a day set aside for worship . . .," whatever that means. "Spiritual dynamics" are left undefined. But if we were to define them, we could not do better than we have implied in our third paragraph, and than that which we have in what the Lord demands for the proper observance of His day as expressed in the following two points. "First, that the ministry of the



Gospel and the schools be maintained; and that I, especially on the Sabbath, that is on the day of rest, diligently frequent the church of God, to hear His Word, to use the sacraments, publicly to call upon the Lord, and contribute to the relief of the poor, as becomes a Christian. Secondly, that all the days of my life I cease from my evil works, and yield myself to the Lord, to work by His Holy Spirit in me, and thus begin in this life the eternal Sabbath" (HC, 103). Surely the dynamics latent in the Sabbath day must be discoverable in the contents of these two points. They have for centuries been declared to the skies not by a mere

national organization, but by the international, universal, truly ecumenical movement of the Reformed churches in the world. This has been done, too, not for "development of our nation," much less to "maintain a sound economical structure and keep democracy afloat," but as far as the whole body of Christ is concerned, "that we may testify by the whole of our conduct our gratitude to God for His blessings, and that He may be praised by us; also that everyone may be assured in himself of his faith, by the fruits thereof; and that by our godly conversation, others may be gained to Christ" (ibid., 86).

## *Examining Ecumenicalism*

# "Renewal in Mission"

*Rev. G. Van Baren*

It was Christ Himself who gave the original "mission mandate" to the church when He, shortly before His ascension, told His disciples, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:19-20).

One would expect, then, that when any who claim the name of "church" would discuss either "missions" or "renewal in mission," they would have in mind that original mandate of Christ. One would think that a "renewal in mission" suggests that somewhere along the line the church had departed from the original command of Christ — and was now to be called back to what was its Scriptural duty. But if one expects to find this in the document approved at the last gathering of the World Council of Churches meeting at Uppsala, he would be sadly mistaken.

At its meeting in Uppsala in 1968, the W.C.C. gathering adopted six reports. These reports clearly reflect the attitudes and beliefs of the majority of those who belong to that organization. Last time we considered the first of these reports. In this article I would point out some of the features of the second report entitled, "Renewal in Mission." It is striking that though the words "renewal" and "mission" can suggest much to the mind of the child of God, none of what he would expect is to be found in this report. It simply does not treat the subject of "mission" in the sense that we generally understand it: going forth into all the world to preach the gospel. Nor is its idea of "renewal" that the church ought to return to its original calling — rather it becomes the occasion to suggest that the church must proclaim a "social" gospel in-

stead of the Scriptural cross. This document is a clear but sad evidence of the apostasy within the church. Any, reading it, who could yet belong to such an organization, shows, to say the least, sad lack of spiritual discernment. For this document is nothing else but devilish. It is on some points vague — especially in its few references to Christ's death and resurrection; yet it leaves no doubt concerning its idea of the central mission of the church.

The first section of the report treats the "Mandate for Mission." It begins in this way:

We belong to a humanity that cries passionately and articulately for a fully human life. Yet the very humanity of man and of his societies is threatened by a greater variety of destructive forces than ever. And the acutest moral problems all hinge upon the question: What is man? We Christians know that we are in this world-wide struggle for meaning, dignity, freedom and love, and we cannot stand aloof. We have been charged with a message and a ministry that have to do with more than material needs, but we can never be content to treat our concern for physical and social needs as merely secondary to our responsibility for the needs of the spirit. There is a burning relevance today in describing the mission of God, in which we participate, as the gift of a new creation which is a radical renewal of the old and the invitation to men to grow up into their full humanity in the new man, Jesus Christ.

Such an introduction is far different than John 1:1 or Genesis 1:1. Fact is, that though it sounds noble and fine to the ears of man, it is a presentation of the lie. Indeed, the question is, "What is man?" Is he truly the one who is involved in a world-wide "struggle for meaning, dignity, freedom and love?" And what is a



"full human life?" The only "full human life" can be one in which Christ is the center and heart — yet humanity does not cry for such life. The passing reference to Christ presents Him in that liberal or modernistic sense: that good man who is the example for all mankind.

This section presents man as one who "suffers an inescapable dread of his own helplessness and his deepest cry, albeit often unrecognized, is for the Triune God." Again, such description hardly is in accord with Psalm 14. Besides, the section makes a mockery of regeneration and conversion. "Faith" becomes a response of natural man. The presentation of these is in that modernistic style which can use orthodox and Scriptural terms — giving a meaning contrary to Scripture. Notice how this is done:

But the new manhood is not only a goal. It is also a gift and like all God's gifts it has to be appropriated by a response of faith. The Holy Spirit offers this gift to men in a variety of moments of decision. It is the Holy Spirit who takes the Word of God and makes it a living, converting word to men. Our part in evangelism might be described as bringing about the occasions for men's response to Jesus Christ. Often the turning point does not appear as a religious choice at all. Yet it is a new birth. It sets a pattern of dying and rising which will continually be repeated. For we have to be torn out of the restricted and perverted life of "the old man." We have to "put on the new man" and this change is always embodied in some actual change of attitude and relationship. For there is no turning to God which does not at the same time bring a man face to face with his fellow men in a new way. The new life frees men for community unabling [*sic*] them to break through racial, national, religious and other barriers that divide the unity of mankind.

The second section of this report is concerned with the "opportunities for mission." Here the report clearly reveals what it conceives the mission of the church to be. That mission is not to preach Christ crucified in this world, but rather to become involved in the social changes and attempts for social changes in the world. The church is here to change society. The church ought not to hesitate in becoming involved in any activity which will build a "new humanity." The report declares:

The church in mission is for all people everywhere; for those who have not heard the Gospel and for those who have; for those who, unknowing, serve the "man for others," and for those who name his Name and yet continue to wait for the new humanity.

And what must the church do? Within "centres of power," for the "sake of the new humanity the powerless must exercise power." This, to my mind, means that the church must become engaged in revolution where necessary. This is stated again in the

report when it declares, "The longing for a just society is causing revolutions all over the world. . . . The Christian community must decide whether it can recognize the validity of their decision and support them."

The church must be active in the universities. There must be a "Christian presence and witness" in connection with student rebellions. The mission of the church is to assist in areas of problems because of changes in our society: problems caused by urbanization and industrialization; problems of suburbia and rural areas.

And how is the church to find out which "mission" work is most important for it to do? The report suggests the following guidelines:

- do they place the church alongside the poor, the defenceless, the abused, the forgotten, the bored?
- do they allow Christians to enter the concerns of others to accept their issues and their structures as vehicles of involvement?
- are they the best situations for discerning with other men the signs of the times, and for moving with history towards the coming of the new humanity?

Finally, the report has a section on "freedom for mission." This section, too, clearly reflects the "gospel" of the antichrist. It contains much "gobbledygook," high-sounding phrases, which serve to cover up its modernism. It wants to rid itself of the old structures of the church and become more "flexible." This is what it says:

Mobilizing the people of God for mission today means releasing them from structures that inhibit them in the church and enabling them to open out in much more flexible ways to the world in which they live. In this world we need to meet others, across all the frontiers, in new relationships that mean both listening and responding, both giving and receiving. . . .

The missionary societies originated in a response of a past generation to the call to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Changing political, economic and ecclesiastical circumstances demand new responses and new relationships.

The church must become a "caring community." It "will find through dialogue a common basis for their task and be encouraged to develop new forms of service within the social structures for the sake of their fellow men. . . ."

In addition to this, the report strongly emphasizes that in this "mission," the church can never "go it alone." The church in this mission must be one. As the report states:

In fact, we find it impossible to envisage any situation where it would not be more effective to act together across all frontiers rather than going it alone.

In a world where the whole of mankind is struggling to realize its common humanity, facing common despairs and sharing common hopes, the



Christian Church must identify itself with the whole community in expressing its ministry of witness and service, and in a responsible stewardship of our total resources.

Called as we are to take up our responsibility for mission in the future which God opens up before us, we do so in the firm and certain hope that the new humanity revealed in our risen Lord and Saviour will surely come to its glorious fulfilment in him. So we humbly serve, in patience and in joy, confidently expecting his final victory.

That is the "renewal in mission" which the World

Council of Churches has in mind. Some objections were raised to the document. Several pointed out that this document was not a correct presentation of the Scriptural mandate to the church. But the Council nevertheless adopted it. It adopted an obviously false doctrine plainly opposed to the mandate of Matt. 28:19. It encourages union of light and darkness. It advocates a "social" gospel. When a document of this nature can be approved by any organization, then the child of God must know that he has no place there — he must come out and be separate.

## *Pages from the Past*

# **Believers and Their Seed**

CHAPTER VI (continued)

**The Historical Realization of the Covenant**

*Rev. Herman Hoeksema*

Now that first man Adam falls through the temptation of Satan and through his own wilful disobedience. And through his fall the first revelation of God's covenant disappears. God had placed His servant in Paradise with a free will. Not, of course, as if that first man was free in the sovereign sense of the word, so that with all the life of his will he was not entirely dependent upon God's good pleasure and God's providential purpose and decree. In that sense no creature is ever free. God is and remains sovereign, and man remains dependent upon his God also in his volitional, or willing, existence. But in the moral sense Adam was free. He could choose good and evil. This, again, was not thus, that in Paradise Adam stood in a state of childish innocence or moral neutrality, so that he really first obtained knowledge of good and evil and became a moral creature by eating of the tree. On the contrary, Adam was gifted with positive knowledge of God, with righteousness, and holiness. He stood with his face toward God. But through an act of his own will he was able to turn about, to turn away from God and toward the devil. And this was exactly determined by his attitude over against the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Thereby it was very really determined whether Adam in obedience would allow himself to be led by his God, would allow God alone to determine what was good and what was evil, or whether he indeed wanted to be like God, determining for himself and in that sense knowing good and evil. Now Adam decided against God and for Satan. He rejected God's Word, and thereby God Himself. He listened to the temptation of Satan through the woman. He chose for the darkness, and he rejected the light. He broke God's

covenant. His light turned into darkness, his righteousness into sin and guilt, his holiness into corruption of his entire nature, his life into death, his love into enmity. Death reigned over him. For we must not say that Adam did not die in that very day, still less that a certain common grace delivered him again from the deadly operation of the poison of sin. No, matters stood exactly thus, that Adam at the very moment that he sinned forfeited the favor of God and became the object of God's wrath and indignation. God slew him. For also in that respect God maintains His covenant in that He slays the man who forsakes Him and raises his rebellious fist against Him. Hence, it could not be otherwise than that Adam, who could enjoy life only in God's favor, must die as soon as he makes himself worthy of God's wrath. Death reigned over him, and he became the slave of sin. He became this *with his seed*. For since he sins as head of the race, through his guilt condemnation comes upon all. And since he sins as father of us all and as bearer of our nature, no one shall ever again be able to bring forth a clean thing out of an unclean. And since, finally, he lies at the root of our race, his one sin shall unfold itself in many sins of the thousands and millions of his descendants, until in the entire race that one root-sin has borne its complete fruit and the measure of iniquity is full. It is therefore also no grace or favor when by God's providential appointment our race does not immediately perish in the root, but must continue to exist and to serve God's counsel, and when anyone in that race is born outside of Christ. For he is born under guilt and condemnation and in death; and he can nevermore do anything else than through his own sin



and guilt cooperate unto the bearing of the fulness of the fruit of that one root-sin, and thus increase guilt with guilt.

Now according to the counsel of the Lord God, Christ stands behind Adam; and from this point of view the fall of Adam serves to make room for the King Whom God had anointed over Zion, the mountain of His holiness. The first servant of the Lord falls. But when he falls, God says, "Behold my Servant, whom I have chosen." The first Adam falls away in order to make room for the Second. Thus, certainly, the matter must be presented. The fall of Adam took place according to God's determinate counsel. No Reformed man may doubt that for a moment. For God's counsel stands, and He does all His good pleasure: and that, too, not only in the sense that He has the final victory over Satan and all the workers of iniquity, while in the course of history the devil in many respects resists and thwarts that counsel. With such a view we end up in heathen dualism. Also the heathen know of a good god and an evil god, who are always fighting one another, but in which battle the good god ultimately will gain the victory. And there are not a few who imagine that if thus they only present matters, they may be called advocates of the antithesis. But matters do not stand thus. In the course of history the powers of darkness never have the victory, not even for a time. God always does what pleases Him, also with sin and the devil. Thus it is also with Adam's fall. Adam falls, indeed, through his own fault. Nor is God the author of his sin. The fault lies with Adam, not with God. But all this does not change the fact that you may not only explain the fall of Adam from Adam's free will. He falls according to God's decree. Otherwise we arrive at a terrible conception of things. Then, after all, the entire history which follows, a history of trouble and distress, suffering and death, with the fearful cross of God's only begotten Son in the center, would actually be dominated and controlled by the will of Adam, by which he chose for the darkness and against God. But now matters are different. If we conceive of Adam's fall from the viewpoint of God's counsel, then the first Adam must fall in order that the Second may come. For God, for the greater revelation of His glory and the higher exaltation of His covenant and the more

glorious salvation of His children, had in mind some better thing for us than that which was revealed in the first Adam or which ever could have been realized through him. He willed to establish His covenant not in that first man, who was of the earth, earthy, but in the Second Adam, Who is the Lord from heaven, Who is God of God and presently enters into our nature in order to make us partakers of the life of God so as the first man never knew it. That counsel of the Lord also the fall of Adam serves. When now the first man falls according to that counsel of the Lord, Christ stands behind him, in order, as head of a better covenant, immediately to become manifest and upon the ruins of the first house of the Lord in the first Paradise to build a much more glorious house of the Lord as the Servant of Jehovah and the High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Through this Servant of Jehovah God maintains His covenant and raises it to higher glory. He does that by entering into our nature and uniting the human nature in the most intimate manner with the divine. He does that by assuming our guilt and making atonement for it by His cross. He does that by conquering death and by arising out of the grave with a life of glory such as He alone could receive. He does that when presently He is entered into the highest heavens and is exalted at the right hand of the Father and has received the Spirit for all those given Him of the Father, by becoming the quickening Spirit, entering into them, and bestowing upon them the life of God's covenant in that fellowship which He Himself so beautifully described in the words, "Thou in me, and I in them, that they may be made perfect in one."

And so God's covenant is now the life of the friendship of God in Christ. In that covenant there are no offers and no conditions. The covenant is solely God's. He establishes His covenant. He chooses and saves. He ingrafts us into Christ, and He sanctifies. He makes us friends of God for His name's sake in the midst of the world. And He then also fights His own battle in us through Christ unto everlasting victory. And we are, through His grace, of God's party. And when presently the battle has been fought, then He gives us, out of free grace, the crown of victory, a crown of life, a gracious crown.

Now that covenant of God is for us and our children.

#### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Mr. and Mrs. Society of South East Protestant Reformed Church express its sincere sympathy to Rev. and Mrs. Marinus Schipper and their family in the passing of Mrs. Schipper's mother, Mrs. Cordelia Plasman. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." Psalm 116:15.

Mr. C. Lubbers, V. Pres.  
Mrs. H. Kuiper, Sec'y.

#### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Mary-Martha Circle of Southeast Protestant Reformed Church expresses its sincere sympathy to one of its members, Mrs. M. Schipper, and its Bible leader, Rev. M. Schipper in the loss of their mother,

MRS. C. PLASMAN.

May our Heavenly Father comfort and sustain His own as He gathers His church. Mrs. C. Westra, Pres.  
Miss A. Reitsma, Sec'y.



## News From Our Churches

There is again a flurry of activities of trios and calls. Doon has called Rev. Engelsma, from Loveland; Pella has called the Rev. D. Kuiper from a trio consisting of Revs. Heys, Kuiper, and Lubbers; Hull's congregation will meet Oct. 27 to call one from a trio comprising the Revs. Kuiper, Lubbers, and Woudenberg; and First Church must elect on Nov. 28, from a trio including the Revs. Engelsma, Lubbers, and Schipper, one to whom they will extend a call to be missionary to Jamaica.

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In response to the need of the Jamaican churches our Mission Committee has decided to send Rev. Lubbers to labor there for three months. Southwest Consistory has graciously consented to release their pastor for this work. Rev. and Mrs. Lubbers are scheduled to leave Nov. 4. A special program has been prepared to observe their departure Sunday evening, Nov. 2, at Hope Church. The Southwest congregation had a private farewell party for them on Tuesday evening, Oct. 21, sponsored by the Mr. and Mrs. Society. This send-off program included talks by Rev. Lubbers and Mr. H. Meulenberg, who also showed slides of the locale and played tapes of the voices of some of our Jamaican friends. A gift, in the form of a donation to help defray the travel expenses of the Jamaican ministers, was prepared to send with Rev. and Mrs. Lubbers.

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The Annual Reformation Day Rally was held in Grand Rapids in First Church auditorium on Friday evening, Oct. 24, featuring Prof. H. C. Hoeksema as speaker. From the first sentence — "Beloved sons and daughters of the Reformation, the Reformation story is a love story, that of the sovereign love of God." — to that last sentence — "The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, always has the victory, always conquers." — the speaker held his audience in a quiet listening mood: His theme was "The Word of God and the Reformation," which was treated from three points of view: 1) The Word of God *in* the Reformation; 2) The Reformation *and* the Word of God; 3) The Word of God *and* Reformation. It was a clear evening which brought out many "sons and daughters" who came to be reminded of the break-away from the established church which had become apostate, and to be directed to our calling to beware of any deviation from the truth of the Scriptures which would necessitate another reformation. Mrs. C. Lubbers was in her usual place at the console of the pipe organ, the prelude being "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," and the postlude "Now Thank We All Our God." Rev. Veldman led in opening devotions and introduced the speaker. Rev. Heys was asked to lead in closing prayer in the place of Rev. Schipper, who was absent due to the decease of Mrs. Schipper's mother.

Loveland's pastor, Rev. Engelsma, was scheduled to give a Reformation Day Lecture on October 30, speaking on "The 16th Century Reformation of the Church." Plans included the opportunity to ask questions of the lecturer about this wonderful historic fact. The evening was sponsored by the church extension committee.

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Rev. Woudenberg received an unusual "thank-you" for his sermon recordings lately. It was from Holland, Mich.; she wrote, in part, "I am blind and finding suitable recordings to listen to is often difficult. I appreciate your services very much. I hope more blind and shut-in individuals are able to take advantage of this wonderful truth which is so distinct in this day and age..." So we learn of another connecting link to the manse in Lynden, Wash.

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The Eastern Ladies' League met in Southeast Church Thursday evening, Oct. 23. Prof. H. Hanko spoke on "The Generation Gap." The musical portion of the program was a song, "Perfect Peace," sung by the Westra sisters (five of them!), members of Southeast Church.

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Southwest Deacons joyfully announce that they have received 2960 lbs. of clothing for the Jamaican poor, plus \$384.99 for shipping charges and for new clothing. They take this news item as an opportunity to "thank you one and all." We are thankful to the Lord for this show of mercy. Truly it was a rewarding experience for us as Deacons to assist in this clothing drive. The 7 cartons left Grand Rapids by truck for Miami on Oct. 16, and then piggy-back on the boat for Jamaica. The shippers figure on 4 to 5 weeks for delivery. Rev. Lubbers will then be there, D.V., to assist in the distribution thereof. Our brethren and sisters in Jamaica, we are sure, join us in saying "Thank you."

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The Western Ladies' League was held in Hull on Oct 16, with an intriguing idea to emphasize their theme. Each member was provided with a dress pattern guaranteed to fit all christian women. Materials listed were joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, etc. One of the "directions" for installing zipper (called a lip-zipper) was Prov. 21:23 (*look it up for yourself*). Some of the pattern shapes were a speech by Rev. Van Baren on "Christian Witnessing," and a question hour conducted by Rev. Lanting.

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... see you in the church triumphant, where we shall join the angels in their worship saying, "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power and might be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen."

J.M.F.