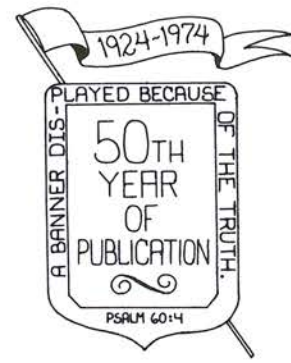


The STANDARD BEARER



A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Let it be considered, then, as an undeniable truth, that they who have been inwardly taught by the Spirit, feel an entire acquiescence in the Scripture, and that it is self-authenticated, carrying with it its own evidence, and ought not to be made the subject of demonstration and arguments from reason; but it obtains the credit which it deserves with us by the testimony of the Spirit. For though it conciliate our reverence by its internal majesty, it never seriously affects us till it is confirmed by the Spirit in our hearts. Therefore, being illuminated by him, we now believe the divine original of the Scripture, not from our own judgment or that of others, but we esteem the certainty, that we have received it from God's own mouth by the ministry of men, to be superior to that of any human judgment, and equal to that of an intuitive perception of God himself in it.

— John Calvin

MEDITATION

God's Workmanship

Rev. M. Schipper

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."
Ephesians 2:10

Saved we are by grace only!

It is not of works, lest any man should boast!

Now surely this cannot mean that the apostle, when he writes thus in the immediate context, will have nothing of works. So some would interpret him. But the text, which is the subject of this meditation, clearly shows that the apostle has a place for good works.

Rather, the apostle is stressing the point that our work can never be the ground or reason for our salvation. Were this so, then surely man would have reason for boasting in self. Our salvation, from beginning to end, is all of grace, in order that God's may be all the glory.

We are saved by grace through faith, and in such a way that neither the grace nor the faith is of us. It is all of God!

Our text serves as a further explanation of this truth.

What is so striking is the fact that the apostle ascribes even our good works to God's saving grace.

We are entirely, as a saved people, His workmanship.

A glorious creation!

Far exceeding the glory of the first creation!

Oh, indeed, that first creation was also glorious. That was true, first of all, of the creation in general. Also then the creatures were not the product of their own development, as the abominable theory of evolution would maintain. But all creation was called into being in the wisdom and by the power of God. And this was done by the Lord, almighty and all-wise, in such a way that all the creatures together and each creature in particular showed forth the glories of their Creator. Indeed, the heavens declared the glory of God, and the firmament His handiwork. What was

true of the spacious heavens was also true of all the earthly creation. The blade of grass, the meandering brook, the precipitous mountain, the leviathan of the deep, the flowering field, the singing bird, the denizens of the forest, as well as the star-studded canopy of heaven, — altogether speak the Word of God which is in them. Whether you will hear it or not, God exclaims in loud tones: I am the Lord, and there is none else! I have made the world and all it contains; and for My praise have I created it.

Especially was this true of the creation of man!

Though he was made a little lower than the angels, yet was he crowned with glory and honor. Made was he in the very image and likeness of God. As a rational, moral, and spiritual creature, he was made to be the head of all the earthly creation. And as such he could intelligently and intuitively express to God the correct interpretation of the Name of His God which he read in all the works of His hands. He himself was a creature reflecting in a creatural way the glory of God.

Indeed, that first creation was exceedingly glorious!

But the new creation, of which the apostle speaks, is far more glorious!

That first creation is only earthly, and serves only a temporary purpose. It has no abiding value, nor shall it forever remain. It fell under the curse of God due to the sin, transgression, and fall of man. In due time that earthly creation passes away. The very elements of which it is composed shall all be burned up. The very firmament shall be rolled up as a scroll, that very creation which was intended to separate the earth from heaven, shall disappear, in order to make way for the appearance of the heavenly. Not in the annihilation, but in the regeneration of all things, shall all this take place.

It is of this new creation, which shall be infinitely

more glorious than the first, that the apostle speaks.

Here God, Who calls the light out of the darkness, and brings life out of death, speaks again, and calls forth a new, eternal, heavenly creation into being.

It is the beginning of this new creation that the apostle has in mind in the text.

Of that creation Christ Jesus is the first-born. He is the first-born of every creature, the beginning of the creation of God. He is that as the image of the invisible God. He is that as the Head of the body, the church: the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things He might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell. He is the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.

We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus!

Not only are we chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, but God has created us in Him. And this means that in Christ Jesus we are given the right to become new creatures. Through His sacrifice on the cross He cleanses us in His blood from all our guilt and pollution of sin. By the Spirit of Christ we are regenerated, given the life of Christ which He brought with Him from the dead; and we are made righteous and holy, given all the graces of Christ, including a true and living faith.

All is of God, in Christ!

All is of grace, not of our work!

Indeed, a glorious creation!

With an eternal design! Created are we in Christ Jesus unto good works!

Eternally prepared!

Whereas all of creation was designed to serve God's purpose, and all the works of God's hand function, each in its own place, and with its own contributions, even so, man works. The sun, for example, accomplishes its circuit through the heavens, and the earth revolves about the sun, and each day these creatures unwittingly accomplish their function according to the law which God has created for them. Again, the tree, according to God's design, sprouts from its seed, and under the rain and sunshine which God constantly provides grows in its green verdure, producing its luscious fruit. The green blade of grass in the spring time sparkles under the dew of heaven, and in the fall it fades and dies, to be buried under the snow of winter, only to begin its function all over again after death's cold hand has been lifted, and it is resurrected in the warmth of spring. All of the creatures simply function according to the plan of God for them.

But man works!

In distinction from the rest of creation, he was made a rational, moral, and spiritual creature, so that consciously and willingly he performed his deeds. Having been created in true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, yea, in God's image, his calling was to cultivate the earth and bring it into the service of God. This he did so long as he remained in the state of righteousness.

However, through the temptation of Satan, he fell from his high estate. Consequently his nature became corrupt, and all his works became evil. He continued to work in God's creation, no longer with a view to bringing creation into the service of God, but of himself. And all his posterity with him did only evil continually. So all mankind became incapable of doing any good, and was inclined to all evil.

But those who were by nature the sons of Adam, and by grace became God's workmanship, in Christ Jesus were created unto good works. It was the design of their new creation that they should do good works.

And good works are those, and those only, which proceed from true faith, are performed according to and in harmony with the law of God, and with a view to His glory.

Good works which were before prepared!

Not only were those who are in Christ Jesus before ordained, but so also were their good works.

O, the depth of the wisdom and power of God!

All our good works He prepared beforehand, from eternity, in order that we in time should walk in them, and so shall it be unto all eternity.

Our walk is our whole life, from the cradle to the grave, from the moment of our birth to the moment of our death. It includes our eating and drinking, our sleeping and rising, our working and playing, our week days and our sabbaths, our childhood and adolescence, our adulthood and old age. It includes our religious and social, our physical and spiritual life. There is no department in life where our walk is not involved. Always we are walking.

Now in all these departments of life God gives us good works, which He before prepared, in order that we should perform them. Not, you understand, as robots, mechanically manipulated, but as rational, moral, regenerated children of God, who obediently and lovingly respond to the good grace of God which is in them. The circle of good works is as broad as life itself. Each day they are set before us by the hand of God.

When you look at life this way, and at our walk in this world from this point of view, then there are no menial jobs in it, no moments when you wish to run away from it all. Then the Christian mother who

brings forth children with a view to the realization of God's covenant, who wears the skin of her fingers down to the bone to make a home for her darlings, performs a good work. Then the uneducated but strongly built man, who works in the sanitation department of the city, who labors with great difficulty to earn enough money to give his children a sound Christian education, performs a good work. Then the child of God, who is hungry and thirsty after righteousness, seeks the Lord's house on the sabbath, not because he follows a custom or superstition, but because there he would be filled, so that he may be strengthened in the inner man to praise God in the company of His saints. Then all of life becomes something worth living. Then all our works, proceeding from true faith and tempered with the love of God, become good works. Yes, even when I have to condemn my evil works which proceed out of my old nature, against which I have to struggle all my life long.

Indeed, there was a time, as the apostle signifies in the context, when we all had our conversation in the

lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

But God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.

By His grace He saved us through faith. He made us entirely His workmanship, creating us in Christ Jesus unto good works, which He before prepared, in order that we should walk in them.

Not only shall this be so for this present life, but also in the world to come.

For He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Then shall all of our works, which are now tainted by the flesh, be only good works, in perfect harmony with His law, and serve perfectly unto His glory.

EDITORIALS

Editor's Notes

Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

THE OUTLOOK is going to carry in a future issue our editorial, "A Realistic Response To 'A Dream,'" together with an editorial response by the Rev. John Vander Ploeg. In a letter from Rev. Vander Ploeg, he wrote: "Your editorial reply was presented to the Board of Reformed Fellowship at its meeting on May 31. It was decided to reprint your editorial together with my response to it in *THE OUTLOOK*. However, this is not to be done until the Board members are first given an opportunity to consider carefully what you have written and also to give consideration to my reply. This will mean some delay because the Board will not meet again until the end of July." We are happy to see that *THE OUTLOOK* intends to carry the editorial and to reply, and we look forward to their reply. We shall refrain from further comment on this subject until the reply appears.

PUBLICATION NEWS. The RFPA Publications Committee has some big plans for publishing books during the coming year. By the end of the summer

there should be at least five or six books on the way. One book already in the process of being published is a book on child training by Gertrude Hoeksema; it is entitled *Peaceable Fruit*. Hopefully, this book will appear some time before the first of next year. Another will be a paperback reprint of my *In The Beginning God . . .* A third will be a reprint of Rev. Herman Hoeksema's *God's Eternal Good Pleasure*; this reprint will include the chapter which was inadvertently omitted from the first edition. From the pen of Rev. D. Engelsma is coming a fine volume on Christian marriage. And from the pen of Prof. H. Hanko is coming an expository volume on our Lord's parables. And in time for the 50th anniversary of our denomination there will be published a beautiful and worthwhile commemorative volume which all our people will want to get. We have more projects under way; but the above should be enough to tickle your appetite!

ADVANCE NOTICE. In our September 1 issue we

hope to carry (complete in one issue) a transcript of a lecture by Prof. H. Hanko on the subject, "The AACs and the Kingdom." There is rather widespread interest in this subject, and it is just possible that you will want extra copies of the issue which will carry this lecture. If so, write to our Business Office promptly; if there are many such requests, we will have to print an extra supply of the September 1 issue.

* * * * *

Due to a surplus of copy, some of our regular departments do not appear in this issue. If there is a similar surplus for the September 1 issue, it is possible that your editor will take a 1-issue vacation from his writing chores. Don't be surprised!

At long last the Synod of the *Gereformeerde Kerken* has made a decision in the Wiersinga Case. This case goes back to before October, 1971. Dr. H. Wiersinga, of Amsterdam, who works as a pastor among students, denied in a book on the atonement

the central truth of the Reformed faith that Christ vicariously bore the wrath of God against the sins of His people. In October of 1971 the Synod issued a kind of pastoral letter to the churches in which they exhorted the churches not to be disturbed, because the Synod firmly maintained this truth of our confessions. Since that time the case has been in the hands of a committee which was engaged in extensive discussion with Dr. Wiersinga. Now, at last, the committee has reported, and Synod has reached a decision which was, to me, not unexpected. After all, this decision follows the pattern of previous decisions and failures to exercise doctrinal discipline. And to find some degree of comfort in the decision which the Dutch Synod has taken can only be classified as a grasping for straws.

What follows first is our translation of the synodical decision as it appeared in *De Wachter*, July 2, 1974. Next, we quote the report which appeared in the *RES News Exchange*. And finally, we will make a few comments on this important, but sad, decision.

The GKN and the Wiersinga Case

The synod has taken note of the report of the deputies for the conversation with Dr. Wiersinga.

The synod considers:

1. The conversation of the deputies with Dr. Wiersinga has given further clarification on various points, so that it may be considered that there is agreement with a view to the following:

a. that on the cross of Christ, the one sent by God, our sinful existence, which is under God's judgment, has been slain, so that it no more has a future;

b. that Christ fills the office of the substitute, the office of the One, who has died and risen again for the many.

2. Dr. Wiersinga has, with others, correctly pointed to the ongoing power of victory of Christ through his Spirit in a life of faith, conversion, and sanctification as one of the aspects of Christ's work of reconciliation.

3. According to the message of the gospel Christ has borne the judgment of God in our place, and therefore this constitutes an essential element of the doctrine of reconciliation of the confession, so that a denial thereof would fall short of the proper preaching of the gospel of reconciliation.

4. Also the aspect pointed out by Dr. Wiersinga

touches the heart of reconciliation, and therefore ought no less to have a central place in the preaching and the pastoral care of the church and in the life of the congregation.

5. There is difference of position between the synod and Dr. Wiersinga with relation to the manner in which reconciliation is brought about; for:

a. Dr. Wiersinga holds that this reconciliation is attained through the fact that Christ, as the new man given by God, breaks through the power of sin and guilt, and through the Spirit opens for us the way along which we too can enter into the new life.

Only by taking into consideration what follows under b. can the synod express agreement with this formulation:

b. the synod confesses that this reconciliation is attained through the fact that Christ has borne the judgment of God in our place.

6. It is clear to the deputies that Dr. Wiersinga wants to be led by Holy Scripture with respect to the doctrine of reconciliation.

7. Dr. Wiersinga has not been able to convince the synod from Holy Scripture of the fact that his objections against the doctrine that Christ has borne the judgment of God in our place find support in

Holy Scripture.

8. The discussion of the deputies with Dr. Wiersinga has furnished further clarification on various points. However, further discussion is desired concerning texts which are central for the understanding of reconciliation in Scripture — namely, concerning the Scriptural givens which received a place in the synodical message of October 6, 1971 — and concerning the manner of their explanation;

concerning the meaning of the sacrifice of Christ;

concerning the nature of the salvation given in Christ and concerning the relation between this salvation and the working of it in an ongoing history;

concerning his fear that the unity of God's being and work are breached by the fact that the Suffering Son is placed over against the Father;

and concerning the bearing of the judgment of God by Christ.

9. Also for Dr. Wiersinga is of force what is of force for every minister of the Word with respect to the bond to the confession of the church, but there are in this instance sufficient reasons to continue the discussion with him further.

The synod expresses:

she abides by the confession of the church with respect to the nature of the substitutionary work of reconciliation (atonement) of Christ, also as the bearing of the judgment of God.

The synod decides:

1. To make an earnest appeal to Dr. Wiersinga that he will listen to the judgment of the synod and in connection therewith urgently to beseech him to reflect carefully upon the question whether his confessional and theological choice of position is not in need of revision, and to do so in the expectation that in his official work he will not contradict this confession of the church.

2. to mandate the deputies for church and theology to take the present question under discussion and to involve Dr. H. Wiersinga in the discussion and to report on this to the following synod.

3. To exhort the churches in preaching and pastoral labor not only to emphasize the forgiving power of Christ's sacrifice, but also a living by the atonement, in which the victorious power of Christ through his Spirit comes to application in faith and conversion and sanctification.

4. To thank the deputies very sincerely for the work accomplished;

5. To communicate this decision to

a. Dr. H. Wiersinga of Amsterdam;

b. The church of Amsterdam;

c. The deputies for ecclesiastical work among students.

* * * * *

In the *RES News Exchange* of July 2, 1974 there appeared the following account of synod's action and of the reaction of some of the Dutch leaders to synod's decision:

DUTCH SYNOD HESITATES IN DEALING WITH WIERSINGA

The Synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN) meeting in Lunteren took all of June 6 and part of the next day to come to a decision on how to proceed in the disciplining of Dr. H. Wiersinga. No one at Synod defended his position which denies that there is any element of satisfaction of God's righteousness or justice in the substitutionary death of Christ. But the overwhelming majority of the Synod shocked back from instituting the traditional discipline procedures against heresy.

The previous Synod had charged six deputies to meet with Dr. Wiersinga in order to come to a clear understanding of his position and to discuss solutions to the problems which the publication of his works have caused in the church. The deputies met with him a total of 70 hours. Their report pointed out that Wiersinga's views were patently in conflict with the confessions. Wiersinga rejects the notion of Christ undergoing the judgment of God in our place. God, he asserts, did not turn against Christ. Although this is a very important departure from the confession, the deputies said, it occurs "within the context of a fundamental agreement that salvation is not a possibility which has to be realized by us, but that it is a reality which is given us by God in Christ, given and sealed in the death and resurrection of the Lord." Dr. Wiersinga came to his conception of the reconciliation, it was pointed out, because he wished to sponsor a more effective view of the reconciliation. He, therefore, has eyes only for that aspect of Christ's reconciling work where we too can be said to participate. That part of the reconciliation which involves Christ's taking our sins upon Himself in order to bear God's wrath for us is completely denied by him. Christ died for us to involve us in a life of victory over sin through his Spirit. The deputies reported that although Wiersinga had not relinquished his position, progress had been made during the discussions. They, therefore, recommended that Synod affirm the stance of the confessions, but that it take no disciplinary action. Instead, Wiersinga

should be called upon to reflect on the rightness of his confessional and theological position.

A minority of the synodical committee concurred wholly with this report. But the majority advice to Synod was stronger. It characterized Wiersinga's views as a "serious abbreviation of the Gospel." It also pointed out that an effective doctrine of reconciliation could more convincingly be built upon the traditional view of reconciliation. The advisory committee, accordingly, recommended that Wiersinga be asked to uphold the confessions in the work of his office, but that in theological discussions he be allowed to present his views. Further discussion, they suggested, should focus on Wiersinga's exegetical method (manner of explaining the relevant texts).

The resulting discussions brought several motions and amendments to the floor. The fear was expressed that if Wiersinga's views were tolerated any longer, the confessions would be undermined and complete doctrinal freedom would result. This would inaugurate an essential change in the nature of the church: it would become a "dialogue church." Both Dr. B. Wentzel and Dr. K. Runia proposed to limit the time of discussion with Wiersinga to three months.

Dr. J. Verkuyl pleaded that Wiersinga be given room to develop. After all, he argued, slighting man's participation in the reconciliation was a heresy too, but no one was disciplined for that. Someone else pointed out that the heresy of racism, which was much more serious, was not dealt with under a deadline of three months. Years ago, theologians considered above suspicion already raised questions regarding the way in which the doctrine of reconciliation is stated in the confessions, Dr. G. C. Berkouwer reminded the Synod: continued discussions will give us a chance to come to greater clarity. Again and again, the fear was voiced that if the Synod proceeded on the road of traditional discipline, a mass exodus would result, especially of the youth. Dr. D. Nauta warned against letting this fear of discipline rule the discussion. Then a large part of the church order might just as well be crossed out, he said. Dr. John H. Stek, a delegate for the Christian Reformed Church, reporting back to his own synod, wrote: "I felt that FEAR hung in the air as thick and oppressively as the clouds of smoke from numerous pipes and cigars."

Another committee was finally formed to work out a new proposal. The final version once more affirmed the confessions and pointed out Wiersinga's deviation from them. But it also emphasized that Wiersinga expressed a willingness to be led by Scripture. The committee, therefore, saw sufficient reason to continue the discussion with Wiersinga. Some objections were raised because this version

omitted the phrase, "serious abbreviation of the Gospel" with regard to Wiersinga's conception. It was explained that if this phrase were retained, further disciplinary measures would be unavoidable.

Writing on Synod's decision, Dr. K. Runia pointed out that what the Synod had done was clearly a form of discipline. But he also expressed the fear that further disciplinary measures had been made extremely difficult, if not impossible. He emphasized that the way must remain open for discipline due to deviation from sound doctrine. In this regard, he said, the decision of Synod had revealed a serious weakness, not just in Synod, but in the body of the whole church.

Dr. H. N. Ridderbos was even more critical in his commentary. Despite all of its exertions, he said, Synod has virtually left matters as they were. Not only did Synod refrain from pronouncing judgment on Wiersinga himself; it also refrained from pronouncing judgment on his teachings. The first advisory committee (majority) had recommended continuing the discussion in the context of leading Wiersinga away from his "seriously abbreviated" Gospel. The adopted form, Ridderbos laments, merely makes Wiersinga a partner in a theological study committee which has been commissioned to report on the meaning of Christ's sacrifice. The question has thereby been moved to a wholly different plane: from a confessional level to one of theological discussion. In Ridderbos' opinion this means that the question of Wiersinga has been put into cold storage for a considerable number of years. Meanwhile, the Synod expects (not: asks) Wiersinga to refrain from contending against the church's confession regarding the reconciliation. A realistic expectation?

Evaluation

We certainly cannot agree with the evaluation of Dr. K. Runia, as reported above. How he can opine that what Synod did was "clearly a form of discipline" is difficult to understand, except from the point of view that Runia seems always able to find some good in everyone and everything — except, that is, among those who want to adhere strictly to the Reformed faith. I can well understand, by the way, that he is the kind of man whom the Dutch Synod would want to appoint to represent them at the next meeting of the World Council of Churches, as they have done.

Nor is the evaluation of Dr. H. Ridderbos, also reported above, correct. It certainly is not true that Synod left matters virtually as they were. It is some three years later! A decision was supposed to be made. A solution was supposed to have been

furnished. Protests should have been adjudicated. It is true that what Synod has done is *negative*. It is definitely not true that matters were left virtually as they were. The Synod has failed dismally to discipline someone who certainly should be disciplined for heresy. That is not leaving matters as they were; on the contrary, it is but one more step in the direction of ecclesiastical disaster, another step in the direction of the false church! And remember, it is not a little step! For this case concerns the central truth of the gospel, the vicarious satisfaction for our sins through Christ's bearing the wrath of God. If this truth can be denied with impunity in the GKN, then the whole of the gospel of our salvation is forfeited! And the Synod of the GKN officially decided in this decision to allow such denial with impunity. Moreover, even Ridderbos himself admits that things were not left as they were. For his opinion is reported to be that "the question of Wiersinga has been put into cold storage for a considerable number of years." Meanwhile Wiersinga is not even *ordered* to refrain from propagating his false doctrine!

It ought to be plain that the Synod of the GKN spoke loudly by its action — its refusal to discipline — much more loudly than by its words.

On the one hand, the Synod gave lip-service to the precious truth of Christ's vicarious satisfaction for His people. I say intentionally "lip-service." For I do not believe, in the light of Synod's decision and in the light of the fact that this is one of the most precious truths of the gospel, that it was any more than that. Yes, indeed, the Synod *claims* to maintain the truth that Christ has borne the judgment and wrath of God against our sins in our stead.

But does the Synod give any evidence that it holds this truth precious?

None whatsoever!

It tries to find something good to say about Dr. Wiersinga's views. This was not the Synod's business. Synod's business was only to judge concerning Wiersinga's heresy.

It claims that Wiersinga wants to be led by Scripture. But this is begging the question. It remains to be seen whether Wiersinga wants to be led by Scripture. Every heretic has always claimed this; and if he did not claim this, but said plainly that he denied Scripture, he would get no following in the

church. And if Wiersinga denies the truth of the atonement as plainly taught by Scripture, then it is not true that Wiersinga wants to be led by Scripture.

If refuses to discipline Wiersinga — not even mildly. It will not even say that Wiersinga severely abbreviates the gospel — though it has advice to do so. It will not flatly forbid Wiersinga to propagate his views — though it knows that those views are contrary to the Biblical and confessional view.

Deathly dialogue! On-going dialogue with heretics — until the church is poisoned and dies!

That is the synodical action, which speaks louder than its lip-service to the truth of Scripture and the confessions.

And the sad part of it is that this is supposedly motivated by a desire to save the church. Many at the meeting of the Synod were afraid that if Wiersinga were condemned and disciplined, a large segment of the church would be alienated and the GKN would be split. And if such condemnatory and disciplinary action would not be taken, the GKN could be saved.

But this, you see, is a myth.

The church is not dependent on numbers. Nor can the GKN retain or regain their true identity as a Reformed denomination by coddling heretics, though they may retain thousands of members. Nor can the lie or the toleration of the lie save the church!

If a church would retain its identity as church and save itself when threatened by enemies from within, then it must maintain the truth of the Word of God without compromise, must exorcize the lie and false doctrine, must expel unrepentant heretics. This is the only salvation of a church, any church. For the chief mark of the church is the pure preaching of the Word!

And if this can only be done at the expense of numbers, yea, at the expense of the vast majority of a church's membership, so that only a remnant, a tenth, is preserved, — well, so be it, then. It is better, infinitely better, to be small but faithful than to be large but corrupt!

This is a lesson which many should learn, both in the Netherlands and in our own country.

And it is a lesson which we as Protestant Reformed people should never forget!

Gift Idea? Give good books. Give RFPA publications!

QUESTION BOX

Post-Lecture Question Box (2)

Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

[Note: This is the continuation of my answers to questions submitted at the question period last spring following my lecture on "Why Are We Protestant Reformed?" The first installment appeared in the June issue. HCH]

Question

In what way is the radio ministry mission work? Is it not by preaching, according to Romans 10:13-17?

Reply

My answer to this question may be very brief.

First of all, I certainly agree that mission work is accomplished by preaching of the Word. The latter is central to all proper mission work.

In the second place, our radio ministry is properly classified as a form of preaching of the Word. The form and the means are different from the preaching of the Word in our regular church services; but in our Reformed Witness Hour broadcasts we proclaim the Word of God. In fact, our radio preaching is also done under the supervision of a consistory, the consistory of First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids.

In the third place, the preaching on our Reformed Witness Hour goes out to those outside the pale of our Protestant Reformed Churches. Hence, to that degree it can rightly be classified as a form of home mission endeavor.

Finally, however, I believe that our radio ministry is a very limited form and means of mission work. This stands to reason. It is evident, for example, that radio ministry all by itself cannot serve as a means in the gathering and organizing of congregations. It can serve only as an auxiliary means, a means, perhaps, of first contact with people of God who hear our radio preaching. And I fully recognize the fact that contacts established through radio preaching are not numerous. This does not mean, however, that we do not reach people with the preaching of the Word through our broadcasts. And as long as we reach people with the preaching of the Word, we may rest assured that the Lord our God will use that preaching as He sees fit and for His purpose.

Question

How can God ordain sin and still remain a perfect God?

Reply

This is a large question, on which much could be written. I will try to make a few pertinent remarks.

In the first place, let us remember that neither of the two truths mentioned in the question — that God ordained sin and that God is the eternally perfect God — is dependent upon our understanding of the relation between them for their truth. If Scripture teaches both — and it does — then we bow in childlike faith before the Scriptures, whether we can fathom the possibility of both truths or not.

In the second place, I wish to emphasize that it is not a pet Protestant Reformed doctrine that God ordained sin. That is simply the age-old truth which our Reformed confessions maintain. Thus we read, for example, in Article XIII of the Confession of Faith: "... so that nothing happens in this world without his appointment: nevertheless, God neither is the author of, nor can be charged with, the sins which are committed. For his power and goodness are so great and incomprehensible, that he orders and executes his work in the most excellent and just manner, even then, when devils and wicked men act unjustly. And, as to what he doth surpassing human understanding, we will not curiously inquire into, farther than our capacity will admit of; but with the greatest humility and reverence adore the righteous judgments of God, which are hid from us, contenting ourselves that we are disciples of Christ, to learn only those things which he has revealed to us in his Word, without transgressing these limits."

In the third place, notice that the truth that God ordains sin is a Scriptural doctrine. There are several classic examples of this in Scripture; but let me

mention just one outstanding example, the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ, Acts 2:23: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Notice that the most heinous sin in history is indeed the responsibility of wicked men, not of God, Who is perfect; yet it takes place according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

In the fourth place, bear in mind that the alternative to the doctrine that God sovereignly ordains sin is the denial of the sovereignty of God: for then sin comes about without God and apart from God and His control. And from a practical, spiritual point of view, where would you rather have sin controlled — by the devil, or by our sovereign heavenly Father? To ask this question, it seems to me, is to answer it. Our Confession of Faith puts it aptly when it says in Article XIII: "This doctrine affords us unspeakable consolation, since we are taught thereby that nothing can befall us by chance, but by the direction of our most gracious and heavenly Father; . . . being persuaded, that he so restrains (bridles, HCH) the devil and all our enemies, that without his will and permission, they cannot hurt us."

In the fifth place, let me submit the following statements in answer more specifically to the "how" of your question:

1) God ordains sin without Himself becoming the author of sin.

2) God ordains sin perfectly, that is, holily - in a holy manner and for a holy purpose.

3) Part of the purpose for which God ordains sin is, certainly, that He may reveal His own perfect and infinite holiness over against it.

Question

Do you believe we should invite parents of other denominations to send their children to our Christian parental elementary and high schools?

Reply

First of all, as far as I know, none of our school societies makes it a point to *invite* parents of other denominations to send their children to our schools. At least some of our schools *accept* children of parents from other denominations.

In the second place, I believe this practice is all right, provided: 1) The acceptance of such pupils does not work a hardship on the school. In a case where, for example, a school might already be over-crowded, I think it would be foolish, practically speaking, to accept outside pupils. 2) Such parents

are given clearly to understand — and agree to this — that their children will be given a distinctively Protestant Reformed education, and that when the Protestant Reformed character of that education comes to the fore, they have no right of protest against it. I also happen to believe that it is only fair that such parents be required to pay the full cost of education per pupil, seeing that they do not belong to a supporting church.

In the third place, however, if the motivation of such acceptance of non-Protestant Reformed pupils is "mission work," then I am flatly opposed. Our schools are not mission stations, but educational institutions.

Finally, I want to add that I am opposed to admitting non-Protestant Reformed parents to our school societies. If they are not Protestant Reformed, they cannot subscribe to the constitutions of our school societies. If they can indeed subscribe, then they ought also to be Protestant Reformed. And, by the way, it is *our* prerogative, not theirs, to decide whether they can and do subscribe to the constitution. We have struggled to obtain Protestant Reformed schools. I, for one, believe we should be very careful to keep our schools Protestant Reformed and to keep the control of them strictly in the hands of Protestant Reformed parents. With all respect and love to Christian Reformed and American Reformed and other parents, the fact is that they cannot and do not subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity (which are in the basis of our school constitutions) as we Protestant Reformed understand and maintain them.

Question

Scripture is subject to many interpretations. How can you say your interpretation is right and there is no place for varying beliefs? The Bible teaches us we are to encourage our brother and not be concerned in varying beliefs. The differences in the CR and PR are hard to understand. What about the simple minded Christian?

Reply

First of all, I do not believe that Scripture is subject to many interpretations. It is, indeed, *subjected* to many interpretations by men. But there is only one meaning of Scripture and of any given part of Scripture. That is the meaning of the Spirit. And that interpretation is to be gotten from Scripture itself: Scripture is its own interpreter.

Secondly, I can only say that my interpretation is right when it is the interpretation furnished by Scripture itself. Moreover, the Scriptures are clear, so that any child of God can understand them — as I emphasized in my graduation address, published in

our July issue. Before those Scriptures we must bow, therefore; and before those Scriptures there is no place for “varying beliefs.”

In the third place, the Bible does not teach us “not to be concerned in varying beliefs.” It teaches us to beware of false prophets and false doctrine, and it teaches us to seek and love and maintain and speak the truth, “to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.” And we are indeed to encourage our brother, but encourage him in the truth.

In the fourth place, the differences between the Christian Reformed and the Protestant Reformed Churches are not hard to understand. This does not mean that there are no difficult questions connected with these differences; nor does it mean that we must not think and study matters in the light of Scripture. But the fundamental differences are very simple, and in 1924, and ever since, there have been many “simple minded Christians” who have seen through those differences. Is God’s grace for all men, or is it only for the elect? Is the gospel a general, well-meant offer of God to all men, or is the church called to preach generally a particular promise? Is man totally depraved by nature, or is sin restrained by virtue of common grace, so that man is not really totally depraved? Is the natural man capable only of sin, or is he able to do good works? These are fundamental questions, but they are fundamentally very simple. It does not require a theologian to understand and to answer them.

Question

Is not the word *Protestant* derived from the word *Protest*? Prior to adopting the name Protestant Reformed Churches, were we not known as *Protesting Christian Reformed*?

Reply

The answer to both of the above questions is affirmative.

This does not change the fact, however, that, as I said in my lecture, our name does not refer to that protesting status over against the Christian Reformed Church. The name refers to the fact that we stand on the basis of the Protestant reformation of the sixteenth century, and particularly represent the Reformed line of that Protestant reformation. References: *Why Protestant Reformed?*, by Rev. Herman Hoeksema, page 10; *The Protestant Reformed Churches in America*, by Herman Hoeksema, page 276.

Question

Can infralapsarianism ever be right? Why or why not?

Reply

That depends on what you mean by “right.” The question of infra- and supra-, as you probably know, concerns the logical order of the various “moments” of God’s decree. According to infralapsarianism, the decree of predestination comes *after* the decree of the fall, while according to traditional supralapsarianism the decree of predestination logically precedes the decree of the fall. In other words, infra- practically introduces the order of historical events into the decree, while supra- presents the order of the decrees as the reverse of the order of history, so that what is last in historical realization is first and is the purpose of all things in God’s decree.

Now I believe that the presentation of Scripture in passages like Ephesians 1 and Colossians 1:15, ff. is that of supra-. Only, I would like to stress that the important question here is not merely that of the *order* of the decrees, but the question what is purpose and what is means in the work of God. In this sense, I say supra- is right.

But when it comes to the broader and fundamental question of being Reformed, and particularly of maintaining the truth of the absolute sovereignty of God in predestination and in all the work of salvation, as over against all Arminianism, then, certainly, true infralapsarianism is just as “right” as supralapsarianism. Our Canons of Dordrecht are infralapsarian, although there were several supralapsarians at the Synod of Dordt. And historically, in Reformed churches the question of supra- or infra- has never been a test of one’s being Reformed. From that point of view I have said more than once, “Give me a good infralapsarian any day!”

Question

Does the Living Bible, or other translations, have a place in our homes, even as a commentary?

Reply

This question takes in a large territory when it says “other translations.” Personally, I have a good many different translations on my library shelves. And I surely derive some benefit from them as commentaries. And although I have no use for the Living Bible or for other contemporary translations like it, I see no harm in having them in our homes strictly as commentaries and reference works.

However, just like many commentaries, their value is very limited. And like all commentaries, they must be used with discretion.

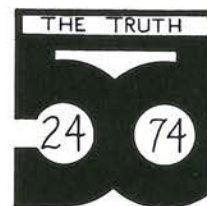
I definitely do NOT recommend the Living Bible for family worship. But let me be positive: I definitely DO recommend the King James Version for our homes, for personal reading and study, and for

our schools.

By the way, the RFPA recently prepared three sets of reprints of *Standard Bearer* articles on Bible translations. Those interested may write to our Business Office for copies of these for themselves or for distribution. They are free for the asking while the supply of one thousand lasts.

The Standard Bearer In Retrospect

Rev. G. Van Baren



Jokes are often made about the church. One of these, a few years ago, dealt with a church which was busily engaged in defending the truth. One scoffer called that church the "little round church." When asked why he called it that, his answer was that it was a church where the devil could not get one in the corner. The Rev. J. Heys, in the July 1, 1957 issue of the *Standard Bearer*, wrote about that church in an article entitled: "The Little Round Church."

"The Little Round Church"

Rev. J. A. Heys

Recently we came across the expression which appears above.

It really is a beautiful thought.

You may have your massive, huge churches of square or rectangular shape, but give us "The Little Round Church." For that Church is the Church of Jesus Christ.

No question about that!

Oh, you will not find it called by that name in the Scriptures. But you do not need to look far to find God's Church pictured that way in Holy Writ.

What is more, after hearing the expression, "The Little Round Church," we recalled a passage of Scripture which teaches us that to bring up our children *In His Fear*, we must exactly teach them that God's Church, the only true Church, the Church for which Christ gave His life is the little round church.

That the Church of Christ is little we will be able to maintain without a great deal of adverse criticism. "Many are called but few are chosen," Matthew 22:16, are the words of Christ Himself. "Fear not

little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," Luke 12:32, are also His words. And He ought to know whether this is true or not. "Once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water," I Peter 3:20. Although the Church of God as it will stand upon the new creation will be an innumerable host, yet it is, in comparison with the number of those that are outside of her, a little Church.

But what we like, especially, about the expression is that it very correctly denotes it as a *round* church.

That is, indeed, a beautiful thought and expresses what the Word of God repeatedly declares concerning the Church of Jesus Christ.

The idea is that a round church is one wherein the devil can never get you in a corner. A round church has no corners. A round church is one where you are safe from all the attacks of the Wicked One.

How beautiful, really!

Who could ever desire to have a church that did not afford that safety? To many, the church is a

society for the saving of souls. Revivals are urged and conducted that "many precious souls may be saved." But if the church has corners, and in that church the devil can still get you in a corner, what has the church to "offer" and "promise" to all men who hear the preaching, that is not also true outside the church? If the church has corners where the devil may get hold of you, why cannot a man be saved outside the church as well as in it? O, maybe it is a *little* safer in the church than in the world. There are not so many corners. And if there is one place in that church where the devil may get a hold on one of its members, in that place that member loses his salvation. And the church is a failure.

If there is anything one wants to find in the church it is safety. Why should a man ever want it otherwise?

The Philippian Jailer cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" He did not want to be told that there is no sure way to be saved because even the Church has corners and the devil can catch you in one sometime.

Paul knew nothing but a "round church" when he wrote to the church at Rome, "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," Romans 5:1. No corners there where the devil may catch you. We are justified by faith; and justification is either whole, complete and sure or it is not justification. One sin whose guilt has not been taken away by Christ means hell with all its horrors as surely as a million sins whose guilt is not removed. Either all the corners where the devil might be able to demand our everlasting destruction are removed, or else we can have no peace with God. My peace of mind is gone, my fear is there even when there is only one thing left that Satan can claim as the basis for my everlasting damnation. No, I need to belong to a "round church" in order to have peace and comfort. I need to know that the Church of Jesus Christ to which I belong is "round."

You just tell your children that, too.

Listen once to the testimony of one who knew the joy of belonging to a "round" Church: "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: Tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, Consider her palaces; That ye may tell it to the generations following." (Psalm 48:12, 13)

What a safe place of refuge that is!

No corners there where the Evil One may get hold of you.

And by all means "tell it to the generations following." Do not deceive your children.

In this day and age when all the military might of our nation is on display before their eyes, when the democratic way of life is lauded as being so superior to the socialistic, communistic forms of government,

when the freedoms of the free nations are presented as such an advancement over what the nations of the world enjoyed in the past, by all means tell *your* children about the towers of Zion. Instruct them in the security of her bulwarks. They must not form the opinion that the devil is able to hide in those towers and break through those bulwarks so that the children of Zion are never sure of safety.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" Psalm 27:1. Of Satan? Afraid that as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ he will get me in a corner where I cannot crawl out?

And James did not know what he was talking about when he said, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," James 4:7? Even when a child of God is cornered by the devil, there is a way of escape. But remember that when the devil gets you in a corner, it is because you are in the world and not in the Church of Christ. Christ has removed all the corners for His people and made a safe retreat and reinforced the bulwarks of Zion so that no enemy can ever get in and hurt His people. That safe retreat is His Church.

Oh, God's people have doubts and fears. There are times when "Our sins rise up against us prevailing day by day." There are times when a child of God may lose all consciousness of his salvation. It is not a rare thing to find children of God who cannot with confidence testify that they are children of God. At best, they will simply tell you, "I hope so; but I do not see how I can be."

People of God have also had Asaph's experience. They look at the world. They see the eyes of the wicked that they "stand out with fatness." They see that these wicked "have more than heart could wish," Psalm 73:7. They are, then, inclined to cry out that "Clean hands are worthless and pure hearts are vain." There are times when it seems that to be in the Church of Christ does not compare favourably at all with being in the world.

However, do not forget that this is due to the fact that they are *at that moment* outside of that "round" Church! No, once engrafted into Christ by a true and living faith, we can never be cut off. For it is a "round" Church where the devil can never get you in a corner. Once regenerated by the Spirit of Christ, we can never, never lose that life and die spiritually. John declares, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God," I John 3:9. That is the word of God. The new man in Christ can never be gotten into a corner by Satan. And if we do sin — and how often is it not that we do? — it is by the old man of sin in us who is in the world and part of that godless world. Or again, Peter declares, "Being

born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever," I Peter 1:23. Or again, the words of Paul in Philippians 1:6, "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." No possibility, then, that once being made a living member of the Church, the body of Christ, one can possibly be cast out, cut off to perish outside that Church.

But that does not mean that with our hearts and our minds we cannot get outside of that Church. Being in that Church from eternity by sovereign election, being in that Church by the spiritual bond of faith, we can look out and look away from Christ, the Corner Stone of that Church, and then lose our confidence of the safety and blessedness of that Church.

We can get beyond those bulwarks and outside of those towers of Zion in our thoughts and then be filled with fear. Then we have all kinds of worries, cares, and perplexities. That is what Paul wrote to the Church at Philippi, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus," Philippians 4:6, 7. Notice that these cares and worries are presented as matters of the heart and mind. When our hearts and minds are kept in Christ the peace of God which passeth all understanding keeps us from all cares and anxieties. Actually what Paul writes is that our hearts and

minds are *garrisoned in Christ*.

There you have again those towers and bulwarks of Zion. There again you have the Scriptural idea that the Church of Jesus Christ is "round." No corners there at all.

We never get peace of heart and mind, we never have rest and quietness for our souls till they find themselves in that round, cornerless place of safety, the Church of Jesus Christ.

Outside of that Church there is fear. Outside a terrible monster lurks and waits to devour; and you stand in the dread danger of being cornered by him at any moment.

In the Church is also fear, but it is the fear of the Lord, the fear of amazement and awe before Him, which is the result of beholding His greatness and grace in preparing a place so secure and safe for His people. It is the fear of faith.

The "church" that teaches directly or indirectly that the Church of Christ has corners deceives God's people. What is worse, such a "church" ridicules and insults the King of that Church. It accuses Him of having made an imperfect Church. It limits the power of His blood and denies that it was able to make a perfectly safe and secure retreat for God's people. It denies the victory of the seed of the woman over the seed of the serpent. It takes away the believer's comfort and peace of mind.

Indeed, give us membership in the "little round church" and we will have peace and joy and everlasting comfort and consolation.

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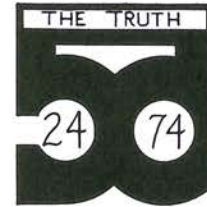
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STUDIES IN ISAIAH

Reformed -- Or Removed

Rev. Robert C. Harbach



For, behold, the Lord, Jehovah of hosts is removing from Jerusalem and from Judah supporter and supportress, all support of bread, and all support of water, mighty man and fighting man, judge and prophet, also fortune-teller and elder, the captain of fifty and the distinguished person, even the counselor and skilled craftsmen and expert charmer. (Isaiah 3:1-3)

I. *Their Captain of Fifty Removed.* For, expressing the reason for the command and good advice of the preceding verse, "Cease ye from man!" and so from every leaning upon the dictates of humanism. For God is about to remove from the people every ground they rest on, natural and spiritual, beginning with all the support of food and drink, all support of government and society, including civil, military, labor and religious "very important persons." In the last two mentioned, not only ministers and officebearers, but heads of the mechanical and magical arts are threatened.

Behold! The command is to look at that which is near to come, and hints at the shortness of time, so short that they would be eye-witnesses of what would shortly come to pass. *The Lord*, God considered as sovereign over all, with all subject to him, hence, as E. J. Young translates *Adon*, the Sovereign! He, the sovereign God, is himself the stay and foundation of all creation. In Him all things consist. *Jehovah Tsebhaoth*: The combination of the names Adonai and Jehovah of hosts appears in the prophecy where judgments are being introduced and publicly proclaimed (1:24; 10:16, 33; 19:4), showing that they come, not by chance, but from the Lord himself. *is removing* — This removal results in the government, business, and all society in general falling into worse than mediocrity, into incompetent hands (v. 4). Then extortion crops up everywhere, down to the grass-roots level, even to "everyone by his neighbor" (5a), the evil running of into insubordination (5b) and resultant confusion. Finally, with no qualified person either in office or available for public service, the people are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked, and the state is a shambles (6, 7). What provoked this fearful destruction was the sin of the people. They brought it all upon themselves (8, 9). In the midst of these judgments, the righteous, too, suffer, but are nevertheless comforted in and through them, while the wicked must endure the

punishment of them (10, 11). Another cause and provocation of this complete ruination was female pride and vanity, which would all come to grief (18-24). Terrible retribution would overwhelm them in the form of desolating war (25, 26), fulfilled in 2 Kings 24:14, 16. This judgment really began in the time of Ahaz. As far back as his reign you hear of the inroads and invasions of foreign powers, and from then on such names as, Tiglath-Pileser, Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, Morodach-baladan, Esarhaddon, Assurbanipal (or Sardanapalus) and Nebuchadnezzar, under whose reign the ruin was complete. The prophecy of Jeremiah and his Lamentations are the best commentaries on this. The land suffered a drastic decimation of the male population, leaving widows in a pitiful state of existence (4:1). But the finalized and most devastating blow came in 70 A.D., in the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, when the curses of Lev. 26 and Deut. 28 were literally fulfilled.

From Jerusalem and from Judah. In chapter 1:10-21, Isaiah had pronounced judgment on the entire universe as apostate from its Creator. Now judgment falls more particularly on not only the capital, but on the whole kingdom of Judah. (In chap. 1:1 and 2:1, there is the opposite order, Judah and Jerusalem.) — *supporter and supportress* (3:12, 16-4:1; i.e., support of every kind), *all support of bread and all support of water*, the main staples of human life. Bread, a good gift, is in itself no blessing, as Hagg. 1:6 will show. In fact, bread in the teeth of the imperious becomes a downright sin, a name for iniquity (Ezek. 16:49). Then bread, so far from being a blessing, which must be added to the mere gift of bread (Deut. 28:5), becomes a curse (28:17). Life is supported by bread and water. Life hobbles along on the crutch of bread and water. Without that crutch, life can't make it; it expires.

Mighty man and fighting man. Great men in government shall be so discouraged as to decide to

serve no more and resign their commissions. *Judge and prophet, also fortune-teller.* The nation's legitimate and illegitimate supports are removed, as Hosea, a contemporary of Isaiah, had already prophesied, "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim" (3:4). *and elder* (LXX, presbyter), *the captain of fifty*, the inferior officer, the semi-centurion (Josh. 5:14f, II Ki. 1:9, 10, 11, 13), shall be removed; *and the distinguished person*, (the lifted up in face, the exalted person, as Mordecai), *even the counselor*, as Joseph was to Pharaoh, Moses to another Pharaoh (who knew not Joseph), Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius and Cyrus; and Mordecai to Ahasuerus. The position of counselor was a sharing in the office of Christ, as shown in 9:6 (Wonderful Counselor!), and shows that biblical counseling is both instructive and directive (40:13).

II. *Our Captain of Fifty Reformed.* Our captain of fifty is *The Standard Bearer!* It is indeed a captain, a leader in the Reformed world, and has been a captain, a champion of the Reformed Faith, for fifty years consistently holding up the standard of truth. Always it has recognized the need for continued and on-going reformation. As one has well put it, "all the Reformed churches . . . recognized the Church as always in need of reformation, even as they felt this to be the ceaseless need of every individual Christian. Calvin and other Reformers lived in a time when reformation was notoriously necessary, and even many [Roman] Catholics in these days were calling loudly for reformation in head and members.

"However, the actual accomplishment of this was opposed within the bosom of the Church, but our fathers persisted in their testimony, and came to action. That as a consequence they were cast out of the church was not at their direct initiative, but this *became a situation which was forced upon them; whence the Roman Church was really the schismatic.*" (*The Reformed Principle of Authority*, G. H. Hospers, The Reformed Press, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1924, p. 231). In answer to the charge that the work of reformation in and of the church "made a schism in the Church," Calvin replied, "Our adversaries, therefore, if they would persuade us that *they* are the true Church, must, first of all, show that the true doctrine of God is among them." That is, the true church will bear its own distinctive, identifying marks, "the preaching of the Word, the pure administration of the sacraments and the exercise of holy discipline." On the point of schism, he remarked, "Let our opponents, then, in the first

instance, draw near to Christ, and then let them convict us of schism, in daring to dissent from them in doctrine. But, since I have made it plain that Christ is banished from their society, and the doctrine of the gospel exterminated, their charge against us simply amounts to this, that we adhere to Christ in preference to them . . . Those who refuse to be led away from Christ and his truth . . . are thereby schismatics?!" (Calvin's Tracts & Treatises, I, *The Necessity of Reforming the Church*, 211-217).

When the churches cease to reform and conform to the pattern of Scripture, but instead apostatize from the Reformed Faith, then the nation begins gradual decline to ruin. It especially then proves useless to rely on popular statesmen, great soldiers, modern psychologists or the counsel of judge or prophet. For the Lord removes them; He withdraws their breath; they die in the very emergency in which they were needed most. Or, if they live, their acumen, courage and success evaporate before public eye, or their reputation fails, and down dashes once high expectations. No good will come to church or nation from prophets and teachers no longer given a hearing, or whose warnings are rejected; no, nor from false prophets who prophesy smooth things, who prophesy deceits, such as, Peace!, when there is no peace. What a decadent nation or church it is where the moral fiber of the people is lost, and their firm, unbending, uncompromising leaders are things of the past, and the elder, in age, and in office, with years of valuable experience making a fit counselor, is nowhere to be found!

Therefore, the church must be reformed or be removed. The churches of all the ages were and are warned of this. The very best churches do well to heed this warning. Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall. One of the best churches was the church of Ephesus. It was a church sound in doctrine. It preached the Word of God and faithfully exercised Christian discipline. As a church, it was active in the work of the Lord. It did not become weary in well-doing. There was love in that church. It was on the move, too. But it was like a jet which has cut its motors and is spiraling gradually in ever widening circles to a landing. No longer does it send out its jet-stream and go streaking like an arrow to its target in the sky. So this church lacked the motivating power of its first love. It just did not have the spiritual life it once had. It was falling asleep and drifting along, partly on momentum of the motor of first love, now really shut off and lost, and partly on the momentum of tradition and custom. It is this church which is warned, "Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will

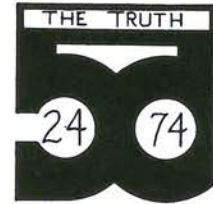
remove thy lampstand out of its place, except thou repent'' (Rev. 2:5). The divine warning is, Be reformed! or be removed! That warning has been faithfully sounded forth by our captain of fifty, *The*

Standard Bearer for as many years. It is of God's grace alone that our captain of fifty still remains in the land, and continues to perform the work of its calling!

IN HIS FEAR

In Which Many Years of Down to Earth, Every Day, Practical Matters Are Thankfully Recalled

Rev. D. H. Kuiper



When a bit of research is conducted in the past forty-nine volumes of the *Standard Bearer* for material commemorating the contributions this rubric has made to our magazine, one is reminded of the advertising slogan that you can't eat just one potato chip. Even as a person continues to eat these salty slices until the available supply is gone, so the person who pages through these old volumes finds himself devouring article after article that has nothing to do with his purpose. And how the time flies! With a little self-discipline various discoveries were made of significance for this anniversary year. The department *In His Fear* began, as far as its name is concerned, on October 1, 1945 (Vol. 22) with an article entitled "Off to School" by Rev. R. Veldman. Since that time the following editors have made contributions: Revs. J. DeJong, M. Gritters, C. Hanko, J. A. Heys, H. C. Hoeksema, H. Veldman, R. Veldman, and since 1971 the undersigned. The bulk of this time Rev. Heys was the contributing editor, producing an article for most every issue from 1953 to 1971.

A HEAVY EMPHASIS ON CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION

Very likely in the minutes of some R.F.P.A. meeting there is an article stating that *In His Fear* ought to address itself to the question of Protestant Reformed Christian instruction. For many years prior to the establishing of this department articles appeared in the *Standard Bearer* on this important subject. With the beginning of this column a flurry of articles addressed themselves to all possible aspects of the question; indeed the very title chosen is a reminder that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (Prov. 1:7) The early articles bemoaned the fact that after twenty years of church existence

our children were still being instructed in the existing schools, they treated the Baptism Form exhaustively as the basis for training the child to the utmost of one's power, and they gave specific content to the "way in which he should go." Later articles dealt with the whole area of teacher training for those who would give distinctive instruction, and one fine series can even be found which developed principles for teaching Civics, Geography, Grammar, History, Psychology, and Reading. What is so impressive, as we look back, is the tremendous amount of work that went into these articles! These authors were ministers serving in congregations, without a formal teacher training; yet, they found in the Word of God the basics which underlie our school movement today. They developed these basics so that it became clear to more and more of the readership that our own schools were a *must*. It can fairly be said that the writings which appeared in these columns prior to 1947 were a significant factor in the opening of our schools.

So as our witness went out with each issue of the *Standard Bearer* this statement was also made: we believe in a thorough, Biblically-grounded education for our covenant children. We believe that the parent must supply that instruction. We believe that instruction must have the same emphasis and distinctiveness that we hold as a communion of believers. We are determined to do this because God has spoken! Such was the content of the early articles. We give a short list of titles to demonstrate this, and to whet the appetites of those who possess the early volumes.

1. Our School Issue
2. Principles of Teaching

3. Education, Instruction, Training
4. Training the Child in His Fear
5. Our Own School – An Injunction?
6. Reformation and Our School Movement

A CHANGE OF EMPHASIS

With the passing of the years articles began to appear which treated subjects that ranged far from the Christian school movement. Although articles continued to appear stressing the instructional demands of the covenant, these were liberally interspersed with essays which treated many other aspects of the Christian life. There are, perhaps, two good reasons for this: first, once our schools opened and our teachers began to develop a Christian philosophy and psychology of learning themselves, this load fell from the backs of our ministers to a large extent. The teachers began to hold seminars and, of late, institutes. Secondly, the doctrines for which we had been cast out of the Christian Reformed Church, and which had been clarified and developed over the years since 1924, *demand* application to all areas of the believer's life. Doctrine and life are one. "Faith" without works is dead, being alone. The believer does not live in an ivory palace but in a world of woe, and he needs answers daily to many pressing problems. Those answers were given. And by the grace of God those answers were Scriptural and clear. And after reading these articles no one has to sit and wonder what the man meant, as is true of so much literature today!

Again, as our witness went out through our magazine it was made unmistakably clear where we stood on the problem areas of the Christian life, what our world and life view was. Our churches became known as a denomination that held sound doctrine, and made the serious, sanctified attempt of living those doctrines. This turned a lot of people off perhaps. We were too strict for the diets of many. But since these were not cunningly devised tales, but Scripturally applied truths, we may know that our positions have been correct. The following titles will give some idea of the wide spectrum of subjects treated from 1950 to the present.

My Brother's Keeper
Vacationing
The Lucky Number Craze
Gaining Others to Christ
Virgins for Christ's Sake
The Blessed Giver
Seeds of Violence
Freedom of Speech

A NOTE OF APPRECIATION

After eighteen years of contributing to *In His Fear*, Rev. Heys turned his attention to his first love, Old Testament History (The Day of Shadows). During these many years he wrote with a unique style that can best be called clever, in the good sense. He was not bound to archaic, "dominie" talk but spoke to us in clear, up-to-date language. He could hit the nail on the head without being offensive. He knows how to use examples. And running through his many articles was the obvious desire to help and build up. What got us to reading the articles, often times, were the catchy titles. Remember?

Holiday or Holyday
Spell It Greed
Abhortions
Handle with Care
The Whether of Our Weather
A White Christmas
Saintly But Faintly
A Check Up and a Check

Since very few of these well-written articles are time-conditioned or out of date, the board of R.F.P.A. ought to consider asking Rev. Heys to select a certain number of essays for publication. A paperback containing twenty-five or thirty of these essays, grouped under several general headings, would make fine devotional reading, especially for the young. There may even be use for such a little book on the mission field.

In the above I have tried to express my personal appreciation for these articles. Over the years they have meant much to me. I feel I may write in a complimentary vein since I have only recently begun to write under this heading. It is my resolve to continue in the same tradition.

GIVE
THE STANDARD BEARER
TO A FRIEND

IN TIME TO RECEIVE THE ANNIVERSARY ISSUE OF SEPT. 15

Use the convenient envelope enclosed in this issue.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH

Eschatology--

The First Period

THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

Rev. H. Veldman

We now conclude our discussion of the Intermediate State as set forth by the fathers in this early period of the church of the New Dispensation with a final quotation from Hodge (Vol. III, 741 f.f.). In this quotation, the common views on this subject (again according to Hodge) are perhaps fairly represented in the elaborate work of the Honourable Archibald Campbell, writing on the doctrine of the middle state between death and the resurrection, and we quote:

First. That the souls of the dead do remain in an intermediate, or middle state between death and the resurrection.

That the proper place appointed for the abode of the righteous during the interim between death and the resurrection, called paradise, or Abram's bosom, is not the highest heavens where alone God is at present, fully to be enjoyed, but it is, however, a very happy place, one of the lower apartments or mansions of heaven, a place of purification and improvement, of rest and refreshment, and of divine contemplation. A place whence our Blessed Lord's humanity is sometimes to be seen, though clouded or veiled if compared with the glory He is to appear with, and be seen in, at, and after His second coming. Into which middle state and blessed place, as they are carried by the holy angels, whose happy fellowship they there enjoy; so afterward at the resurrection, after judgment, they are led into the beatific vision by the captain of our salvation, Jesus Christ Himself, where they shall see Him fully as He is, and there they shall enjoy God forever and ever, or sempiternally.

The souls of the wicked at death do not go into hell, but into a middle state, which state is dark, dismal, and uncomfortable, without light, rest, or any

manner of refreshment, without any company but that of devils and such impure souls as themselves to converse with, and where these miserable souls are in dismal apprehensions of the deserved wrath of God.

So, the place of both, the righteous and unrighteous, while in the intermediate state, is neither heaven nor hell, but, shall we say, a sort of interim place. We now continue the quotation:

Secondly, That there is no immediate judgment after death, no trial on which sentence is pronounced, of neither the righteous nor the wicked, until Christ's second coming. And that, therefore, none of any age or class from the beginning of the world to the glorious appearing of our blessed Saviour at His second coming, are excepted from continuing in their proper middle state, from their death until their resurrection, whether they be patriarchs, prophets, Apostles, or martyrs.

"Thirdly, That the righteous in their happy middle state, to improve in holiness, and make advances in perfection, and yet they are not for all that carried out of that middle state into glory, or into the beatific vision, until after their resurrection.

I am not in the position to prove or disprove this assertion, that this doctrine was taught in this early period of the church of God in the New Dispensation. Here we read that the righteous, while in this middle state, improve in holiness, make advances in their perfection, although it is also stated that this improvement is never of such a sufficient nature as to make it possible for them to be carried out of this middle state and to enter into the final and heavenly glory.

Fourthly, That prayers for those who are baptized according to Christ's appointment, and who die in the

pale and peace of his Church, which the ancients called dying with the signs of faith, I say that prayers for such are acceptable to God as being fruits of our ardent charity, and are useful both to them and to us, and are too ancient to be popish.

Lastly, That this doctrine for an intermediate state between death and the resurrection, as I have proved it, does effectually destroy the popish purgatory, invocation of the saints departed, popish penances, commutations of those penances, their indulgences, and treasures of merits purchased by supererogation.

As an example of the prayers for the dead he gives the following extract from the Office to be used at the Burial of the Dead in the first Liturgy of King Edward the Sixth: "O Lord, with whom do live the spirits of them that be dead, and in whom the souls of them that be elected, after they be delivered from the burden of the flesh be in joy and felicity; grant unto this thy servant that the sins which he committed in this world be not imputed unto him, but that he, escaping the gates of hell and pains of eternal darkness, may ever dwell in the region of light, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the place where is no weeping, sorrow, nor heaviness; and when that dreadful day of the general resurrection shall come, make him to rise also with the just and righteous, and receive this body again to glory, then made pure and incorruptible."

Jeremy Taylor, bishop of Down and Connor, says: "Paradise is distinguished from the heaven of the blessed; being itself a receptacle of holy souls, made illustrious with visitation of angels, and happy by being a repository for such spirits, who, at the day of judgment, shall go forth into eternal glory."

Again, he says: "I have now made it as evident as questions of this nature will bear, that in the state of separation, the spirits of good men shall be blessed and happy souls, — they have an antepast or taste of their reward; but their great reward itself, their crown of righteousness, shall not be yet; that shall not be until the day of judgment . . . This is the doctrine of the Greek Church unto this day, and was the opinion of the greatest part of the ancient Church both Latin and Greek and by degrees was, in the west, eaten out by the doctrine of purgatory, and invocation of saints; and rejected a little above two hundred years ago, in the Council of Florence."

It appears, therefore, that there is little difference between the advocates of an intermediate state and those who are regarded as rejecting that doctrine. Both admit, (1) That the souls of believers do at death pass into a state of blessedness. (this the undersigned, H.V., does not understand. How can the believer, if we reject the intermediate state, pass at death into a state of blessedness, unless these advocates believed that the believer passes into a state of blessedness, as according to body and soul.) (2)

That they remain in that state until the resurrection. (3) That at the second coming of Christ, when the souls of the righteous are to be clothed with their glorified bodies, they will be greatly exalted and raised to a higher state of being.

This concludes our discussion of the Intermediate State as set forth during this early period of the church of God in the New Dispensation. In our following article we will treat another phase of the doctrine in connection with the general doctrine of Eschatology, the doctrine concerning the last things.

THE RESURRECTION

Having called attention to the doctrine of the Intermediate State as set forth by the church during this early period of the New Dispensation, we now call attention to the doctrine of the Resurrection. Of this doctrine, as taught during this period, Hagenbach, in his *History of Doctrines*, Vol. I, page 217, writes as follows:

Though traces of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, which is set forth by the apostle Paul in such a majestic manner, may be found in some conceptions of greater antiquity, yet it received a personal centre, and was made popular even among the uneducated, only after the resurrection of Christ. During the period of Apologetics this doctrine of the resurrection (of the flesh) was further developed on the basis of the Pauline teaching. The objections of its opponents, proceeding from a tendency limited to sense and the understanding, were more or less fully answered in the Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, as well as in the writings of Justin, Athenagoras, Theophilus, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Cyprian, and others. Most of the fathers believed in the resurrection of the body, and of the very same body which man possessed while on earth. The theologians of the Alexandrian school, however, formed an exception; Origen, in particular, endeavored to clear the doctrine in question from its false additions, by reducing it to the genuine idea of Paul; but at the same time, he sought to refine and to spiritualize it after the manner of the Alexandrian school. The Gnostics, on the other hand, rejected the doctrine of the resurrection of the body entirely; while the false teachers of Arabia, whom Origen combatted, asserted that both soul and body fall into a sleep of death, from which they will not awake till the last day.

In footnotes which appear at the conclusion of this quotation, Hagenbach observes that it naturally excites surprise that, while Paul represents the resurrection of Christ as the central point of the whole doctrine, the fathers of the present period keep this fact so much in the background; at least it is not, with all of them, the foundation of their opinions concerning the resurrection of the body. Some, e.g.,

Athenagoras, who yet devoted a whole book to the subject, and Minucius Felix, are entirely silent on the resurrection of Christ; the others also rest their arguments chiefly upon reason and analogies from nature (the change of day and night, seed and fruit, etc.).

It was during the period of Apologetics (the age of the Apostolic Fathers, the period immediately after the apostles) that this doctrine of the resurrection (of the flesh) was further developed on the basis of the Pauline teaching. In our Apostles' Creed we read of the resurrection of the body. In the Holland version

we read: *De Opstanding des Vleesches*, the resurrection of the flesh. Hagenback makes the observation that it belongs to exegetical theology to inquire how far the New Testament teaches a resurrection of the flesh, and what is the relation of the flesh to the body and to the resurrection of the dead. At any rate, according to Hagenback, the expression, resurrection of the flesh, soon became current, and thus it passed over into the so-called Apostles' Creed. It will be interesting to call attention to this doctrine of the resurrection of the body as set forth by the church during this early period of the New Dispensation.

MISSION CONTRIBUTION

Beautiful Feet Upon The Jamaican Mountains

Rev. John A. Heys

Nine years ago the undersigned was sent with Mr. Harry Zwak to our mission field in Jamaica, that beautiful island in the Caribbean Sea. Our labours were at that time with three ministers who were serving twenty churches. The date of our arrival was April 20, 1965.

On April 16, 1974 the undersigned with the Rev. C. Hanko landed at the Montego Bay airport, being sent by the same Mission Committee to the same field of labour. But there were marked changes in the field. When we arrived, there were only two ministers serving only nine churches. Yes, the two-edged sword of the Word cut both ways. The seed sown did not always fall on good soil. It fell also on the pathway, among thorns and thistles and on rocky ground — of which there is so much literally and figuratively in Jamaica. More churches left us than remained with us. More individuals turned from the truth than cried for us to preach it in their midst. As is the case in our own land — and we are a handful of churches in the midst of a tremendously big Arminian church world — so there, a small remnant of the twenty churches continued to hold fast to the truth. And even as we

are not at all surprised in the areas where our churches exist to find fierce opposition to what is truly Reformed, so there we ought not to be surprised that only a few want to hear a truth that had *never* before been proclaimed on their island. The positive fruit has been small, and this should not amaze us in light of our own history here in the States. But there is fruit there; and we still have an open door which God has not closed, *and we dare not close!*

But to continue the line of thought we were following — nine years ago we worked with three ministers and in twenty churches. When we arrived on April 16, 1974 we contacted two ministers and nine congregations. Yet when twenty-one days later, on May 7, 1974, we boarded our Air Jamaica jet for Chicago and Grand Rapids, there were *six* ministers serving these nine churches. Surely a word of explanation is in order.

Through the foresight of our missionary to Jamaica, the Rev. George C. Lubbers, four young men were trained for the ministry of God's Word for the Protestant Reformed Churches in Jamaica. Young

men who themselves are Jamaicans, who understand the Jamaicans, who have at their finger tips Jamaican illustrations and examples for their sermons, who know the Jamaican way of life and the Jamaican language (this will become plain in a moment) were indoctrinated in the truth of God's Word as it is so richly and beautifully expressed in the Reformed Creeds. And they received that truth into their souls and echoed it in their prayers and speech.

In December of 1973 they were graduated and declared candidates for the ministry of God's Word and eligible for calls. On April 23, 1974 in our presence, and in the presence of the veteran ministers, Rev. Joshua E. Frame and Rev. Clinton J. Elliott, as well as elders from the nine churches, and as many other men and women who could be there, these four young men preached their sermons in the church at Lacovia on the southern side of the island.

They were limited to a twenty minute sermon each, and were given the choice of an Old Testament or a New Testament text, having been assigned one of each. Kenneth Brown, who had received the call from the congregation at Fort Williams, preached first. Having been given the choice of Psalm 103:11, 12 or Matthew 7:24-27 he delivered his sermon on Psalm 103:11, 12. In his sermon he revealed his love for the Reformed Faith and in particular for the truth of sovereign election and particular atonement, as well as the fact that he had received the instruction given him that he was to get his material out of the text, when he called our attention to the fact that the pronouns *our* and *us* in the text exclude many and teach that God has mercy only for the elect, and has removed as far as the east is from the west only the transgressions of His people chosen in Christ from eternity.

Leonard Williams, who received the call from the Belmont congregation, chose Romans 8:31, 32 rather than Psalm 139:23, 24. And here we will quote a few lines from his sermon, "Can the world harm us, since God is for us? Can the wicked enemies of ours overthrow God's eternal counsel and plan of redemption and election towards His people whom He has chosen in Christ out of His mere grace from before the foundation of the world?" Speaking of that sovereign eternal election he waxed exuberant and his face lit up with the joy of it when he cried out of God, "He is my *all* in time and in eternity!"

Trevor Nish, who was called by the Lacovia church, preached on Matthew 6:33 and pointed out with conviction in his voice that, "only those whom God has made alive in Christ can seek the kingdom of God. A dead man cannot walk or seek; and man is by nature spiritually dead and must be made alive by God before he can seek the kingdom of heaven." And

he showed how qualified these young men are to preach to the Jamaicans in the language of the Jamaicans when he pointed out and warned his people against the "Obeah man." These men are men of male witchcraft or sorcery on the island, whose antics and procedures, though condemned by the government under penalty of severe fines, still creep into the churches. Native ministers know the ins and outs of the objects used and the methods followed by the Obeah men, and brother Trevor was revealing that he intends, by God's grace, to be a practical minister, not given to dead dogmatic preaching but to warning his people of the evils *very near them*, as well as to instructing and comforting them with God's Word.

The last to preach was Alvin Beckford who had been called by the Cave Mt. church because, as one of the elders stated, "He preaches the truth of God's Word." This does not mean that the other three candidates did not and that Rev. Elliot and Rev. Frame did not, but they wanted brother Beckford for the truth that he preached. In his sermon on Luke 18:9-14 he stressed the greatness of our God, the folly of the Pharisee in thinking that he had helped a God *Who needs no help*, but whose help we need, and whose help the publican sought in his prayer for mercy as a sinner. Such, he told us, go home assured of being justified, while those like the Pharisee go home with the wrath of God upon them.

What a day it was! I could not help but wish that my congregation, which so graciously and often had allowed me to go to Jamaica (five times in seven years) could have been there to feel the enthusiasm of these young men, to enjoy their preaching which seemed to come out of their hearts, and to hear these of another race speaking the same glorious truth (and with such conviction) that we hear from Sabbath to Sabbath in our churches.

And then came those days when on April 29 Rev. Kenneth Brown was ordained at Fort Williams; when on May 2 Rev. Trevor Nish was ordained in Lacovia; when Rev. Alvin Beckford was ordained on May 5 at Cave Mt. and when that evening, in the midst of a downpour of rain that made it necessary for us to leave the thatched roof "church" to have the service on the porch of a deacon of the congregation at Belmont, Rev. Leonard Williams was ordained. The veteran ministers, Rev. Elliott and Rev. Frame, ordained the ministers-elect. Rev. Hanko and undersigned took turns preaching the sermons. Touching (and the congregations were visibly moved) was the ceremony of the laying on of hands.

So now there are six pairs of beautiful feet upon the mountains of Jamaica that preach glad tidings, who proclaim peace, who bring tidings of good things and proclaim salvation.

Continued in next issue

News From Our Churches

*Report of Classis East
July 3, 1974
Southwest Prot. Ref. Church*

Classis East met in regular session on July 3, 1974 in Southwest Prot. Ref. Church with all the churches, except Prospect Park, represented by two delegates. Mr. Thomas Nelson, elder from Prospect Park, was present without credentials and thus could be given advisory vote only. Four elders, present at classis for the first time, signed the Formula of Subscription.

The business of this session was of a routine nature. The usual committees were appointed and the Stated Clerk submitted his report re correspondence. Serving on the Finance Committee were Elders A. Karsemeyer and J.N. Dykstra. Expenses of \$152.15 were reported and authorized. Rev. J.A. Heys and Elders B. Windemuller and M. Klop served on the Classical Appointment Committee. The job of this committee was not an easy one. Seminary supply had been exhausted for the months of July and August. The following schedule, however, was adopted (it will be interesting to see if the East now gets its opportunity to read) for our Kalamazoo Church: July 14 - M. Schipper; August 4 - J.A. Heys; August 11 -

M. Joostens; August 25 - H. Veldman; September 8 - R. Van Overloop; September 22 - G. Van Baren; October 6 - C. Hanko.

The church visitors submitted a partial report of their labors. All visits have been made with the exception of Prospect Park. The report of the visitors is that "On the whole we may report that God has blessed our churches with faithful, dedicated servants, with love, peace, and unity in the congregations and with evidence that He is operating in our churches by His grace and Holy Spirit."

The Classical Committee reported on their transmittal of the ministerial credentials of Rev. Harbach to our Hope Church and of their appointing of Rev. Heys as the moderator of Kalamazoo. Rev. Harbach was, of course, noticeably absent from classis. Both Rev. and Mrs. Harbach and the work which Rev. Harbach is performing in Houston were remembered in the prayers offered at classis.

After the asking and answering of the questions of Article 41 of the Church Order and the reading of the concept minutes, classis adjourned. Rev. H. Veldman led the classis in a prayer of thanksgiving. Classis will

(continued on back page)

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

We, the children of MR. AND MRS. KENN DOEZEMA, announce the twenty-five wedding anniversary of our parents on August 10, 1974.

Please join us in thankful celebration on August 9, 7:00 - 9:00 P.M. at the Southeast Protestant Reformed Church.

We thank God for the Christian home and instruction they have, by His grace and providence, provided us during their married life.

Mr. and Mrs. Bern Wigger (Kaye)
Glenda Doeze
Kenmart Doeze
Karl Doeze
Kristi Doeze

Grand Rapids, MI

Know the standard
and follow it.
Read the
STANDARD BEARER!

NOTICE

Classis West of the Prot. Ref. Churches will meet in Randolph, Wisconsin on September 4, 1974 at 8:30 AM. Delegates in need of lodging should notify the clerk of Randolph's consistory.

Rev. David Engelsma, Stated Clerk

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Mary-Martha Society of the SouthEast Protestant Reformed Church wishes to express its sincere sympathy to one of its members, Mrs. R. Teitsma, in the passing of her mother, MRS. G. VANDER TUUK. May she be comforted with the promise found in Rev. 14:13 - "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

Mrs. Charles H. Westra, Pres.
Mrs. Paul Van Dyken, Sec'y.

IN MEMORIAM

On the morning of July 4, 1974 it pleased our heavenly Father to call our beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, MRS. G. VANDER TUUK, to her heavenly home at the age of 85 years.

We miss her presence here but rejoice in the glorious hope of the resurrection and eternal life of which, according to her own testimony, she was fully assured.

Mr. & Mrs. H. J. Scholten
Mr. & Mrs. R. H. Teitsma
11 grandchildren
20 great grandchildren

meet next, the Lord willing, on October 3, 1974 in Hudsonville.

Respectfully submitted, Jon Huiskens, Stated Clerk

Rev. J. Kortering has declined the call he received from Edgerton, and Rev. R. Miersma has declined the call received from Prospect Park.

From a member of our Radio Committee, comes the following interesting contribution:

"In the June issue of *The Standard Bearer* an announcement appeared advertising the availability of taped recordings of the recent lectures sponsored by the Prot. Ref. Lecture Committee. All three recordings are still available. The first of the series — "Why Protestant Reformed?" — delivered by Prof. H.C. Hoeksema, in First Church was recorded in the recording studio of our Reformed Witness Hour, located in an upper room of First Church. No problem there — everything went according to schedule.

"The second lecture, given by Prof. H. Hanks, held in Holland, Michigan was also recorded.

"Then on Thursday evening, May 16, Prof. R. Decker gave his lecture — "The Mystery of Lawlessness." This discourse was delivered in Hudsonville. An announcement concerning the availability of taped recordings of this message was also printed on the program of the evening. But — due to an oversight — no recordings were made. What to do about this? — that was the question. After a conference with Prof. Decker it was decided that he should once again deliver his lecture — only this time in First Church, employing the recording equipment of our Reformed Witness Hour. Rather than speak to the 800 (or so) empty seats of that auditorium, it was resolved to invite interested persons by means of an announcement given at the Ascension Day Service. Consequently, at 9 A.M. on Friday, May 24, Prof. Decker mounted the pulpit of First Church and once again rendered his most interesting lecture before an audience of —13 people! The speaker expressed his thanks to his listeners, the attentive audience expressed their enjoyment to the Professor, and so — tape recordings of this lecture became available. Thank you — Rev. Decker, for your time and effort in making this possible."

D.D.

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