

# The Standard Bearer

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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## THE STANDARD BEARER

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**Meditation****The Risen Lord Expounding The Scriptures**

Rev. M. Schipper

*"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."*

Luke 24:25-27.

Then said He unto them . . .  
The risen Lord about to expound the Scriptures!  
And to an audience which is berated by Him as  
fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets  
have spoken; an audience whose eyes were holden that

they should not know Him, and who therefore considered Him a stranger not only because they could not recognize Him, but also because He impressed them as one who was entirely unaware of the events as they had transpired in and out of Jerusalem in the last days.



It was an audience that consisted of only two men, the name of the one is mentioned as Cleopas. Shall we conjecture that the name of the other was Luke, the physician? And that on the ground that he is the only one of the gospel narrators who mentions this incident; and who, like John, would be reluctant to mention his name?

Not a prominent place did they occupy in the disciple group, such as did Peter, James, and John; but disciples none the less who loved the Lord, though they had great difficulty in understanding Him. Who believed in Him, though they could not always present a clear dogmatic system of what they believed. Who followed Jesus, not for the bread that perishes, but for the words which He spoke, though they were not always competent to comprehend all that He had revealed unto them.

And they were troubled! . . .

Events had happened all too swiftly for them. Though they most likely had not been present at the scene of the crucifixion, they nevertheless had been thoroughly informed of the fact. And their hearts were filled with questionings. How could it be that the One on Whom they had set their hope that He would redeem Israel, . . . how could it be that He gave Himself so submissively over to the will of His enemies? How could this be reconciled with His undoubted pretensions as a prophet, mighty in word and in deeds? If He was truly the Messiah as He so often led them to believe, how is it then that He had to die? This was, indeed, the heart of their problem!

But there is more. On this very day they had heard that He was risen from the dead. Certain women of their company had reported to them that they had gone to the tomb and found it empty. Also they had said that angels had revealed to them that He was alive. That the grave was empty, they had no difficulty in believing, because others of their company had gone to the grave and reported that it was even as the women had said. But Him they had not seen! And so long as they themselves had not seen Him, what were they to believe?

Such were the troubles that filled their aching hearts, and that brought sadness to their faces. This was the subject of their conversation as they were walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus, and as they argued in the way.

It was at this point that the Stranger met them! Hardly had they noticed that He was walking with them, so deeply were they involved in their argumentation. It was He Who interrupts their line of reasoning with the question:

What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk and are sad?

Almost instantaneously Cleopas retorts with a faint rebuke: Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in

these days?

Then the Lord, knowing precisely the subject of their conversation; and Pedagogue that He is, Who, knowing that the best way for them to resolve their problem was to state it clearly, asked them: What things?

They reply: the things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, . . . how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel . . . How could it be that the Messiah must die in order to redeem us, and through this way to enter into His glory?

O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

How is it that you do not yet understand?

Indeed, a stupid audience!

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.

Most capable Expositor!

By no means was He the stranger they had thought Him to be!

O, it is true that their eyes still were holden that they should not know really who He was. Presently their eyes would be opened, and they would know Him when just as wonderfully as He has appeared unto them He would also vanish from their sight. And so long as they remained the fools and slow of heart to believe, so long also would their eyes be holden, not only to behold the risen Lord, but even more importantly their hearts would be unable to understand the things concerning Himself. When, on the other hand, their eyes would be opened to behold Him, then also would they be able to say, as they did say, "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us in the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"

The Expositor is, of course, none other than the risen Lord Himself!

He Who was the subject of their conversation, the very One Whose work they could not understand, Whose death proved to be the enigma — the stumbling question, the puzzle question, that did not seem to fit anywhere in the general lay-out as they were trying to piece it together. He is about to point them to that puzzle-piece that will make the whole picture to become beautifully complete and reveal to them at the same time the whole of the counsel of God concerning their redemption.

And beautiful method of exposition He uses; for He begins by asking them their own question. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" As soon as that question is asked, you must revert back to God from Whom all necessity must proceed. Simply because nothing has any right of exist-



ence without Him, and all things proceed out of His eternal will and decree. No less is this true with respect to Christ's suffering and death. In one word, it was God's eternal purpose to glorify Himself, and to do this precisely through the way of sin and grace, the fall and redemption of His people: through the suffering and death of Christ to lead His people to glory.

A burning exposition!

He expounds unto them in all the scriptures!

Beginning with Moses!

Surely they must remember how this secondary author of Scripture in the very first book of his Pentateuch, and in the opening chapters of that book, spoke of the so-called Mother Promise, how God would set enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, which would climax in the crushing of the serpent's head and the bruising of the heel of the seed of the woman. Never should they forget how this same Moses gave the dispensation of the law which magnified our sin and guilt, and which compelled us to flee to Christ Who was to come and become a curse for us. Mindful they should also be how that in ceremony and sacrifice, in altar and tabernacle that prophet of God was showing to them, as it were in pictures, precisely how the Lord was going to save His people — not by the blood of bulls and goats — but by the blood of the Lamb which taketh away the sin of the world.

And all the prophets! . . .

As a golden thread, what Moses said, was woven into all that was spoken and written by all the seers God raised up. Undoubtedly the Lord reminded His audience of especially the Psalms of David which etched in various shades and hues the portrait of the dying, rising, and ascending Saviour. And because the Word so minutely described the suffering, dying, and exalted Redeemer, He more than likely recited for them most of Isaiah 53. He must have reflected on the night visions of Daniel, who beheld the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven in His glory, crowned with dominion and glory only after He had first deeply humbled Himself. And we can almost hear Him repeating the words of Micah — "But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler, deliverer of Israel, whose goings

forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Jesus — Jehovah Who saves His people from their sins.

In answer to the question: Ought not the Christ to have suffered and thus to enter into His glory? He step by step leads them through the Scriptures, which from beginning to end reveal that divine necessity for Christ coming into our world to suffer and die for the salvation of His people. And that He could rise again and go to glory only after He had first laid down His life for His own.

Why must He die? . . .

Because it was necessary, in the first place, from the point of view of God's counsel and purpose. Secondly, the historical necessity was our sin and guilt, for which atonement could be made in no other way than the death of the Son of God in the flesh.

Indeed, a burning exposition!

Here was no appeal to their sentimental and emotional feelings, though no doubt they were at the moment emotionally beside themselves — for their faces were sad. Here was no display of human philosophy with its mere play on their human reasoning faculties.

Rather, it was a clear, authoritative setting forth of the Word of God, which alone has appeal to faith which had been implanted in their hearts.

The things concerning Himself! . . .

O, how well He knew them! For it was precisely this Divine plan as set forth in the Scriptures which He had followed to the minutest detail. Always He was deeply conscious of His calling to fulfill the Scriptures. And therefore no one better than He could expound to them that which concerned Himself.

And now He does it as the risen Lord! Because the Scriptures were fulfilled, and all that He had accomplished met the requirement of the Word of God, He could rise again and minister that Word unto those for whom He died.

When the slow of heart to believe hear such exposition of the Word of God, their hearts must burn within them.

Then their foolishness turns to true wisdom, which is that grace of God in us that is able to see the divine purpose in all of its wonderful implications.

By the grace of the risen Lord!

## Editorial

# Something BAD Happened To The Canons — in the GKN

*Prof. H. C. Hoeksema*

In the *Reformed Journal* of February, 1971 (pp. 21, 22) Dr. James Daane makes a few of his typical com-

ments about my editorial of May, 1970 concerning the repudiation of the Canons by the *Gereformeerde*



*Kerken* in the Netherlands. In said editorial I made the point that the GKN principally repudiated the Canons when they repudiated sovereign reprobation.

Daane writes under the title, "Something Happened to the Canons."

And as usual, he is right, but dead wrong.

This is true, first of all, as to his title. It is correct that something happened to the Canons. But it happened to the Canons only in the Gereformeerde Kerken. And besides, *something* happened, but it was something BAD: the Gereformeerde Kerken principally cut the heart out of the Canons.

But this is true also as far as the contents of Daane's article are concerned.

I believe Daane is right, first of all, when he writes that the *Standard Bearer* offered the only critical coverage of the decision of the GKN in the American religious press: at least, I also know of no other coverage. Daane is correct, too, when he expresses agreement with my criticism of the failure of the GKN to consult other Reformed churches. He tempers the latter element of agreement, however, by adding: "Had this occurred, however, nothing would have been achieved if the *immediate* response would have been that the Synod was about to *repudiate* the Canons." To the latter remark I can only reply: elementary! And I would assure Daane that if the Protestant Reformed Churches had been consulted, we would have been at pains to *demonstrate carefully* and *with thorough Scriptural proof* that the position which Synod was contemplating was incorrect and that it would result principally in a repudiation of the Canons. If any church wants to consult us, we would surely be ready to consult! However, in my editorial I was reflecting upon the accomplished fact of Synod's decision, not upon a contemplated action. And then I insist that the attitude of the GKN — which vaunts itself for its ecumenicity to the extent that it joins the WCC — was one of haughty conceit and proud highhandedness; and I will add to that: highly un-ecumenical, as well as inconsiderate! What kind of ecumenicity is it when they do not even consult sister denominations about their common ecumenical heritage, the Reformed creeds? And what kind of consideration is it, even from their own point of view, when the GKN, supposedly having new insights into the Canons, does not even share these insights with and consult sister churches in the Reformed family?

But for the rest, Daane is dead wrong.

He is wrong, first of all, in the following quotation:

Hoeksema believes that reprobation concerns the very heart of the Reformed faith because "the crucial test of whether one actually believes the truth of sovereign election is in the question whether he believes the truth of sovereign reprobation." This test would seem to be on a par with a contention that belief in hell and the devil determines whether one

really believes in heaven and in God.

Now apart from that little inaccuracy of speaking of belief "in" hell and the devil (I believe *in* God and *in* Christ), I would certainly contend that the man who does not believe the existence of hell and the devil does not truly believe the existence of heaven and does not believe in God: for all of these are revealed truths of Scripture. But I deny Daane's analogy. For when you speak of God's predestination, you speak of His decree with respect to the members of the one human race. He elected His people *out of* the whole human race. Speak of it in infralapsarian terms, if you will; but this surely means that He did *not choose*, or *passed by*, the others. If He sovereignly chose some, then it follows that He equally sovereignly did not choose, passed by, the rest. And if you deny that He did the latter, then it follows that you necessarily deny the former. This, by the way, is why I emphasized that historically the two have always stood and fallen together and that traditionally it has been sovereign reprobation which has been so distasteful and which is the first object of attack and the evidence that men do not really want sovereign election. This is true in the GKN, so that either the doctrine of election is silenced or it is corrupted into a conditional election. Moreover, I make bold to say that if Daane himself wants conditional reprobation, he also wants (though he probably will not admit it) conditional election.

In the second place, Dr. Daane is wrong in the following quotation:

... Hoeksema contends further that one does not truly believe in a *sovereign* reprobation unless he believes in an *eternal* reprobation, that is, in a reprobation that is not conditional, or contingent, upon something that happens in time and history.

The above quotation is followed by a long and involved piece of confused reasoning about God acting sovereignly within the conditions of temporality and against the contingencies of history. I must confess in regard to the latter that I do not understand Daane at all; I wish he would clarify what he writes.

But in the above quotation Daane is wrong. He misses the point. In the first place, the language equating "sovereign" and "eternal" is not mine, but Daane's — though I gladly accept, of course, the truth that God's predestination is both eternal and sovereign, as God is eternal and sovereign. But, in the second place, Daane misconstrues the problem. The problem is really very simple: how can God's decree of reprobation be sovereign if it is not unconditional, that is, if it is not dependent upon man's sin and unbelief? Daane must not simply say, "contingent upon something that happens in time and history." The question is this: is God's decree of reprobation contingent upon man's sin and unbelief? If so, then it is by definition not sovereign, not free and independent. As everyone knows, this was the issue with respect to *election* in



the Arminian controversy. There the question was: is God's decree of election dependent upon man's (foreseen) faith and obedience and perseverance?

In the third place, Dr. Daane is wrong on the subject of infralapsarianism when he writes as follows:

Moreover, if, as Hoeksema suggests, reprobation is only sovereign and eternal because it is *not* a response to the condition of human sinfulness, then the infralapsarian position is heretical, for infralapsarians wanted nothing of a reprobation that is eternal in the sense that reprobation is in no way contingent upon sin. But infralapsarianism generally characterizes all Reformed creeds.

Daane is right, of course, when he writes that infralapsarianism generally characterizes all Reformed creeds. This is true of the Canons also. And to these Canons I subscribe. But if the above is the infralapsarian position, and if the position of the Canons is the position of *infra*-, then why, pray tell, did the GKN reject the Canons on reprobation? Polman and Berkouwer and their kind have been for years attacking the Canons on reprobation. Now the GKN have repudiated precisely the position of the Canons on reprobation; and Polman and Berkouwer are glad. Why? — if the Canons teach a reprobation which is contingent upon sin? Has this not always been the

stumbling-block to men like Berkouwer and Polman? Has not Berkouwer long been twisting the so-called *non eodem modo* in the Conclusion to the Canons precisely in order to teach a conditional reprobation and to destroy the teaching of the (infralapsarian) Canons on reprobation? Secondly, what Daane sets forth as the *infra*- position (reprobation contingent upon sin) is nothing but Arminianism. And the infralapsarian Synod of Dordrecht exactly rejected Arminianism.

But I would suggest two things: 1) Let Dr. Daane demonstrate that the Scripture passages cited by the Canons (and other similar passages) do not support sovereign (unconditional) reprobation. 2) Let him explain what these Scripture passages *do* teach.

One more item. Dr. Daane writes: “. . . ‘eternal’ does not simply mean ‘timeless’ (Agreed! HCH); ‘eternal’ carries a connotation of the relationship of eternity to time and to the conditions of history.” Please explain what you mean by that last statement, and then demonstrate its truth from Scripture. In addition, please furnish a good working definition of “eternity,” — based, of course, on Scripture.

Perhaps then we could continue this journalistic exchange.

## Question Box

# As To The Form For The Lord's Supper

### Question

“I have several questions concerning the Form for the Administration of the Lord's Supper.

“First of all, where did it originate to read the first part of the form for preparatory, and then just the second part for the actual communion service? It is true that the first part, dealing with the examination of ourselves, is a part dealing with preparatory, and that the form consists of two parts; but it is my feeling that they should not be separated. Have the Synod, Classes, or local consistories originated this?

“Another thing: if the first part of the Form, dealing with preparatory, is read the previous Sunday, isn't it proper to read the part dealing with the institution again as part of the communion service?

“Do you have any thoughts on this matter? I've long thought about this and would desire an answer to these questions.

Your brother in Christ,  
N.

### Reply

First of all, for the information of those who are not acquainted with the practice referred to in the above

letter, my questioner is referring to the practice of reading the entire first section of the Form on preparatory Sunday, and reading only the second section, beginning with the words, “Let us now also consider to what *end* the Lord hath instituted his Supper . . .,” on communion Sunday. About this practice my correspondent has several questions.

In answer to the first question, to the best of my knowledge this practice originated with some of our consistories in the Grand Rapids area. It did *not* originate with any classis, nor with Synod. As to possible reasons for this innovation, I can only guess, not having access to the minutes of any consistory which introduced the change. My guess is that the reasons were two: 1) The desire to abbreviate the communion service (possibly especially in churches where there are two communion services) by reading part of the Form on the previous Sunday. If the minister reads rather leisurely, this first section of the Form takes perhaps ten minutes. 2) The (mistaken) idea that this so-called preparatory section belongs properly at the *beginning* of preparatory week rather than at the end of it.

As to the second question, my answer is affirmative. I believe that *if* the first part is read the previous Sun-



day, it is indeed proper to read the institution again on communion Sunday. In fact, when occasionally I officiate at the Lord's Supper in churches in which the Form is divided, I have done so. My reason is that I believe this to be liturgically sound. That institution belongs properly to the celebration of the sacrament, and, in fact, forms the basis of its celebration. Besides, I always feel that it is very abrupt simply to begin with the words, "Let us now also consider. . . ."

As to the third question (Do you have any thoughts on this matter?), my answer is: Yes, several.

1) I believe that the practice of dividing the Form is *historically incorrect*. I have several source-books in my library about our liturgy. I have consulted them in the past, and I checked them again before answering this question. In none of them can I find any reference to this practice of dividing the Form ever being *intended* or *followed* — going all the way back to the time when this Form was first adopted in the Netherlands in the 16th century. This is also evident from the language of the Form: it is not designed to be divided. It is not two forms, but one. It does not have two addresses, "Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ . . ." but one. Technically, if this Form is divided, the minister ought to say at the end of the first section on preparatory Sunday, "To be continued."

Of course, this historical reason all by itself is not sufficient. They may have been wrong in the past. Nevertheless, I believe we ought to have a healthy respect for history, and that long-standing practices ought not to be lightly ignored and overthrown. Usually one discovers that there was some sound reasoning at the basis of the practice. At any rate, if one overthrows three or four centuries of history, he had better first do some good basic study and have some good reasons.

2) I believe that the practice of dividing the Form is liturgically incorrect and based upon a mistaken understanding of the Form. Perhaps you have already noticed that part of this misunderstanding unintentionally crept into my correspondent's letter. He writes: "It is true that the first part, dealing with the examination of ourselves, is a part dealing with preparatory, and that the form consists of two parts." But this is incorrect. The section which is usually read at the preparatory service consists of three parts, only one of which may at all be classified as "preparatory." Those three parts are: 1) the institution; 2) the self-examination; 3) the exercise of the key-power, sometimes wrongly called "the excommunication," (beginning with the words, "All those, then, who are thus disposed, God will certainly receive in mercy. . . .").

Properly speaking, there are two main sections in this Form. The first main section is the doctrinal, or instructional, section. The conclusion of this section and the transition to the second section is in the words, "hereto assist us, the Almighty God and Father

of our Lord Jesus Christ through his Holy Spirit. Amen." Then follows the second main section, the ritual section, consisting of the Prayer, the Admonition "to lift our hearts on high in heaven," the Communion proper, and the Thanksgiving.

When we divide the reading of the Form, we break up that first main section, — something which was never intended and which was never practiced in the past. The first, or didactic, section of the Form consists of the following sub-divisions: a) The institution; b) the self-examination; c) the positive and negative exercise of the keys of the kingdom, in which the faithful are encouraged and admonished to partake and the wicked and impenitent are warned that this communion is not for them; d) the exposition of the meaning of the Supper.

But the question is: what about that section on self-examination? Is not our preparation to take place during the preceding week, and is it not therefore altogether too late to talk about self-examination at the very service where communion is to be celebrated? And does it not make good sense to read that part of the Form a week earlier, at the preparatory service?

As I have already indicated, the negative part of my answer is that this was never the intention when this Form was composed and adopted. It *could* not have been the intention: for then our fathers would have made provision for this in the very language of the Form, something which they did not do. Then we would have had *two* forms: a preparatory form and a communion form. And besides, this has never been practiced in the past.

What then? Did our fathers actually expect the spiritual work of preparation to take place at the very service when communion was celebrated? No, they knew better than that!

This is the intent of the Form: a) On the Sunday preceding the celebration of the Lord's Supper there is to be a preparatory sermon. The purpose of this is to admonish God's people that they may only come to the Lord's table as *proper* partakers, to examine themselves, and, if there is anything "out of the way" in their life, to remove it. Hence, the work of self-examination and preparation goes on indeed in the preceding week. For this reason the rule of having a preparatory service has been observed since the 16th century. And besides, in by-gone years family visitation was always conducted by the elders before every celebration of the Lord's Supper with a view to having the congregation prepared to partake. b) Then on the Sunday of communion also the section on self-examination is read, — not to *initiate* self-examination, but to *conclude* it, to summarize it. It is necessary to come to the Lord's table in the right attitude and the right spiritual "mood." To this end, it is necessary to perform the spiritual deed of testing one's own heart and soul — as a conclusion of the week's preparation — in



order, positively speaking, to stimulate the heart to come to the Lord's table in the proper attitude, that attitude which is demanded by the character and purpose of the Supper. c) And it is in this connection, thirdly, that the next section of the Form fits in beautifully: those who, having examined themselves and who are prepared, are then admonished and encouraged to come to the supper; and those who, having, applied the three-fold test of the section on self-examination, find that they are in a wrong way (not a way of sin, but a way of walking in sin and of impenitence) are warned to abstain.

3) I believe that this practice of dividing the Form is technically contrary to the Church Order. The Church Order (Art. 62) prescribes that "at the conclusion of the sermon and the usual prayers, the form for the administration of the Lord's Supper, together with the prayer for that purpose, shall be read." It does not say "part of the Form" or "the second part of the Form," but, "the Form." But, I hear someone say, is not the order of worship a matter for local decision? Correct, with the single exception of such matters as are pre-

scribed by the Church Order (the Forms for Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for instance) and which can only be changed by synodical decision, i.e., the agreement of all the churches in common.

Why, then, — I hear someone say — do you not protest this illegal practice? My answer personally is, in the first place, that this is no great matter of principle for me. Secondly, things of this kind are sometimes better changed by instruction and by overture than by protest, appeal, and decree. But these matters are worth considering; and they certainly ought to be carefully considered by consistories. Moreover, I think that if any consistory thinks that our Form should be divided, or that other revisions are necessary, they should give all the churches the benefit of their thinking, so that changes may be achieved in the proper way, and so that proper liturgical uniformity may be maintained in the churches.

I hope that my correspondent and our readers generally may now at least see some of these problems a bit more clearly.

## *All Around Us*

# Is The Christian's Calling Organizational? Rock Music

*Prof. H. Hanko*

## IS THE CHRISTIAN'S CALLING ORGANIZATIONAL?

In the March 6 issue of the *Canadian Reformed Magazine* there appears a review of the book "Out of Concern for the Church." In this review, the author touches upon some criticisms of the A.A.C.S. and the C.L.A.C. and other Christian organizations which we consider valid and which we have ourselves long felt to be justified. The proponents of separate Christian social organizations and the authors of the book referred to above have long insisted that the real essence of the Christian's calling in manifesting the kingdom of Christ here upon earth is the organization of a Christian political party and a Christian labor union especially to subject these spheres of life to the rule of Christ. The author of the article to which we refer criticizes this position on the grounds that a Christian organization takes over the calling of the individual child of God. A few quotes from the article will give the general idea which the author states.

The booklet under discussion (*Out of Concern for the Church*) made the impression on us that, in the mind of the five authors, the christian organization

has to *take over* from the individual christian as well as from the state, society, etc. Although we have repeatedly written about this in previous years, we will again try to make ourselves clear. We must, then, keep in mind that the ideas about christian organizations of the A.A.C.S. men must be evaluated against the background of their concept of the 'body of Christ' and the (modest) place of the 'society structure of the 'institutional church'. It all boils down to this: the 'body of Christ' encompasses much more than what we call the (true) Church. This 'super-temporal' body becomes visible, not only in the church . . . but also and with similar impact in 'other' christian 'societal structures', such as political, educational, scientific, and artistic organizations.

. . . In previous years we have maintained over-against the writings of Mr. VandeZande, Dr. Seerveld, and others, that christian organizations never can nor may take over from the individual christian his kingdom calling, i.e., to be a readable letter of Jesus Christ in the family, in the neighbourhood, in the store and on the job, in conversing with fellow-citizens. The authors gave the impression (by that time they were writing for the C.L.A.C.) that you cannot be a good christian labourer if you are not a member



of the C.L.A.C. Because in the C.L.A.C. the 'body of Christ' is revealed and we have to appear on the scene of labour unitedly, communally as not only members of that body but as the body proper. We agree, of course, that a christian organization may *help* me in the various callings I have but it is not supposed to *take over* from me my christian duty and responsibility. I do not enter the plant as representing the C.L.A.C. nor does the C.L.A.C. with me, enter the plant. I enter there as an employee who, whether organized or not, has to work there in such a way that others can notice that I am a member of Christ, a child of my heavenly Father.

The same goes for my 'political calling'....

On the other hand, the above-mentioned authors give the impression as though, if only all members of all churches understand their calling, the Kingdom of heaven will be established upon earth. Or, in other words, our goal seems to be that several organizations-of-christians will, or will have to, *take over* from the government, from the social structures, from the department of education, etc.

Then, in connection with these last remarks, the author states:

In the first place it is unwarranted optimism to envisage 'all denominations' as taking part in this movement. The authors ... should learn to speak more in the terms of the Reformed Confession with its distinction of the true and the false church. Scripture speaks about a (small) remnant that will remain faithful in these last days. The authors do not deserve the consent and cooperation of the Reformed christians as long as they do not drastically change their concept of the Church.

In the second place it is unwarranted optimism to draw a picture of the future with such bright colors as they use. Christ's kingdom is not of this world. We must not try to make people believe that, if only everyone cooperates, we can create a christian world, a christian state, etc. ....

It is 'the last hour'. Christian organizations must not be expected to take over from the individual christian his 'cultural mandate', nor should they act as though it is their calling to take over the life of the nation and whatever other 'sphere of life'. We are and we remain strangers in this world....

With these criticisms we concur. It seems to us that they are very much to the point. Not only do Christian organizations take over the individual calling of the Christian, but they run the grave risk of leaving the impression with the individual child of God that he has fulfilled his calling when he has joined such an organization. He need no longer witness in his own station and calling in the home, the shop, and the world at large; the organization which he has joined will do this witnessing for him. His very membership in it is supposed to be such a witness, for it is the essence of the Christian's life.

And this is, after all, the easy way out. There is nothing so very difficult or soul-stirring in joining an organization. There is nothing so exceedingly pious

about this. There is nothing in this which will bring him face to face with his calling: "Let your light so shine before men..." Even if one should commit himself wholeheartedly to such a Christian organization, it is infinitely easier to crank out position papers on a mimeograph machine than face the world every day in the grim realities of the shop and street and maintain the cause of Christ in word and deed. And this latter is after all, the heart of the Christian's calling. And let no man despise the many faithful people of God who, day after day, do this in their own humble and simple way.

## ROCK MUSIC

A couple of issues ago we began a discussion of rock music, which has become so popular in the world today and which is so attractive also to covenant youth. In that article we were making two assertions: the one was that, while all the music of the world is basically sinful, there is something uniquely wicked about rock music. It stands in a class by itself in the midst of the music of the world as something particularly devilish. The other assertion was that rock music itself is this kind of music altogether apart from the words which may be sung. The music is, of course, particularly adapted to themes which are sinful; and we shall examine this question a bit later. But for the present, the point which needs to be stressed is that, even if no words are sung, the music is harmful and does bad things to those who listen.

We quoted, in this connection, a couple of men, one of whom has himself written and played rock music, but who, after his conversion, rejected it as being extremely evil. We quoted these men because they are the ones who ought to know. I do not know enough about music to be able to form an independent judgment; nor would my word count for very much. But one who himself participated in rock groups ought to know. We noticed that they invariably come back to the matter of rhythm when they discuss the evils of rock. And their contention is that the peculiar rhythm of rock music produces wicked physical responses in the bodies of the listeners. A couple of more quotes from these writers will illustrate this.

In his book, "Music? Does It Make Any Difference?" Bob Parks is quoting another writer, Bob Larson:

Some argue that there is no such thing as an evil rhythm, I must differ with them. Because of the rhythmic nature of the human body, and the close association that rhythms have with the biological drives of the body, certain tempos will inherently evoke certain reactions, particularly in accompanying dances. This is a partial explanation for the erotic body movements of dances with syncopated rhythm.

The author himself then goes on to say:

He is saying that there are rhythmic patterns that by the very peculiarity of the arrangement of the



accents and pulsations will naturally produce wrong responses in thought and action. . . .

Continuing to answer the original question about good and bad rhythms, we still need to find out what makes rhythm good or bad, so we'll be able to tell the difference. Let's get one misconception cleared up first; it's not the speed or tempo of a rhythm that brings the greatest offense. . . . Most of the problem comes in the use of altered or syncopated rhythms.

Then after discussing the whole subject of syncopation, the author continues:

Broken, jerky rhythms that are emphasized even above the melody itself call for strong physical reactions. Contemporary dances such as the Frug, Watusi, and the Monkey represent various physical reactions to individual rhythmic patterns of syncopation. The displacement of accents or their omission can cause the body to respond with a form of shock at the misplaced accent (where it is not expected), or it can cause the body to "lunge" physically to fill in a missing beat. In listening to the various styles of syncopated rhythms in many pop rock songs heard over the radio today, the perceptive ear can pick out certain identifying earmarks of each respective style. . . . Could they possibly restrain their desire to react? Certainly they could. That's not what they do, however. Even if they did restrain themselves, emotionally they would be going through the same response they would physically but chose not to express. This, by the way, is one reason why it is impossible to listen to rock or syncopated rhythms without being affected. You *can* hold yourself back. You *can* comply with your parents' wishes by not going through the contortions you might express physically. But you will never escape the emotional and psychological tension generated by the rhythm. That's why I cannot accept the defenses of Christian teenagers who say they listen to rock music but do not "turn on" to it.

There are good and bad rhythms. Good rhythms fulfill the purpose and intention of God for His gift of music. . . .

I am not sure that I agree precisely with everything which the above author writes concerning rhythms and syncopation. It is difficult for me to tell, but the general gist of his thought is very much to the point. And that is that the rhythm of the music itself is of such a kind that it does evil to a person. This is substantiated strongly by an article which appeared some time ago in *Newsweek* in which the whole field of rock music was discussed at length and was commented upon favorably. The gist of the article was that the force of rock music is precisely its physical impact upon the listener along with its emotional and psychological influence. We quote one paragraph in which the article is talking about a rock group by the name of Jagger and the Stones.

"I'd say they are the greatest rock 'n' roll group in the world," says rock producer Glynn Johns. "They've done things to an audience no one else has. Mass hysteria is an understatement." Seldom understated, the Stones precipitated a turned-on frenzy and unleashed a submerged rebelliousness in both boys and girls as no other group did. Where the carefully groomed Beatles came across in the beginning as kicky, sassy boys next door to be swooned over by crush-ridden teeny-boppers, Jagger and the Stones immediately homed in on the deeper, fugitive malaise bubbling in the more sophisticated youth of both sexes.

It is apparent from all this that rock music is evil and devilish and can have nothing but disastrous consequences in the life of those who listen to it. We shall, the Lord willing, return to this later.

*(The quotes from Bob Parks' book are used here with permission.)*

## *The Strength of Youth*

# Marriage, A Divine Institution

*Rev. J. Kortering*

Among the many institutions under attack in our day, the home seems to bear the brunt. Ill winds blow from every direction, some of them with tornadic force, shaking the Christian home to its very foundation. Let's spend a few moments evaluating this attack and hopefully repelling it.

### A CRISIS OF IDENTITY

The Women's Liberation movement has at least succeeded in stirring domestic waters. "Hang on gals, help is on the way", "The vote wasn't enough, equal op-

portunity for women"; "Let me bloom"; "Housewife, blah, Freedom"; such placards are representative of their sentiments. Apart from the silly spectacle and fiery oratory, at least they indicate to us the crisis of identity. What is the expected role of a husband or wife? Is there any basis for determination that a wife should be busy in the things of the home, to desire to have children and to care for them and the needs of the family? Is it merely traditional that the husband gets a job and busies himself with his vocation, or can



he just as well care for the children and the wife work out? Are these roles determined by the individual, by society, or does God determine them?

Little wonder that if we separate ourselves from the moorings of the Word of God we find ourselves attracted to the whirlpool of relativism which is so common in our day. Sociologists are seriously proposing that the traditional family concept be abandoned. In place of the mother-father roles, each person should act as an individual. It's best that the husband and wife get jobs, find fulfillment in outside work and arrange for day-care centers for their children. Some suggest communal living in which more than one couple live together, share their home and children. This supposedly eliminates the boredom of family life. Others suggest trial marriages, that permission be given to a young couple to live together but not to have children. If this succeeds, they may have children later after they would be officially married. The most radical suggest the elimination of marriage entirely; they advocate free love on the broadest scale, preventing the birth of children by birth control.

If we are to deal effectively with this issue, we have to go to the root of the question and ask, what really is marriage? Only after we see clearly that marriage is a divine institution, will we be able to conclude that God also determines the roles of each member of the family. This we hope to do now and in future articles.

#### MARRIAGE IN THE GARDEN

I well remember a professor I had for a course in sociology who delighted in berating the Scriptural concept of marriage. Time and again he quoted Paul in I Cor. 7:9, "It is better to marry than to burn." He would shake his head and say, "Is marriage an escape valve for sex? By lifting such a text out of its context, it is possible to ridicule the Scriptures concerning its teaching on marriage.

If one looks honestly at the Bible, it is striking that two things have a direct bearing on the subject of marriage. The first is that God *created* marriage, it was part of that which God saw as good. The second is that God raised marriage to its exalted height by joining His Son in marriage with the Church He loved.

It is significant that the formula for marriage quoted by Paul in Eph. 5:31, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife and they two shall be one flesh" is a reference to Gen. 2:24 where Moses applied it to the marriage of Adam and Eve. We sometimes forget that God did not only make two individuals, Adam a man and Eve a woman; He created a husband and wife and joined them in marriage while they were still in the state of perfection.

Since this is true, we may examine the creative act itself and draw certain conclusions concerning the state of marriage. Marriage was not an afterthought on God's part. He created Adam and Eve to be married.

The creation of Adam was a distinct act from the creation of Eve. God did not make both simultaneous: rather first Adam, then Eve. Adam was fashioned out of the earth, Eve was made from Adam's own flesh, his rib. From this we may conclude two things: Adam and Eve were distinct individuals who possessed their own bodies, personalities, and individual characters. Yet they were both humans, they possessed a like nature in the midst of creation, and therefore needed each other and could perfectly compliment each other. Man and woman became husband and wife. God made them able to share their whole life together. Adam appreciated this, for he said, upon observing his newly created wife, "Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman!" God had enabled them to enjoy a communion of life and love.

We may ask, why did God create Adam and Eve as husband and wife? Not to control their lust; they had none, since they were both perfect. Not to bring forth children immediately, as if God intended that they should bring forth the perfect human race, but failed, so now Christ has to make up for Adam and Eve's failure. Rather, within the state of perfection they could in their personal and individual life enjoy God's covenant friendship. Since God's relationship was that of covenant friendship with them, they could experience first hand what that covenant meant to them while they enjoyed this covenant friendship within the bonds of marriage. At the same time the king of creation had someone with whom he was able to share the beauty of his rule.

#### THE CURSE UPON MARRIAGE

The wages of sin is death. Adam and Eve and all their children soon learned this through the hard road of experience. God had warned them of this before they disobeyed. Once they ate the forbidden fruit, they knew that God's word is always true. The curse of death also affects marriage.

To understand this we must first consider a few ways that it does not apply. Death, that is the corrupting influence of sin, God's punishment for disobedience, did not destroy man's desire to co-habit with a woman. The desire to live with someone, whether we speak of this in terms of one's whole life or in the limited sexual sense, was not destroyed by death. Neither should we say that the curse of death abolished Adam's and Eve's marriage as if the institution of marriage was broken by death. Rather, we must conclude that man, who is born in sin, cannot live *properly* within the sphere of marriage. Indeed, we observe many marriages today; the newspapers are adorned with all the details. Nevertheless, if man apart from God in Christ marries, he has no proper basis for that marriage. He has the natural instinct, he may be able to live in outward harmony, such a marriage may produce children, yet if the only thing attracting a man



and woman together in marriage is themselves, there is no foundation! It is no more than legalized prostitution. The reason is that there is no *love*! A loveless marriage cannot attain unto the height for which God has created it. There may be mutual admiration and respect, but apart from Christ there is no love.

The results are only too obvious. The history of almost any family in the world is strewn with the wreckage of one broken home after another. This is increasing daily, until proud man finally has the audacity to stand before the living God and say, we don't need your institution any more! We can't make marriage work, we will abandon it. This is the ultimate confession of natural man's failure.

### MARRIED TO CHRIST

In Eph. 5:32 Paul writes, "This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." He has described this as follows, "Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle."

There is something basic here for our marriages. We may well ask, how is it possible for us, conceived and born in sin, to continue to enter into the estate of marriage and live within it and still serve God? The answer is that the only basis for true marriage is this: we must first be married to Christ and only then can a husband and wife live within the state of marriage to the glory of God. Why? It is only when a husband is married to Christ that he receives the love of Christ which enables him to love his wife, and similarly, when a wife is married to Christ, from that union she receives the necessary love that will enable her to submit to her husband and call him lord. The love which is basic for marriage is received by us when we are joined in a marriage union with Christ.

This indicates to us that the marriage union which the Church enjoys with Christ is not simply the model or example of true marriage by us; it is much more: it is the dynamics for our marriage. Without a living union with Christ by faith, we cannot live properly with one another in marriage. The union with Christ produces the energy for such love.

What is this marriage union with Christ? It has its basis in the unchangeable law of God. Marriage is legal; it must be sanctioned by the judge through the court. This is true among men because this is true with God. The marriage of Christ to the Church, His bride, is rooted in the perfect will of God. From eternity, God decreed this marriage. This is sovereign election. To secure the license for such a union, Christ paid the fee; He had to die to atone for the sins of His unfaithful bride. To make His bride fit for so great a union, Christ sends forth His Holy Spirit Who brings His wife

to her knees and causes her to repent of all her spiritual fornication and earnestly strive to be faithful to her Husband. The Church is now joined to Christ by the mystical union of faith. Christ calls His Bride, and she answers. Christ assures His Bride that He is coming for the perfect marriage union and urges her to watch and wait in faithfulness. The Church as the Bride resists all the flirtatious appeal of the devil and this world and prayerfully listens to her Husband, receiving grace for grace and love for love. Such a marriage union is basic to true marriage among men.

### THE BLESSED MARRIAGE

God wills that man and woman be united in marriage. "I will that the younger women marry," I Tim. 5:14. Marriage is a divine institution that is ordained by God through Christ to be used by His people. Not that all people are to be married. Paul reminds us that it is also God's purpose in giving some the gift of continence, to enable them to work in a distinct way in His service, I Cor. 7. When covenant young people desire to enter into the state of marriage, they may believe that God has also given them this state to be used by them in the service of God, for their mutual enrichment and the bringing forth of the covenant children.

It is also obvious that young people must seriously consider whom they marry. We hope to comment on this in the next article. If marriage is to be rooted in true love, that love must be fused in the love of God in Christ by both partners. The power of God that is so necessary to enable us to live within marriage is love. This love comes to us from a higher marriage, that is our being married to Christ. Husbands and wives who marry in the Lord appreciate this, others ignore this to their own ruin.

The perfect model for human behavior within marriage is seen in this union of Christ with His Church. As Christ loves His Church and gave Himself for Her, so husbands must love their wives. As the Church is glad to call Christ her Lord, so the wife is glad to give honor to her husband, Eph. 5:22-30.

Only death terminates this earthly relationship of marriage. As surely as Christ will never forsake His wife, even forgiving her for her unfaithfulness and fornication, so husbands and wives must seek each other's good in marriage. Divorce is wrong because it is a breach of love, true love, the love of God for His Church.

Finally, though our marriages are temporal, and there shall be no co-habiting in heaven between husband and wife, yet husbands and wives shall together enjoy the perfect consummation of marriage in that they shall be married to Christ in perfection. That love life shall endure forever and God shall be glorified by the marriage feast of Christ and His Church.



## *In His Fear*

# Abhortions

*Rev. John A Heys*

In actuality there is no such word as the one which forms the title which we have chosen for this time. But there ought to be.

And in the minds of those who walk in His fear there is such a word.

There was a time when there was no word Christian; and then a day came when the disciples were called Christians. And a new word was formed.

In our day and age with its untold number of murders of unborn children by "legalized" abortion, what is happening before the eyes of those who walk in His fear is that abhortions are being practiced. One who walks in His fear can only abhor these abortions and call them abhortions.

For it is the most dastardly and cowardly form of murder practiced in the world today. An abortion is an act of killing; and no one is in a position to deny that. If through the abortion a living creature (Let us for the moment be satisfied with that word creature) is not destroyed, then why is that abortion sought and so eagerly carried out? One wants to terminate a life, and therefore practices abortion. We speak of our antibiotics as wonder drugs because they kill the bacteria, germs or viruses that make us sick. These are so small that they can be seen only by a very powerful microscope; and in the case of viruses often cannot be isolated and seen. Yet we call them living creatures, and we set out to *kill* them. Just as surely that embryo or fetus, which is large enough to be seen with the naked eye, is a *living* creature, and destroying it is an act of killing. It is not on the same level with destroying a building. It is destroying life. In one clinic man seeks (foolishly) to create life in a test tube, and even calls it life. In another clinic life is deliberately destroyed by abortion. And who can number the thousands of murders of the unborn children that are committed and "legalized" today?

So far the unbelieving scientists and doctors will agree. We are dealing with a living creature. That it is a *human* being is a moot question, that is, among the majority of men it is. Therefore in some instances a definite month of the growth and development of that fetus is set as the moment before or after which it becomes a human being, and before which or after which it would be or has become murder to end that life. Immediately after the fertilization of the egg there is a rapid process of growth and multiplication of the one cell into thousands upon thousands of cells in that living organism. There is a time when the bones begin

to form, when the brain begins to take on form, when the arms and legs begin to appear, when the separate internal organs develop, and even when the fully formed heart begins to beat and can be heard. Therefore there is this wide difference of opinion as to when abortion constitutes murder, and when it does not.

From the theological point of view there is that interesting question as to the origin of the soul. Does it pre-exist, and does God add it to the developing body? Were all the souls created before the creation of Adam and in the beginning, and then in due time put in the right bodies by God? Does God create a soul after conception or at the moment of conception and place it in that body? Do the parents bring forth the soul as well as the body of that child? And in connection with this question of abortion there is in the church world then a need (so it is claimed) to have knowledge of when that fetus becomes a living soul, becomes a human being and has a life as precious as that of any adult. Up until the third month after conception that fertilized and growing egg is called an embryo as a rule. After the third month it is called a fetus. And the question is whether it is a human being with a soul in those first three months of development or only after the third month has passed? Do we murder when we take the life of that growing creature before three months have elapsed from conception? Is there a human soul there before the third month or after, or all along the way?

In His fear we have no problem with these matters at all. That which from the moment of conception has been growing and developing is not a plant or an animal, is it? It is the beginning of a *human* being as surely as from the moment the seed of a particular flower is fertilized, it is the beginning of another plant that bears that kind of flower. Men seek to destroy the fertilized seed, because they do not want the plant, and thereby they admit that the fertilized seed is that plant in its earliest stages of development. And that which in abortion is **KILLED** is a human being that is not fully developed yet but in all honesty can only be called a *human* embryo or *human* fetus.

And we call it the most dastardly and cowardly form of murder because it is inflicted on such a defenseless human embryo or fetus. Well do we remember repeated calls to us on the streets of Montego Bay and of Kingston, Jamaica as we rode through the heart of these cities, "White Mon, go home! You kill women and babies in Viet Nam!" Our country is incensed, and



court trials are being conducted at the very moment, because in Viet Nam women and children were mowed down in large numbers; and defenseless civilians, who lifted no finger in opposition, nor even intended to do so, had their lives snuffed out. And here, before the abortion, you have a developing human being that has done no harm, can in no way defend itself, did not have anything to do with the fact that it is there in that protected spot within its mother, to whom it is connected for its very life, torn away from its life-line and cast out and away not only as an unwanted thing, but as a detestable thing! And while we have court trials to decry what happened in Viet Nam, legislative bodies deliberate, and men try to build "strong" cases to make it legal to kill these unborn *human* beings. Call them abortions, if you will. They are abhorritions! Nothing less!

"In His Fear" does not legislate that if both parents agree, it is to be allowed. "In His Fear" asks, "What saith the Scriptures?" And the commandment says, "Thou shalt not kill." It does not specify a particular age when this commandment goes into effect. It does not say "Until one is too feeble to enjoy life anymore." It does not add, "Unless the pains of a terminal disease make life almost unbearable." Neither does it look at the other end of the life cycle and say, "From the moment of birth." What it says, "thou shalt not kill" it says, "Thou shalt not take away human life!" And that fertilized egg (call it embryo or fetus but call it then correctly as we did a moment ago) is a *human* embryo and/or a *human* fetus. It is *human* life that is being snuffed out. A stop is brought to the growth of a human body by the drastic step of killing that very small creature that has within it human life.

We understand, of course, that the law is broad but also narrow. It does not forbid the authorities the right to kill, and in fact demands it in so many passages that we cannot take the time to quote them, and not simply in the Old Testament. Jesus said yet to Peter in the garden, "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Matthew 26:52. But the law says that you and I may not as neighbours take a man's life in hatred against him.

We may not kill him *to get him out of our way*. To do so is to commit murder. David sought to get Uriah out of his way, and arranged to have others do it for him. But in humility he confesses bloodguiltiness in Psalm 51, and pleads for pardon for a sin against GOD. Abortion does exactly that. It kills to get out of its way that which it hates because it will bring shame, inconvenience, hardship, more work, poverty, a life-long stigma, and because of many other experiences one does not want to endure. That little entity of human life (actually the mother's closest neighbor) is a threat to the pleasure, fun, freedom, material wellbeing of the parents. And that life must be snuffed out that the flesh of man may be satisfied, or at least not be

threatened with a curbing of its lusts.

The fear of the Lord has no problem either when there is danger to the life of the mother, or fear that the child may be affected by the mother's siege of German Measles. We do not say that the flesh has no problem in such instances. It surely does and has very difficult problems. But the fear of the Lord sings,

In doubt and temptation I rest, Lord, in Thee;

My hand is in Thy hand, Thou carest for me. (Psalm 73)

If it pleases Him, mother's life will not be lost, and the unborn child will not come into this world with defects. We are not and may not assume to be in God's place to decide whether this deformed child is to be ours to care for and to love, and whether part of our reward of grace will not exactly be for deeds of tender love and care for such a child. The fear of the Lord recognizes all as having come about — that case of German Measles at that critical moment also — by the hand of God in inscrutable wisdom. It also says that all things without exception work together for good to those that love God. And the fear of the Lord certainly says to the believer in such circumstances, "Thou shalt not kill." Better that two die, mother and child, at the hand of God, than that one die at the hand of one who would assume God's position. Better that one body come into this life deformed by the good counsel of God, than that one human life be snuffed out by the fleshly desires of one who is in a state of rebellion against God's good counsel.

Years ago we read of a doctor's confession that he was tempted to snuff out life by not bringing to the act of breathing a new born babe whose one leg was hopelessly deformed, but could not get himself to do so. Years later when he was an old man, was retired, and as a lover of classical music went to a concert, he was thrilled by the skillful performance and rendition of a cello concerto, only to find out later on that this artist was the grown young woman whose life he was tempted to end at its beginning. Shall we "play" God and determine for ourselves His purpose with the unborn? and what gift of patience He is going to build in us, and what love He is going to give us, and grace, in the trials which He will send? The flesh has a problem. The fear of the Lord has the answer.

And a population explosion that will threaten our food supply again is the speech of the flesh, and is at the same time ridiculous speech of that flesh. If we run short of food it is not due to a population explosion but to man's refusal to be God's steward and royal priest. Even now farmers are being paid for not growing and not using their land. The best soil in some regions is being plowed up for housing projects; and in the name of progress and convenience of living near our place of work, valuable soil produces nothing but luxurious lawns, and supports housing projects. Man's lack of planning, and foolish planning, and endeavours



to live it high, not his real need for nourishing food brings this fear of a famine of dainties. And before God this is no reason for killing the unborn.

He abhors all killing for man's personal, individual advancement. And in His fear we better call them abhorptions as well as abortions.

## *Contending for the Faith*

# **The Doctrine of Atonement**

*THE REFORMATION PERIOD*

*Rev. H. Veldman*

In our last article we were busy with Calvin's presentation of the atonement in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book II, Chapter 16. We noted that he does not emphasize the particular character of the suffering and death of Christ, but also observed that this was not a burning issue in his day. We did call attention to the fact that the Genevan reformer stressed the elements of satisfaction and the vicarious nature of the passion of our Lord. Calvin, when treating the death of Christ, follows the order in the Apostles' Creed, namely that Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, and that He descended into hell.

Incidentally, Calvin explains the expression, "descended into hell," in the same sense in which it is understood by our Heidelberg Catechism, Question and Answer 44 of Lord's Day 16. He refutes the idea that "hell" here refers to the grave, inasmuch as then we would have mere tautology in the Apostles' Creed, and he also opposed the presentation that Christ, descending into hell, descended to the souls of the fathers who had died under the law, for the purpose of announcing the accomplishment of redemption, and liberating them from the prison in which they were confined. Calvin writes, in his explanation of the words, "descended into hell:"

Therefore it is no wonder, if He be said to have descended into hell, since He suffered that death which the wrath of God inflicts on transgressors. It is a very frivolous and even ridiculous objection to say that by this explanation the order of things is perverted, because it is absurd to make that subsequent to His burial, which really preceded it. For the relation of those sufferings of Christ, which were visible to men, is very properly followed by that invisible and incomprehensible vengeance which He suffered from the hand of God; in order to assure us that not only the body of Christ was given as the price of our redemption, but that there was another greater and more excellent ransom, since He suffered in His soul the dreadful torments of a person condemned and irretrievably lost.

These words speak for themselves. Notice, in these words, that Calvin writes that Christ's descension into hell must be explained as occurring before His burial.

The reformer believed that our Lord's descension into hell means that He suffered the eternal horrors and torments of hell, as also set forth in our Heidelberg Catechism.

Calling attention to the words, "suffered under Pontius Pilate," Calvin writes:

For the name of the governor is mentioned, not only to establish the credit of the history, but that we may learn, what is taught by Isaiah, that "the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." For to supersede our condemnation it was not sufficient for Him to suffer any kind of death; but, to accomplish our redemption, that kind of death was to be chosen, by which, both sustaining our condemnation and atoning for our sins, He might deliver us from both . . . For when we are told, that Christ was sent from the tribunal of the judge to the place of execution, and suspended between two thieves, we see the completion of that prophecy, which is cited by the Evangelist, "He was numbered with the transgressors." For what reason? To sustain the character of a sinner, not of a righteous or innocent person. For He died, not for His innocence, but on account of sin . . . He suffered, then, under Pontius Pilate, after having been condemned as a criminal by the solemn sentence of the governor; yet not in such a manner, but that He was at the same time pronounced to be righteous, by the declaration of the same judge, that he found in Him no cause of accusation. This is our absolution, that the guilt, which made us obnoxious (exposed, H.V.) to punishment, is transferred to the person of the Son of God. For we ought particularly to remember this satisfaction, that we may not spend our whole lives in terror and anxiety, as though we were pursued by the righteous vengeance of God, which the Son of God has transferred to Himself.

Also in these words of the reformed, the emphasis is laid upon the vicarious, substitutionary character of Christ's death. He died, we read, on account of sin, was loaded with the guilt of others, having none of His own. And he also writes that the guilt, which made us exposed to punishment, was transferred to the person of the Son of God. The death of Christ is therefore the death of a substitute, is vicarious, suffering the sins and guilt of His own.



And Calvin continues in this same vein, when he discusses the species of death which Christ suffered and is fraught with a peculiar mystery. He writes that the cross was accursed, not only in the opinion of men, but by the decree of the Divine law; when Christ is lifted upon that cross, He renders Himself obnoxious, exposed to the curse. He writes, and we quote him at length:

Moreover, the species of death which He suffered, is fraught with a peculiar mystery. The cross was accursed, not only in the opinion of men, but by the decree of the Divine law. Therefore, when Christ is lifted up upon it, He renders Himself obnoxious to the curse. And this was necessary to be done, that by this transfer we might be delivered from every curse which awaited us, or rather was already inflicted upon us, on account of our iniquities. This was also prefigured in the law. For the victims and expiations offered for sins were called by a word which properly signifies *sin* itself. By this appellation the Spirit intended to suggest that they were vicarious sacrifices, to receive and sustain the curse due to sin. But that which was figuratively represented in the Mosaic sacrifices, is actually exhibited in Christ, the archetype of the figures. Wherefore, in order to effect a complete expiation, He gave His soul an *atonement sacrifice for sin*, as the prophet says; so that our guilt and punishment being as it were transferred upon Him, they must cease to be imputed to us. The apostle more explicitly testifies the same, when he says, "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." For the Son of God, though perfectly free from all sin, nevertheless assumed the disgrace and ignominy of our iniquities, and, on the other hand, arrayed us in His purity. He appears to have intended the same, when he says concerning sin, that it was "condemned in the flesh," that is, in Christ. For the Father destroyed the power of sin, when the curse of it was transferred to the body of Christ. This expression therefore indicates, that Christ at His death was offered to the Father as an expiatory sacrifice, in order that, a complete atonement being made by His oblation, we may no longer dread the Divine wrath. Now, it is evident what the prophet meant, when he said, "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all"; namely, that when He was about to expiate our sins, they were transferred to Him by imputation. The cross, to which He was fixed, was a symbol of this, as the apostle informs us: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ." Peter alluded to the same, where he said, "He bare our sins in His own body on the tree"; because from the visible symbol of the curse, we more clearly apprehend, that the burden, with which we were oppressed, was imposed on Him. Nor must we conceive that He submitted to a curse which overwhelmed Him, but, on the contrary, that by sustaining it, He depressed,

broke, and destroyed all its power. Wherefore faith apprehends an absolution in the condemnation of Christ, and a benediction in His curse. It is not without reason, therefore, that Paul magnificently proclaims the triumph which Christ gained for Himself on the cross; as though the cross, which was full of ignominy, had been converted into a triumphal chariot. For he says, that "he nailed to His cross the hand-writing, which was contrary to us, and having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly." Nor should this surprise us; for, according to the testimony of another apostle, "Christ offered Himself through the eternal Spirit." Hence arose that change of the nature of things. But that these things may be deeply rooted and firmly fixed in our hearts, let us always remember His sacrifice and ablution. For we certainly could have no confidence that Christ was our *redemption, ransom, and propitiation*, if He had not been a slaughtered victim. And for this reason it is, that when the Scripture exhibits the method of redemption, it so often makes mention of blood; though the blood shed by Christ has not only served as an atonement to God, but likewise as a laver to purge away our pollutions.

From this lengthy quotation it is very evident how John Calvin conceived of the atonement. It is true that the reformer does not state specifically that Christ dies only for His own and not, head for head, for all men. But this is surely clearly implied in what he writes here. No man can set forth the cross of Calvary in this light and also believe that the atonement of Calvary is universal in its scope, for all men, head for head. Calvin writes that that Christ rendered Himself obnoxious, exposed to the curse. He speaks of the transfer of our curse to Him. He calls attention to the victims and expiations offered for sins throughout the Old Dispensation, and he calls them vicarious sacrifices, and that Christ is the archetype of these figures. He declares that our Lord gave His soul an atoning sacrifice for sin, and underscores this expression. And we read that the Son of God, though perfectly free from all sin, nevertheless assumed the disgrace and ignominy of our iniquities, and, on the other hand, arrayed us in His purity, and this latter expression can be understood only in the light that the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ was strictly limited and particular in its scope. And there it is obvious from this quotation that Calvin conceived of the sufferings and death of Christ as atoning, expiatory, vicarious, and as only in behalf of His own. Calvin, we know, was surely a believer in the unconditional predestination of God. Indeed, according to Calvin, our salvation has become an established fact in Christ. Listen to him as he writes in Chapter 17 of Book II:

For I assume this as granted: if Christ has satisfied for our sins; if He has sustained the punishment due to us; if He has appeased God by His obedience; in a word, if He has suffered, the just for the unjust, — then salvation has been obtained for us by His right-



eousness, which is the same as being merited.

This is the clear testimony of the reformer of Geneva. And this same conception and presentation of

the atonement of Christ is also set forth in the Protestant and Reformed creeds and confessions, to which we will call attention in due time.

## *Studies in Election*

# Its Confessional Expression

*Rev. Robt. C. Harbach*

### *3. Its Confessional Expression (continued)*

We have noted something of the confessional support for the doctrine of predestination as found in the Heidelberg Catechism and the Belgic Confession. Actually, the Heidelberg Catechism is rather permeated with the high truth of predestination from beginning to end, its whole standpoint presupposing it, and hints of the doctrine appearing throughout; and, as everywhere in this catechism, its definite statements stand out in sharp focus. (See HC, Q. 1, 26, 27, 31, 52, 54). As for our Canons of Dort, we agree with B. B. Warfield, who wrote (*Studies in Theology*, p. 146), "The whole constitutes the fullest and one of the most prudent and satisfactory expositions of the Reformed doctrine of predestination ever given wide symbolical authority."

The first chapter of the Canons of Dort has eighteen paragraphs on predestination, plus nine paragraphs in repudiation of corresponding Arminian errors. There you have a very full and very strong treatment of the doctrine of election and reprobation. We can now only touch briefly upon this section of the confession. Read this with the articles before you.

Article 1 begins with the historical fact that all men sinned in Adam, are therefore deserving of eternal death, so that God justly could have left them all to perish. This is unquestionably true. The article views men as sons of Adam in history, not from the standpoint of God's decree. For in the decree man is viewed not in the fallen mass of corrupt humankind, but, as also the angels, in the pure mass of creatureship. Even so, man has no claim on God. (Rom. 9:11-13, 20-21). Predestination is sovereign and free.

The opening *But* of Article 2 makes it plain that it was not God's purpose to leave all men to the condemnation so justly deserved. God determined to save some in sovereign love through faith. Who they are, how they get faith and how they believe is left to following articles.

Article 3 states that God sovereignly sends the gospel when and to whom He pleases, that men may be brought to believe, and that the gospel ministry is an act of mercy, without stating to whom it is so. God calls men to repentance and faith through the gospel.

Article 4 denies universalism, since unbelievers are

lost, and only those with a true and living faith are saved. Faith is the means ordained in the decree of election unto salvation, and unbelief the means ordained in the decree of reprobation unto condemnation. The question is, Who hath believed our report?

Article 5 has to do with the proximate cause of or blame for unbelief. The sinner under the wrath and curse of God is to blame, in no wise, God. Coming to faith and the exercising of faith is of God. Who, or how any are determined to unbelief (as in John 12:36-43) is a matter not treated in this article. Faith is a sovereign and free gift bestowed on some, not all.

Article 6 brings us to God's eternal decree of election and reprobation as the determining factor in who are recipients of faith and who not. The elect are made to believe. The reprobate are not given faith. They are left in their wickedness. Grace and mercy are mentioned, but not as extending to the reprobate. Infra-language is evident in God's leaving the non-elect in judgment, and in speaking of all "men equally involved in ruin." The infra view proceeds from the fall, but does not trace backward to the other side of the fall in God's eternal decree to show the purpose of the decree.

Article 7 in infra-language speaks of God's immutable, eternal decree in which He chose a certain number from the fallen race, men "involved in one common misery . . . to be saved." Here is a very high view of predestination, election and reprobation, the whole cause of it in the sovereign, free will of God alone. The Reformed man or Calvinist must hold at least as much as the high standpoint of this article. There is a higher view. The divine decree of predestination of angels first sees them all as unfallen, for the elect angels never fell. The destiny of the angels was determined as they were seen in the unfallen mass of creaturehood. Similarly it was with the predestination of men.

Article 8: God from eternity chose the elect to salvation, chose the way of salvation, and ordained their perseverance all the way to glory.

According to Article 9, neither foreseen faith nor foreseen unbelief are the cause of election and reprobation, respectively. God's decree is absolutely sovereign, free and unconditional.



The cause of this gracious election, according to Article 10, is in God's eternal good pleasure. The question is not, Does scripture teach election? but, What kind of election does scripture teach? The answer is, Not one where man's will, but God's will is the sole determining factor. The *infra* view is again expressed in "He was pleased out of the common mass of sinners to adopt some certain persons as a peculiar people," which view, too, attributes election only to God's eternal good pleasure.

Article 11 roots the decrees of God in His eternal being. The decrees are characterized by God's infinite, eternal and immutable attributes.

Article 12 treats of the possibility and the actuality of the blessed assurance of election, together with the inseparable evidences of election. One cannot claim to be elect who does not have in evidence the fruits of election.

Going on to article 15, the decree of reprobation is further enlarged in *infralapsarian* terms, speaking of "others passed by in the eternal decree," which does not mean that they are left out of the decree, but that in it God "has decreed to leave them in the common misery into which they wilfully plunged themselves." God decreed not to give them saving faith. He decreed to permit them to follow their own destructive ways. He decreed to condemn them to perish forever. He decreed to send them off into eternal judgment on account of their unbelief and for all their sins.

You see, then, how these first paragraphs of the Canons strongly set forth the sovereignty of election and reprobation. Much murmuring goes on against the double predestination herein expressed. It is sometimes made to appear as though opposition to the doctrine of the Canons is merely a declining of any *supralapsarian* expression. But the Canons are *infralapsarian*. If one cannot go for the *infra* standpoint, one can hardly be called Reformed. As for the reformed confessions in general, they are not all *infra*. Many do not enter upon the *Supra-Infra* question, leaving the matter open. None are either confessionally or controversially against *supra*. The majority of them contain nothing inconsistent with the *supra* view. The Westminster Confession, B. B. Warfield says, carefully avoids raising any distinction between "*Supra and Infra*." *ibid.*, p. 230). Yet A. A., Hodge, in his *Commentary on the Confession of Faith*, where he comments on "God's Eternal Decrees," chapter three of the Westminster Confession, deliberately avers that this chapter specifies the decree of God as determining "out of the mass of fallen humanity, certain individuals . . . to salvation, and that the rest shall be left to . . . their sins." (p. 101). This is an amazing statement, not only in view of what Warfield correctly points out, but in view of the plain, unmistakable language of the Westminster Confession in its chapter three. For there in that chapter is no such language as Hodge uses. He had no

right to leave the impression that it is so thick with *infra* as he claims. This chapter is so great that we think there is no risk of boring the reader to quote it in full.

I. God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin; nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.

II. Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass, upon all supposed conditions, yet hath He not decreed anything because He foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions.

III. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.

IV. These angels and men, thus predestined and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

V. Those of mankind that are predestined unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving Him thereunto; and all to the praise of His glorious grace.

VI. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by His Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified and kept by His power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified and saved, but the elect only.

VII. The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extendeth or withholdeth mercy as He pleaseth, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice.

VIII. The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men attending the will of God revealed in His Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election. So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence and admiration of God; and of humility, diligence and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the gospel.

We shall save our remarks on this for next time.

(To be continued)

D.V.



## Contributions

# As To The Signs of the Times As To Changes in the Order of Worship As To Billy Graham and Verbal Inspiration

*As To The Signs  
Of The Times*

Dear Editor:

About a year ago already, our editor-in-chief started one of his editorials as follows: "To the observant Christian whose sanctified judgment is guided by the infallible rule of the word of God and whose discernment is sensitized by the Spirit of Christ Whose testimony that Word is, there are many phenomena of our times which remind him that the Scriptures are being fulfilled before his very eyes, that the end of all things is at hand, and that the signs of the coming of the Lord, the precursory signs, are multiplying as we approach that end."

About one of these signs I would like to make a few brief remarks. Some time ago one could read in the D.A.R. magazine, "Today the American people can no longer afford to ignore the signs or storm signals being hoisted on many fronts." And to confirm this, about the same time U.P.I. gave the following report from Washington: Defense Secretary Melvin Laird cautioned Congress that the Soviet Union at its present rate of military development could downgrade the U.S. to a second rate power by the mid-1970's. Laird said further, "It is clear that the Soviet Union is embarked on an ambitious program to achieve a global military capability." About the Soviet threat *National Defender* stated: "The Soviets . . . can win the strategic struggle without the necessity of any nuclear exchange whatsoever. All that is required is a strategic situation in which all the elements of the American retaliatory force have ceased to become invulnerable to a Soviet first-strike. At that point the Soviet planners can be reasonably certain that the American *will* to resist them any further will collapse," because, and then I quote the D.A.R. magazine again: "We have been disarmed morally by the failure of our churches to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is this nation's tragedy that many of our churches wittingly or unwittingly support the communist goal of disarming America. Many of our churches, for instance, come out strongly in opposition to the antiballistic missile system, whose sole purpose is to protect the American people. If we disarm, if we fail to protect ourselves, one day the Soviet Union will issue an ultimatum — either surrender and turn over your industrial and economic complex intact, or be bombed off the face of the earth."

America is the bulwark and defender of the free nations. Today we may still serve the Lord in public worship service. But when the Godless and atheistic communism of the Soviet Union will take over the world supremacy, then it is *possible* that we have *almost* reached that point in history of the final manifestation of the Antichrist. The Kingdom of Antichrist shall combine the forces of the ungodly world-power and the false church pictured in Rev. 13. We know from Scripture that upon us are the ends of the ages come. We better listen to Christ Himself when He was on this earth and said, "Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is there, Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

But Christ gave us some other very comforting words too. "And when all these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."

Herman Woltjer  
Zeeland, Mich.

*As To Changes In  
Order of Worship*

Dear Editor:

Congratulations on your recent editorial entitled, "Why not confess with the mouth?" As a layman, I have been a proponent of this "change" for the last few years, however, I think the opposition to such a "change" was partly due to the fear that the clamor for change was considered to be a product of the influence of our fast changing society, particularly in the church realm; therefore it was considered not for its positive value but at the outset more or less negatively. In fact, the opinion of some is that it wouldn't necessarily produce a greater or more meaningful effect and it wouldn't be long before the novelty would wear off and it might become a mechanical utterance of words only. (If this is true wouldn't our whole worship be a mere sham by now?) This may be the case for a few, however this attitude doesn't display the positive faith which was typical of most of the past changes brought about by great reformers in the church. And the issue really isn't whether it would have a more meaningful effect, but as your editorial states, "the proper idea of confession is exactly that of speaking with the mouth, not merely speaking in our hearts." There are times



when one finds it difficult to be silent while the Creed is being read.

The Creed is a personal confession but it is also the confession of the christian church of all ages. It is the one statement of faith which all christians everywhere can embrace, this Creed should constantly remind us as to the proper perspective of *our place* in the universal church of all ages. Two points to ponder are: Are we (collectively as churches) wrong in not permitting the laity to speak out in this confession? or Are we guilty of suppressing a proper outlet of our expression of faith in our worship to God, if we don't confess with the mouth? I would answer, No, certainly not *intentionally*.

Furthermore, I feel every sincere christian by being able to share with one another by confession with the mouth the truths concerning our God and His salvation, we are going to be able to walk into the world with a new courage to declare the same faith which we uttered in church. I'm for change, "Not change, for change' sake" but for sake of "Spiritual Renewal." It's high time that we as christians express to others that faith which unites us (Apostles Creed) rather than looking or picking the issues which constantly seem to separate us from other christians.

My personal feeling is that given the opportunity to join audibly in the confession of the Creed it would have the effect upon each confessing member of becoming more alert – spiritually, more attentive and the Creed itself will become more meaningful in our worship.

In conclusion, we shouldn't even regard mere changes in order or form of worship or even innovations such as introduction of choral singing in the service, as serious threats to change or corrupt the church (establishment). Instead of demanding to make things *earn* our personal approval (Consistories approval), I think we should in faith *test* them, *try* them out to see if they can be disproven. We must believe that the truth of God will endure even though the outward form of worship has changed in the past and should change occasionally. I believe the hand of God caused one of our youngest congregations, namely: Loveland, to take the initiative in this small but important "change". They are speaking louder than they think!!

Fraternally in Christ,  
Jacob Kuiper, Jr.

P.S. In regards to the Lord Supper form, I think it would be appropriate also if the entire congregation would join in with the minister during the final utterance of Thanksgiving, in speaking the "Lords Prayer".

*As To Billy Graham and Verbal Inspiration*

Esteemed Editor:

One of those new pamphlets of ours entitled, *The*

*Infallibility of Holy Scripture* contains this statement on its page 2, " 'Verbal inspiration of Scripture is only a theory and not a matter of great importance for the Christian faith.' This statement was not made by Karl Barth, Martin Luther King, James A. Pike, or some similar free-thinker enemy of Scripture. It was uttered by none other than Billy Graham, ostensible champion of the cause of orthodox, evangelical Christianity." This is what you read in this pamphlet. You read the same in *Billy Graham's Ministry of Error (The Standard Bearer*, Vol. 42, page 418), where some documentation was given. But in the pamphlet the writer neglected to furnish any documentation. Many of the readers of the pamphlet do not question the statement, are not really surprised at it, but would like to have documentation on it, to which they are in every way entitled. The source of the statement is from a Washington, D.C., newspaper. In the *Christian Beacon* of May 10, 1962, page 4, (Vol. 27, No. 13), there appears a photographically reproduced article from *The Washington Post*, April 28, 1962. The Article is one of the religious editor's, Kenneth Dole, who wrote, "Fundamentalists say they are angry because he (Graham, RCH) says verbal inspiration is only a theory and not a matter of great importance for Christian faith. The ground for Christian fellowship, he says, is 'not the inspiration of Scripture, but the deity of Christ.'" It is exactly on the question of the inspiration and infallibility of Scripture that true Christians long for a clear-cut, unequivocal statement from Billy Graham. Rarely does he answer questions. Once 26 questions were put to him. Two he did not answer. One of those two was the question, from liberal churchmen, "Do you believe that we who teach that Christ is the word of God and that the Bible bears witness to God's revelation in him – but that the Bible is full of parable, myth, allegory and is often quite unhistoric and inexact – are 'false teachers'?" The question went unanswered. But the question of plenary inspiration and the infallibility of Scripture still remains and is still pressing. What servant of the Lord can leave such matters hanging in the air? Let's have an answer, Billy!

Rev. Robt. C. Harbach





## BOOK REVIEWS

Prof. H. Hanko

*THE SPIRIT OF THE REFORMED TRADITION*, by M. Eugene Osterhaven; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971; 190 pp., \$3.45 (paper).

The author, for almost twenty years professor of Systematic Theology at Western Theological Seminary, discusses the question of what in his opinion constitutes the unique character of the Reformed faith. Probably the two most important chapters in the book are two short chapters at the end. In one the author treats what has been meant historically by the word "Reformed"; in the other the author sums up what, in his opinion, is meant by the essence of the Reformed faith. In discussing the meaning of the term, he points out that shortly after the Reformation all who belonged to Protestantism, including Lutherans, were called Reformed. But near the end of the 16th century, this term came to be reserved especially for those who adhered more closely to the tradition of Calvin in distinction from that of Luther. It would have been well for the author to develop this a bit further and point out that, over the years, the term Reformed has become more narrow yet. It has been used, especially in the last two centuries, to distinguish between Reformed and Presbyterian not only, but also to identify that branch of Calvinism which lays particular stress upon federal theology. Whether the author agrees with this use or not, it would have been helpful for him to make some remarks concerning this fact.

But when he discusses what, in his opinion, is the heart of the Reformed tradition, he writes:

The Reformed tradition then is not first of all a system of theology or of doctrine. Nor is it a particular type of church government, or belief in "the five points of Calvinism." As important as these are, they do not constitute that tradition, nor do they reveal its heart. The spirit of the Reformed tradition is more subtle, more profound than any of these. . . .

. . . Reduced to a minimum, it is a consciousness of being in God's presence with a call to live unto him. The consecration of life, personally and in its social relationships, is the Christian's mandate and privilege. It also becomes the dynamic by which he lives, for it brings him into fellowship with God whose resources are infinite.

We find it hard to imagine how anyone with even a passing acquaintance with the Reformed faith can write in this way. If there is one thing which all the history of the Reformed faith shouts out loudly (no matter in what sense the term "Reformed" is taken) it is that the Reformed faith is above all else a system of doctrine. All of history from Luther's Reformation through the work of Calvin in Geneva as this work was continued throughout Europe, and down through the

ages whether in the line of the Synod of Dordt, the *Afscheiding* and *Doleantie*, and on into this country, or through the Westminster divines, makes it clear beyond contradiction that the Reformed tradition is eminently a system of doctrine. It is difficult to imagine anyone denying this.

But the book as a whole reflects this emphasis of the author. It is true that he speaks of the Reformed tradition as being a tradition always reforming itself; and that this continuous reformation is always according to Scripture. But in dealing with this, he gives doctrine second place. The emphasis falls upon the Reformed tradition as a particular kind of life. One example is outstanding. If all serious church historians are agreed on one point it is that at the very heart of the Reformed faith and tradition lies the truth of sovereign predestination. Yet Osterhaven treats this heart of the Reformed tradition in one very short paragraph. But several chapters are devoted to the whole subject of the Reformed tradition as a particular way of life. While Calvin especially is quoted at length throughout the book, it is very striking that not one quote of Calvin appears in connection with his strong emphasis on the truth of predestination. Calvin is not treated honestly.

We do not deny, of course, that the Reformed tradition certainly is a unique and Scripturally-directed manner of life. It is that, to be sure. But the genius of the Reformed tradition and its faithfulness to the Scriptures is its emphasis on the *truth* of Scripture and its development of this truth into a systematic body of doctrine. The life of the Reformed man is a life which is basically a commitment to the truth. His walk not only flows out of his confession of the truth; it is manifestation of that truth. This key point is ignored in this book.

We recommend the book however, for its lucid writing and interesting treatment of this question. But we have the strong impression that the author is more interested in following the trends of the times to make Scripture "relevant" to our modern age than in being faithful to the "spirit of the Reformed tradition."

*SPRINGBOARDS FOR DISCUSSION*, by John H. Bratt; Baker Book House, 1970; 143 pp., \$1.25 (paper).

Although intended to be a book which will give societies and discussion groups material to treat, this book is an edited reprint of many articles written by the author in his column "The Reader Asks" which appears weekly in *The Banner*. Those who are acquainted



with this column will know what material to expect from this book. Those who are not acquainted with this column should know that the author treats subjects of a doctrinal and practical nature in it by answering questions sent in by the reader. The book is enriched by a series of questions appended to each short article which are intended to stimulate discussion on related issues.

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Ladies Society "Ruth" of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church expresses sincere sympathy to one of its members, Mrs. John Moelker, in the death of her father,

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSON.

"For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."  
(Phil. 1:21).

Mr. Alvin Rau, Pres.  
Mrs. J. De Vries, Sec'y.

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

All young men desiring to begin their studies this fall in either the pre-seminary or seminary department of the Theological School of the Protestant Reformed Churches are requested to appear before the Theological School Committee at its meeting which will be held D.V. on May 14, 1971 at the Southeast Protestant Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The qualifications requisite to enrolling in the seminary course are:

1. You must present a letter from your consistory certifying that you are upright in walk and pure in doctrine.
2. You must present a certificate of health, signed by a reputable physician.
3. You must be a graduate from high school, being able to show that you have completed a one year course in General History and Church History, and that you have completed the following college courses: Latin - 2 years, Greek - 2 years, German - 2 years, Dutch - 2 years, Philosophy - 1 year, Psychology - 1 year, and Logic - 1 semester.

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

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

R. H. Teitsma, Secretary  
1659 Shangrai La Dr., S.E.  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Martha Ladies Aid Society of the Hull Protestant Reformed Church extends its sincere sympathy to one of its members, Mrs. Ralph Brummel, in the loss of her father,

MR. PETER HOEKSTRA.

May the God of all grace comfort the bereaved family by His Word and Spirit.

Rev. J. Kortering, Pres.  
Mrs. Nellie Brummel, Sec'y.

### ANNIVERSARY ANNOUNCEMENT

On the 25th of April, the Lord willing, our beloved parents,

MR. AND MRS. RAYMOND L. BRUINSMA  
will celebrate their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. In gratitude to our covenant God, we are thankful for the years He has given them to instruct us in the fear of our Lord. Our earnest prayer is that they may continue to experience God's loving kindness and tender mercies.

Their grateful children,  
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond L. Bruinsma, Jr.  
Jim  
Lois and Jim  
Jerry  
Karen  
South Holland, Illinois

### WANTED TO BORROW

Covenant Christian High School Board is in need of \$55,000.00 for their Phase II Building Program. If you have \$1,000.00 or more you would like to invest, at the rate of 7% interest, in a worthy cause, and ultimately in the instruction of our covenant youth, please contact, Case Lubbers 451-3400 or Peter Koole 453-2524, before April 30, 1971 for further details.

The Finance Committee

### NOTICE CLERKS OF CONSISTORIES

The following forms are available in quantity upon your request:

Call Letters  
Certificates of Dismissal  
Classical Credentials  
Ministerial Certificate of Testimonial  
Subsidy Request Forms  
Transfer of Baptized Member Form  
Transfer of Membership Form  
Baptism Certificates (Unofficial but attractive)

Order from: Synodical Stated Clerk  
Rev. D. H. Kuiper  
1314 Main Street  
Pella, Iowa 50219



# IT'S SPRING! ! !

THAT MEANS IT'S "PLANNING TIME".

WE URGE YOU TO PLAN NOW — TO ATTEND THE SPRING LECTURE!

**THE SPEAKER — REV. G. VAN BAREN**

**THE PLACE — THE FIRST PROTESTANT REFORMED  
CHURCH, GRAND RAPIDS.**

**THE DATE — THURSDAY EVENING,  
APRIL 22, AT 8:00 P.M.**

**THE SUBJECT — "TED AND ALICE AND  
GROPPI . . . AND GRACE."**

OR

**"COMMON GRACE . . . AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO WORLDLINESS."**

(A consideration of the open embrace of the world by many in  
the church — and an explanation of this sad fact.)

THE LECTURE COMMITTEE OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCHES.

## News From Our Churches

*Report of the meeting of  
Classis West  
held on March 3, 1971  
at Doon, Iowa*

Rev. Richard Moore gave the opening devotions. After prayer, he read from Matthew 24 and addressed the Classis from verse 42: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."

Seven ministers and thirteen elders represented the twelve churches of Classis West. Rev. B. Woudenberg presided over the Classis. Classis extended a warm welcome to Rev. J. Kortering, who is again in the fellowship of Classis West.

Two permanent committees, the Reading Sermon Committee and the Taped Sermon Committee, gave reports. The Reading Sermon Committee has a library of written sermons designed especially for use in reading services in the churches. The secretary of this committee is Mrs. Gerhart Broekhouse, Box 393, 341 Maple St. W., Edgerton, Minn. 56128. The Taped Sermon Committee has a library of taped sermons, also for use in the worship services of the churches in the absence of a minister. Included in the report of this committee was the following advice to those who borrow the tapes: "The consistories should be re-

minded to make requests in plenty of time, if possible, as this means a difference of either 6c postage or approximately \$1.00 postage. Also, requests should not be included in tapes returned as I do not always open these tapes immediately upon receiving them." The secretary of this committee is Mr. John Flikkema, 2339 184th St., Lansing, Illinois 60438.

The Church Visitors, Rev. C. Hanko and Rev. G. Lanting, gave a report of their work. This detailed report gave evidence of the good hand of God upon the churches.

The consistory of the Oak Lawn congregation informed the Classis "of a decision made by the Congregation of Oak Lawn at a Congregational meeting held the evening of 10 February 1971. At this meeting the Congregation decided, by a unanimous decision, to disband as a Congregation effective August of 1971 or sooner depending upon the sale of the property."

The consistory of Pella presented a fine overture to the Classis: "The Pella Consistory overtures Classis West to adopt the following statement in respect to the signing of the Formula of Subscription by a candidate-elect who has passed his classical examinations: 'That Classis declare that the signing of the Formula of Subscription by a candidate for the ministry take place in



an official manner, i.e., while Classis is in session and after the Formula has been read aloud in the presence of the candidate.' *Grounds*: 1. In the past the Formula has been signed in obscurity, during recess, without the delegates as witnesses. 2. A promise of this magnitude, which has tremendous significance for the candidate's ministry and the welfare of our churches, ought not be treated lightly. 3. In days when the necessity of this Formula is being called into question and the promise is made with unspoken reservations, we ought to stress its importance by having each candidate give his assent publicly and in official session. 4. That a candidate agrees to the Formula is a matter of joy to the Classis, and therefore should be duly recognized. We also suggest: (1) This signing take place after the candidate has been informed of his successful passing of the examinations, and prior to the singing of the customary doxology and offering of congratulations. (2) Classis inform Classis East of this decision, and suggest they concur in this practice, that our churches have a uniform policy on this matter." This overture was adopted.

A classical appointment schedule was set up for Doon, Forbes, and Randolph. *Doon*: March 14, 21 – J. Kortering; April 4, 18 – G. Lanting; May 9, 16 – D. Engelsma; Sept. 5 – B. Woudenberg. *Forbes*: March 7 – B. Woudenberg; March 28, April 4 – R. Moore; April 25 – R. Moore; May 2 – J. Kortering; May 23, 30 – D. Kuiper; Sept. 5 – C. Hanko. *Randolph*: March 21, 28 – R. Decker; April 18 – R. Decker; May 2 – D. Kuiper; May 16, 23 – G. Lanting; Sept. 5 – D. Kuiper. These churches hope to have seminarians in their pulpits during the summer.

Requests for subsidy of Pella, Lynden, Edgerton, Isabel, Loveland, Forbes, and Randolph were granted.

Classis voted for various functionaries, with the following results:

- 1) Classical Committee of Classis West – Rev. Jay Kortering (3 years) and Elder Tim Kooima (1 year).
- 2) Delegates ad examina – Rev. George Lanting (Primus) and Rev. Bernard Woudenberg (Secundus) for 3 year terms.
- 3) Church Visitors – Rev. Cornelius Hanko and Rev. George Lanting.
- 4) Delegates to Synod:

#### Ministers

*Primi*  
Robert Decker  
David Engelsma  
Jay Kortering  
Dale Kuiper

*Secundi*  
Cornelius Hanko  
George Lanting  
Richard Moore  
Bernard Woudenberg

#### Elders

|                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Primi</i>              | <i>Secundi</i>               |
| Gilbert Griess (Loveland) | Art Brands (Edgerton)        |
| George Hoekstra (Hull)    | Allen Hendriks (Edgerton)    |
| Larry Huisken (Redlands)  | Bernie Menninga (Pella)      |
| Ephraim Reichert (Isabel) | Cornelius Van Soelen (Pella) |

Classis accepted the invitation of Isabel to hold the fall Classis there, on September 1, the Lord willing.

Rev. David Engelsma, Stated Clerk  
Classis West

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For the little space left us after the Classis Report, we'll pick a few of the highlights from the abundance of church bulletins sent our way during the past couple of weeks, and save the rest for next time.

News concerning calls is always of special interest. The consistory of our church in Randolph, Wisconsin, announces that it has made a trio consisting of Rev. C. Hanko, Rev. G. Lanting, and Rev. J. Heys. From a trio of Rev. D. Engelsma, Rev. J. Heys, and Rev. H. Veldman, Grand Rapids Hope Church has called Rev. Heys. Rev. G. Van Baren has declined the call extended to him from our Doon, Iowa church. And the congregation of Southwest was, no doubt, happy to learn that Rev. H. Veldman had accepted the call from that church.

Other news which undoubtedly ranks with the best, in the interest column, is that concerning our missionary in Jamaica. Rev. Lubbers writes that, on a recent Sunday, he "preached in Lacovia in the A.M. and in the evening in a new group at Banana Ground, which is some ten miles east of Mondeville. It is situated high up in a mountain too, and even to get to Mondeville we went up switch-backs up the mountain. We left at 8:10 in the morning and were home at 10:25 in the evening."

The four hours of instruction that he gives in "school" in Lacovia involves 138 miles of driving – driving which he calls simply, but meaningfully, "Jamaica style." In a letter written after one of those days, he writes, "I am a bit weary tonight." That must be an understatement. It's likely that the weather does not help at all, either. He writes that already in March it "is getting quite a bit warmer, but the nights have been cool and sleeping still is good. The sun has crossed the point of equinox now and will ere long be quite overhead here in Jamaica." He adds, "So I wear my hat as an umbrella."

To write news this short is almost as good as a vacation.  
D.D.