

The Standard Bearer

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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Blessing Jehovah's Name

Editorial:

Developments in New Zealand

Special Report:

A "Charismatic Renewal" Meeting

News From The United Kingdom

An Examination of Reach Out and The Greatest Is Love (2)

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THE STANDARD BEARER

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Editorials

Editor's Notes

Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

Publication News If our book-binder keeps his promise, the latest R.F.P.A. publication, *Believers And Their Seed*, should be on the market by the time this issue reaches you. This is a 159-page translation of the late Rev. Herman Hoeksema's *De Geloovigen en Hun Zaad*. And here is the nice part of it: the R.F.P.A. is able to offer you this book at the bargain price of \$2.95! We urge you to send in your orders immediately. If you hurry, you can even obtain copies for Christmas gifts yet! This book should be in all our homes. The

old-timers among us have undoubtedly read it in Dutch; but now this little gem is available in English. And if you want a brief, succinct, clear explanation of our covenant view, of the place of children in the covenant, and of the relation of the covenant and infant baptism — this is it! Send your order to: R.F.P.A. Publications Committee, P.O. Box 2006, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501. We are also happy to announce that the out-of-print book by Rev. Hoeksema, *Whosoever Will*, originally printed by the

Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, is going to be published by the R.F.P.A. in paperback, at a price of \$1.95. Watch for further announcements.

* * * * *

United Kingdom News Last year several of us in the Grand Rapids area became acquainted with the Reverend Stanley R. Baxter, of the Free Church of England. In this issue we are presenting his first report of English church news of interest to Reformed people. He has graciously promised us periodic reports. We hope you will enjoy these contributions. And we say a hearty "thanks" to Rev. Baxter.

* * * * *

Your Special Attention is called to the Report and Critique on a Charismatic Renewal Meeting contributed by our seminary students. It is placed with the

thought that it would be instructive, interesting, and timely to have a first-hand report on a burning issue of the day.

* * * * *

Do You Know that some of our ministers are preaching in New Zealand? No, not in person, but by means of tape-recordings. With the financial backing of the Mission Committee and through the efficient work of our ever-ready business manager, Mr. Henry Vander Wal, taped reproductions of services of First Church, Grand Rapids, recently began to make their way to those islands of the sea. I understand some recordings also began a journey to Northern Ireland recently. Yes, the Lord is giving us work to do and an open door — both near and far!

* * * * *

Developments in New Zealand

What has been happening in New Zealand? Do you ever hear anything from the brethren of the Reformed and Presbyterian Fellowship of Australasia? Has there been any progress on their part, and have they succeeded at all in their struggle against the errant views of Dr. Runia?

Questions of this kind are directed to me every now and then. And so I thought it was about time that our readers be informed of developments there.

We have maintained correspondence by letter, tape, and exchange of magazines. Not long ago I prepared a recorded talk for the annual meeting of the Fellowship. In fact, when I wanted some "instant answers" to a few questions, I even had telephone contact with one of the brethren. But it is a bit difficult in our limited editorial space to keep our readers abreast of everything that transpires on the ecclesiastical scene nowadays.

As to the New Zealand situation, the readers will recall that the personal center of the controversy, Dr. K. Runia, of the Reformed Theological College at Geelong, Australia (which is also supported by the little Reformed denomination in New Zealand) left last summer to accept a chair at Kampen, the Theological School of the *Gereformeerde Kerken*. As we shall see, this has indeed had an effect on the situation in New Zealand, though it should not have had the effect which it had. At the same time, however, — and I am glad about this — it served the purpose of making it crystal clear that the brethren of the Reformed and Presbyterian Fellowship were not concerned in their controversy about Dr. Runia's *person*. If the latter had been the case, it is simple to see that the controversy would now be ended: for Runia has departed. And if

the latter had been the case, their controversy would have been wicked, even as some of their accusers (including Runia himself) said it was. Personally I was never of this opinion; otherwise I would not have helped these brethren. Nevertheless, I am glad about Runia's departure at least for this reason, that it makes it clear that the concern and struggle of the brethren was not *personal*, but doctrinal. And if I may say so, for the benefit of our New Zealand readers and for the benefit of those who are still opposing these brethren, this one fact ought to speak very loudly concerning the *uprightness* of their cause. These brethren have been severely criticized and even persecuted in their own churches because they publicly opposed Dr. Runia's false teachings in their *Reformed Guardian*. And though it begins to look as though this will never take place, the Reformed Churches in New Zealand should instead be *thankful* that these men sought to alert the churches. I have never been of the opinion that one may not write publicly about public and non-personal matters which are of general concern to the churches, especially doctrinal matters. Particularly am I of the conviction that when errant views are aired in the ecclesiastical press, it is the right, if not the duty, of anyone to air his opposition in the press. And this is precisely what the brethren of the Fellowship have done. Moreover, I have followed all that they have written in their little magazine; I believe I have not missed anything in any issue of the *Reformed Guardian*. And never did I find anything that could be construed as a *personal* attack. It stands to reason that the name Dr. Runia was mentioned; after all, the views being criticized were *his* views. But it was his false doctrines, not his person, which were the object of

attack. Once again I say that it is high time that this be recognized "down under."

However, I am also of the firm conviction that within a given church-communion one must do more than publicly criticize and warn. He is also duty bound to protest, and, if necessary, to appeal all the way to the broadest assembly in the denomination. If he fails to do so, he gives the lie to the very concern and alarm to which he gives public expression in his writings. Such protest and appeal is not only the right, but the moral duty of members and officebearers in the church. One may bemoan the hopelessness and futility and frustration of this course of protest and appeal. And, indeed, if the situation — by actual test — is so hopeless that protest and appeal prove utterly futile, then there is but one course to follow: reformation by separation! But one thing is certain: to remain within a church-communion and publicly complain about false doctrine, but do nothing about it ecclesiastically, is wrong!

But let me hasten to add that in New Zealand this course of protest and appeal was indeed followed. And we can best trace the course of developments in New Zealand by tracing this appeal and the actions of the Synod of the Reformed Church of New Zealand with respect to this appeal. Through the courtesy of Mr. Wm. van Rij I received a copy of the Acts of that Synod, which met in Wellington in August, 1971; we can follow the official record, therefore.

Although the document is rather detailed and lengthy, we can get a picture of the issues by quoting the "Letter of Appeal" sent to Synod by the brethren J. Koppe and B. van Herk (both members of the Fellowship and active in the publication of the *Reformed Guardian*), members and officebearers of the churches of Wainuiomata and Silverstream. Most of this material is self-explanatory, and it will at the same time serve to refresh our memories concerning all the issues in the controversy about which we reported about a year ago. Perhaps the very first point of the Appeal will not be clear to some of our readers. This concerns the question of the binding force of what the Westminster Confession of Faith (one of the creeds of the New Zealand Church) teaches about the Sabbath. This also, by the way, was a matter on which Prof. Dr. Runia agitated the churches by his writings — although Runia himself, being from Australia, was not bound by the Westminster Confession. For the rest, the Appeal makes mention of matters on which reported earlier; and we will allow the document to speak for itself. It is as follows; Section C-1, pp. 1-4, *Acts of Synod, 1971, of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand*:

Esteemed Brethren,

As members of a local church of the denomination of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand, who are vitally interested in our denomination's continued maintenance of our confessional standards as being wholly in agreement with the teaching

of Holy Scripture, we would desire to address this appeal to you, and we would request your prayerful and Scriptural evaluation of the same, and furthermore, if constrained by finding this appeal to be in agreement with Holy Scripture, we would request of the Synod 1971 an answer to the following questions:

1. That whether or not Synod 1971 considers that satisfactory reports etc. are forthcoming from the committees appointed by Synod 1969, this Synod 1971, clearly declare:
 - a. That the teaching of the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 21, sections 7 and 8, is or is not in complete agreement with the teaching of the Word of God.
 - b. That our Confessional Standards are, or are not in their entirety the system of doctrine to which office bearers of the Church make wholehearted subscription upon entering office, and which is to be the subordinate confessional standard of the denomination.

FOUNDATIONS: That for ten years our churches have been "studying" the Scriptural authority for the statements of the Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter 21, sections 7 and 8 and has received at every Synod since that date, reports in favour, and which did not favour the continued binding character of this confessional statement. We believe that our denomination must now declare "YEA" or "NAY" to this statement of our confession, since it has been under question within the denomination for now, ten years.

During the last twelve years of our denomination's existence these sections of the Westminster Confession of Faith have been a part of the official subordinate standards to which our churches have subscribed, and have never been declared not binding, despite allegation raised against them. Furthermore, the content of these sections are clear teaching of Scripture, and of our other subordinate standards, (Belgic Confession of Faith, Art. 25 and Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 38), and other sections of the Westminster Confession of Faith (Chapter 19) and as such should without reservation be confessed by our churches.

2. That in the light of the disunity that exists within our denomination at this time, over writings and teachings of Prof. K. Runia, and those who would support those writings and teachings, that Synod clearly declare that this denomination,
 - a. does, or does not accept the historicity of the Genesis account of the creation, and man's fall into sin, in all the Scripturally recorded details, (the tree, the snake, Adam and Eve as the first created man and woman, the garden and the forbidden fruit).

FOUNDATIONS: Prof. K. Runia has in his writings in 'Trowel and Sword', a paper whose Editorial Board is subject to the Synod of our New Zealand Churches, as well as the Synod of the Reformed Churches of Australia, (Acts of Synod 1965) questioned the historicity of some aspects of the Genesis account of Creation, and up to this time no action has been taken by the Reformed Churches of New Zealand to demand a retraction of these writings or act in Christian discipline toward the Editorial Board, to whom Dr. Runia is responsible.

Dr. Runia has questioned the historicity of the Genesis account in the following issues of 'Trowel and Sword':

August 1969 and November 1969.

Furthermore, Scripture itself is clear that we are to accept the Genesis account as being a record of historical happenings, and all those things associated with this account to be received as being real, and historical in the sense of the word.

SCRIPTURE EVIDENCE: Genesis 1, 2 and 3; Romans 5:12-14; 2 Cor. 11:3.

OUR CONFESSIONAL POSITION: Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter 6, section 1; The Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 3, q.a.7.

- b. That the teaching of the Canons of Dort, regarding Reprobation, Art. 6 and Art. 15, 1st head of Doctrine, *is* or *is not* in complete agreement with the infallible Word of God.

GROUND: Prof. K. Runia has written in the book 'Crisis in the Reformed Churches' under the chapter title "Recent Reformed Criticisms of the Canons" questioning the Scriptural authority for the statements made in the Canons of Dort, re Reprobation. (Canons of Dort, Art. 6 and 15, 1st Head of Doctrine), see pages 161-178.

The Word of God clearly teaches that God is sovereign and that therefore, without ascribing to Him as author the sins of men, the Bible teaches that it is God Who saves by His grace, and it is God Who in His infinite wisdom and justice chooses to pass by others and leave them to the just dessert of their sins.

This is taught also in our other Confessional Standards: Belgic Confession of Faith, Art. 16.

SCRIPTURE EVIDENCE: Romans 9:16-18; 2 Peter 2:17; June 4.

- c. That this denomination *is*, or *is not* prepared to continue the full support and endorsement of the Reformed Theological College at Geelong, Australia, in the light of the teachings of the Rev. Prof. Dr. K. Runia on the Sabbath, Genesis 1 - 3, Reprobation, and the infallibility of Scripture, and
- d. *is*, or *is not* prepared to have its future ministers trained under Dr. Runia, as long as he continues to question certain of the confessional statements of our denomination and casts doubts upon the absolute historicity of all the details of the Genesis account of man's fall into sin, and therefore the verbal inspiration and absolute inerrancy of Scripture.

GROUND: That to this time, although appeal has been made thereunto, the Board of Directors of the Reformed Theological College at Geelong, Victoria, Australia, has refused to admonish and proceed to discipline Dr. Runia for his questioning and rejection of the clear teachings of Holy Scripture, and the Subordinate standards of that institution.

SCRIPTURE requires of faithful servant of the Lord the

following: 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Titus 3:10; Romans 16:17; 2 Thess. 3:6 1 Tim. 6:5; 2 John 10.

- e. That this denomination declare itself *willing* or *not willing* to accept as of sufficient binding authority, the present form of subscription made by those who enter the Faculty of the Reformed Theological College *as it is interpreted* by the Board of Directors of the College.

GROUND: That the interpretation given the term "System of Doctrine" by the Board of Directors, is a radical departure from the traditional meaning of this term, and as such is both confusing and deceptive. Furthermore, the acceptance of such as being of sufficient binding, will be a radical departure from the subscription required within our own denomination up to this time, such subscription made by office bearers binding them wholeheartedly to "diligently" teach and "faithfully defend the aforesaid doctrine, without directly or indirectly contradicting the same by our public preaching or writings", in "all the articles and points of doctrine contained in the Confessions and Catechism of the Reformed Churches, together with the Canons of Dort, being convinced that they do fully agree with the Word of God."

We believe that our Synod and our denomination must give a clear answer to all these questions to clear away any form of misunderstanding or ambiguity that now exists in the minds of many of the members of our denomination.

Respectfully submitted,
B. Van Herk - Wainui o mata.
J. Koppe - Silverstream

Thus far the Appeal.

We may point out two facts, in conclusion. In the first place, whatever formal shortcomings one might find in the above Appeal, it certainly places Synod squarely before the issues, important issues. And, in the second place, essentially this was an appeal for the exercise of *doctrinal discipline*. True, the appeal does not as such seek the discipline of any person: not even of Dr. Runia, for the simple reason that Runia was not under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the New Zealand churches. Nevertheless, it is an appeal for Synod to act in defense of doctrinal purity and to act in condemnation of doctrinal deviation. And these matters of doctrinal purity and doctrinal deviation, as the appeal makes plain, involved a crucial aspect of the churches' work, namely, the theological education of their future ministers.

Of the outcome of this Appeal we will write next time, D.V.

It is quite possible — and fashionable — to quote John Calvin, but to "de-Calvinize" him in doing so. The device is simple: quote him out of context.

Meditation

Blessing Jehovah's Name

Rev. M. Schipper

"Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

Psalm 103:1, 2.

Jehovah's name!

O my soul, bless that name!

And remember, O my soul, when you bless Jehovah's name, you bless Him!

For Jehovah is His name, and His name is Jehovah!

These two are inseparably connected. They are mutually inclusive. You cannot, O my soul, bless Jehovah without blessing His name; and you cannot bless His name without blessing Jehovah.

The name of Jehovah is the revelation of Jehovah, and Jehovah is pleased to reveal Himself through His name. Outside of His revelation, O my soul, Jehovah is the unknowable. But He, O my soul, Who is in Himself incomprehensible, indefinable, never to be circumscribed within a definition, the infinite, eternal God, has come down, O my soul, to make Himself known unto thee.

And notice, O my soul, that the Word of God here does not simply exhort you to bless God. But very carefully it urges you to bless Jehovah.

Jehovah is your covenant God! In that name Jehovah, He is pleased to reveal Himself to you as to no others. The everlasting, unchangeable, infinite, covenant-making, and covenant-keeping God, has known you in love, and sovereignly chosen you, O my soul, to be united in an unbreakable covenant relation to Himself, and to His people. And the central revelation of His name, my soul, He has given to you in the Person of His Son, incarnate, the Lord Jesus Christ. He has told you again and again, O my soul, in the Holy Scriptures, that the one having seen Him has also seen the Father. He is indeed the revelation of Jehovah's holy name.

That Jehovah's name is holy, O my soul, means that it is incomparable, infinitely perfect, separated from all other names, as an object of your reverence and worship. In the name of Jehovah, O my soul, Jehovah, your covenant God looms before you in His majesty and glory, in His sovereignty and dominion, in His impeccable holiness, before Whom you are to bow, and exalt with praise.

Bless His holy name, O my soul!

To bless, O my soul, means literally that you get on your knees, and kneel before Him. And when you have so humbled yourself, O my soul, that you are in the

dust before Him, you are to raise your hand, O my soul, and point to Him as the adorable and praise-worthy God, your benefactor.

O my soul, you must do that with all that is within you!

For you see, O my soul, if Jehovah's name is to be truly blessed by thee, there must be nothing in thee that exalts in self, or in any other creature. Thou must as the seat of my life cause my whole being to be laid as an offering before Jehovah's face. And when you are on your knees, O my soul, only then are you in the proper spiritual attitude to bless and to praise, and to thank Jehovah's name. Don't you see, O my soul, that the lips have nothing to say, and the hand has no power to point to Jehovah, if you do not first bless Jehovah with all that is within you? Praise and thanksgiving are outward expressions that arise from your innermost being. Jehovah delights not in the power of your hand, nor in the praise of your lips, unless these are motivated by the right spirit which is within thee, O my soul.

Forgetting none of Jehovah's benefits!

That is how you are to bless Him, O my soul!

Jehovah's benefits are those deeds of lovingkindness which He has showered upon thee, O my soul. O, to be sure, He has shown His lovingkindness unto many souls, and they are all to bend the knee in acknowledgment of Jehovah's benefits. But right now, it is not your immediate concern what other souls are doing. I am primarily interested for the moment in you, my soul. When you bless Jehovah's name, be sure that you do not forget any of His benefits! It is so natural for you, O my soul, to forget. Naturally you are bent on seeking your own praise and glory. When your way is easy and prosperous, it is so easy for you to put Jehovah out of your mind. When your way is fraught with fear, sorrow, and pain, it is so easy for you to grumble and rebel, and in your judgment you so often put Jehovah on the background. You must not do that, O my soul! You must remember that it is exceedingly sinful of you, my soul, to forget how in prosperity and adversity Jehovah was blessing you, how He made all things to work together for your good. To forget none of Jehovah's benefits, therefore, means —

To remember all of them!

This must be a conscious act on your part, O my soul! It will not do to have these benefits stored away in your sub-consciousness. Should you do that, O my soul, you may very easily not remember them at any given moment. They must be always before your consciousness, so that you can speak of them continually, in the home, and by the way. Always, O my soul, Jehovah's benefits must be on your lips, so that you can sing of them while you are at work or play.

All of His benefits must be before you, so that you do not mention only one or two, giving preference to some and not to others. You are to mention each one, calling them out by name, counting your blessings, and naming them one by one. As eternal treasures, you are to point them out, to count and recount them. And because Jehovah's name is stamped on each one, as you count your blessings His name will be called out, and so you will be blessing Jehovah's name. It is a gracious exercise, O my soul, to keep on counting Jehovah's benefits to remember them. Little children, O my soul, are taught to remember by constant repetition. So you, too, O my soul, should count and recount the blessings Jehovah, your God, has heaped upon you.

You can do that, O my soul, for you see you are the soul of the child of God and the recipient of His sovereign and elective grace.

The wicked, O my soul, cannot bless Jehovah's name, because they are without grace. O, indeed, Jehovah showers many gifts upon them also. He fills their barns with plenty. He gives them wealth and power. He gives them health and strength. He gives them many things in this world. But His grace is not in things, nor in the abundance of material prosperity He gives them. Jehovah's grace is never common, O my soul, but very particular. That is why, O my soul, you must not be disturbed as the psalmist Asaph was, when he saw the wicked prosper, while the Lord gives you to suffer poverty and oppression. You must remember, my soul, what the Lord revealed to Asaph when He brought Him into the sanctuary; that He had set the wicked on slippery places when He gave them riches and honor, that they might slide swiftly to their destruction. And remember, too, my soul, how the Bible always describes the wicked, as being unthankful, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.

Not so, O my soul, has the Lord dealt with thee!

Besides all His benefits, He has given unto thee also His grace. That is what distinguishes you from all the wicked. Because of that grace, O my soul, you are able to bend your knees and bow in the dust, acknowledging before Him that you are most unworthy of all His benefits. By grace you are enabled to see your sins and confess them, your depravity and deplore it. By grace you are enabled to lift up the hand and to point away from yourself to Jehovah as your Benefactor. And by grace with that same hand to point to all of His bene-

fits so graciously bestowed upon you. By grace, O my soul, you can read Jehovah's name as it is emblazoned on all His works, and to adore and praise His name as each benefit passes before your view.

O, to be sure, my soul, you will bless Jehovah's name with much difficulty. For you must confess that you have but a small beginning of the new obedience. With much imperfection you must admit, my soul, are you able to count Jehovah's mercies to you given. You must do that enclosed as it were in carnal flesh which never has any delight in the God of your salvation: which has no eyes to behold Jehovah's benefits. That old nature often stands in your way, so that you cannot always do the good that you would, and it often makes you do the evil which you would not. That old nature often darkens your eyes, O my soul, so that you cannot always see all the lovingkindness of your God. Nevertheless, O my soul, by the grace given unto you, bow down now, holding your flesh in subjection, and begin to count His benefits, and each day anew begin to name them one by one.

And look, first of all, O my soul, at those spiritual benefits He has bestowed upon you. How He forgave all your iniquities, and healed all your diseases. How He redeemed your life from destruction, and crowned you with lovingkindness and tender mercies. How He delivered you, my soul, out of the horrible pit, and set thy feet upon a Rock. How He showed you that your name was written in the Lamb's book of life. How He promised never to leave nor to forsake you. How He would make all things to work together for your good, not only the good, but also the evil. How He has chosen you from the foundation of the world, to incorporate you into His everlasting covenant; and ordained that you for a while should be a stranger and a pilgrim in the world, while your real citizenship is in heaven. How He sent His Only Begotten Son into the world to suffer and die in your stead and to make an atonement that could satisfy His justice and declare you righteous. O my soul, this is only a start in enumerating all the manifold spiritual benefits He has bestowed on you.

Then consider, O my soul, how that daily He lades you with benefits, all of which you did not deserve. He has never allowed you, O righteous soul, to suffer want, or your seed to go about begging bread. Not only did He supply the bare necessities of life, but He allowed you often to bathe in luxuries. Don't you see, my soul, that even eternity will not be long enough to recall and recount all His benefits?

But because, my soul, it often is so difficult for you to remember all of them, it is so urgent that you be reminded that this is your part in the covenant of God, — to love the Lord your God with all your being, and to glorify and praise Him for all His benefits, not forgetting any of them.

For this, my soul, you need not a special Thanks-

giving Day, or a special service in God's house; though it is well also on such a time to bless His holy name. But let that be your constant activity, O my soul. And remember, too, that though now you do this with much imperfection and weakness, the day is at hand when you shall do it with all that is within you in heavenly

perfection.

Then you, my soul, shall be united perfectly with all of the souls of the redeemed to praise and magnify Jehovah's name forever more!

What a Thanksgiving Day that will be!
O my soul!

All Around Us

RES or WCC

The Prayer Amendment

Do-It-Yourself-Divorce

Discipline of Tongue Speakers

Prof. H. Hanko

R.E.S. OR W.C.C.

Our readers, generally speaking, are aware of the fact that the *Gereformeerde Kerken* in the Netherlands (The Reformed Churches) are members of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (R.E.S.) and have stated officially that they see no obstacle to membership in the World Council of Churches (W.C.C.) This question of dual membership is scheduled for discussion at the meeting of the R.E.S. in Australia in August of 1972. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is asking the R.E.S. to declare that membership in the R.E.S. is incompatible with membership in the W.C.C. and that such churches (there are also two Indonesian Churches which hold such dual membership) should be given two years to make up their minds concerning which organization they wish to be members of.

The General Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands have, according to the latest *R.E.S. Newsletter*, taken note of this request of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. They are in favor also of asking the R.E.S. to consider this problem, but they are not in favor of the "ultimatum" sponsored by the Orthodox Presbyterians. They prefer to ask the R.E.S. to request such churches who hold dual membership to give an account of their position on the matter. This is, of course, a milder and weaker proposal.

We applaud the request of the Orthodox Presbyterians. It seems to us to be obvious that membership in both organizations with such widely divergent bases and with such different membership and character is a spiritual impossibility. And it is equally obvious that if the R.E.S. should permit such dual membership to continue, it has thereby lost its claim to be a *Reformed*

Ecumenical Synod. The *Gereformeerde Kerken* itself should be able to see this. But if it cannot, then perhaps the time is overdue when the R.E.S. forces the issue and calls upon the *Gereformeerde Kerken* to be honest and forthright in its relationships with the rest of the Reformed Churches.

There is no need therefore, for the R.E.S. to request the *Gereformeerde Kerken* to "give account of their position." The issue is clearcut enough.

The trouble is, however, that the *Gereformeerde Kerken* is the largest denomination to hold membership in the R.E.S. The loss of this denomination would be a serious one to those who are interested in a large and influential organization. But if the R.E.S. is more concerned about its Reformed testimony than about its numerical strength, it will adopt this proposal of the Orthodox Presbyterians.

THE PRAYER AMENDMENT

Nothing contained in this constitution shall abridge the right of persons lawfully assembled, in any public building which is supported in whole or in part through the expenditure of public funds, to participate in nondenominational prayer.

It is this short paragraph which has stirred the nation deeply in the last several months; for this is the proposed amendment to the Constitution which is presently before the House of Representatives and which is intended to restore prayer to the public schools and other public buildings.

The battle began several years ago when Madelyn Murray fought her case against prayer in the public schools all the way to the Supreme Court and gained a verdict from this highest tribunal which outlawed prayers in properties supported by public money.

Since that day the pressures have steadily mounted to adopt an amendment to the Constitution which would restore such prayers to the public schools — at least on a voluntary basis. Senator Dirksen, the late senator from Illinois, was a strong backer of such an amendment. But the cause has been carried on and just this month the first vote on such an amendment is scheduled in the House of Representatives.

I have never considered this issue to be a very important one. It really makes very little difference to me personally whether such an amendment is passed or whether the ruling of the Supreme Court is permitted to stand.

My indifference is for various reasons. Perhaps the chief reason is that the whole question presupposes, it seems to me, an erroneous conception of prayer. This erroneous conception of prayer is apparently that one can go through the motions and words of prayer and actually pray in a way that is pleasing to God. Or, if this is not the case, then at least the supposition is that a facade of religion, an outward appearance of recognition of God is desirable for this country. We disagree with this — violently. The Scriptures are quite explicit on the point that prayer is possible only for a child of God who has been regenerated by the Spirit of Christ. This possibility is due to two considerations. The first is that any man for whom Christ did not die (and that includes all those who are not elect), does not have the *right* to appear before God in prayer. Even apart from the question of whether such a man *can* pray, the more important question is: does he have the *right* to pray? We answer this with a firm negative. It is a privilege to come to God. And it is possible only for one who is as holy as God is. God will not and cannot (as a holy God) tolerate in His presence a man who is a sinner. The fierce wrath of God consumes such a man and drives the sinner away from His presence. God's people have this right, this unspeakably blessed right, to come to God. Not because they are in themselves holy and worthy to appear before God. But rather because they come to God in Christ. And God receives them "for Jesus' sake."

But it is also true that the unregenerate lack the *ability* to pray. They cannot pray. For prayer is a spiritual activity born in a regenerate heart and worked by the sovereign and irresistible operation of the Spirit of Christ. A man devoid of that Spirit and lacking regeneration has not the spiritual ability to pray — even if he should go through the motions.

Nor does such a man even *want* to pray. After all, the deepest principle of all sin is enmity against God. The sinner is implacably set against God and filled with an implacable hatred of Him. This is the deepest principle of his life. He is this way, or he is not a sinner at all. It stands to reason that such a man does not want to pray. He may want to go through the motions of prayer in order to assume an external pious mask of

religion or because it seems, generally speaking, to be the thing to do — to acknowledge in some way some higher being. But this is not prayer.

Supposing, therefore, that the government would once again permit prayer or that a constitutional amendment would be passed which would restore prayer to public school classrooms and other public buildings, would this automatically make people pray? And if it be objected that true Christian children are deprived in the public schools of devotions which they consider essential, then the answer, quite obviously, is this: they have no business in the public schools to begin with, for the public school system cannot offer instruction in the fear of the Lord.

It is for this reason that it really makes very little difference to us what happens to the prayer amendment.

There is, however, one good argument which I recently came across which is the best argument in favor of the prayer amendment that I have read and even seems to have some validity. This argument does not consider the whole matter of prayer in the public schools or in public buildings by itself, but considers the matter from the point of view of the question of religious freedom. This argument is advanced by Clyde Taylor in the *Presbyterian Journal*. He argues that it is very well possible that prayer and Bible reading no longer have a useful place in the public schools and perhaps never did have; but that this is not the point. The point is that the ruling of the Supreme Court is an abridgement of the freedom of worship. There is probably some validity in this argument. But even then, one must face the more difficult question of whether the government has the right in any case to establish schools when the responsibility is laid by God upon parents. And the answer to this question would determine whether the government has any right to say anything at all concerning the whole matter of education and devotions which are held in the classroom.

The trouble is, after all, that when fundamental principles of Scripture are violated in a wicked world, problems are created to which there are no solutions. For these problems are created by sin; and they cannot be resolved without taking sin away first of all. That is the hopelessness and vanity of the world in which we live.

(In tonight's paper, Nov. 9, a news item appeared which told of the defeat of the "prayer amendment" in the House of Representatives. A majority voted in favor of the amendment, but not the necessary two-thirds. So the advocates of this amendment will have to wait till next year to get another vote on the matter.)

DO-IT-YOURSELF DIVORCE

Divorce is now, in California, a very cheap and simple procedure — under the right circumstances. It is

possible in this state to obtain a divorce without the help and assistance of attorneys and without costly court battles and without staggering fees — and without establishing “fault.” It is a kind of “no-fault” divorce procedure. It works like this. If a husband and wife decide to part ways and dissolve their marriage, and if there are no disputes concerning property and children, then one party files for divorce with the county clerk on the grounds of “irreconcilable difference.” The party pays a filing fee of around \$35.00, fills out a simple form and can expect a decree in about six months. A notice must be sent to the other spouse, costing an additional \$10.00 or so; and that is about all there is to it. If there are problems concerning property or custody and support of children, then attorneys and courts must still handle the matter.

This is about as simple as it can be made. And it certainly reflects the wholly evil attitude of the world towards marriage. No longer is marriage considered an indissoluble union of man and woman. No longer is adultery considered the only God-ordained reason for divorce — although not ground for the dissolution of the marriage bond. No longer is it considered important to ascertain who is to blame in the divorce and who is the innocent party. God’s prescriptions are cast to the winds. The sacred and holy bond of marriage is mocked and derided. People can enter it and leave it at any personal whim. That which is sacred and holy is trampled in the mud of filth and sin. And it all spells the destruction of the home — that central unit of all society and the inevitable breakdown of all institutions among men. The world writes its own death sentence and sounds its own death knell. And in its foolishness thinks it is making progress.

DISCIPLINE OF TONGUES-SPEAKERS

A congregation which belongs to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod has recently, according to *Christian News*, suspended twelve of its members for taking part in a charismatic movement (the movement which seeks the “baptism of the Spirit” as manifested in gifts of healing and speaking in tongues) and for

praying with others who are not in doctrinal agreement with the denomination.

Evidently this branch of Lutheranism takes a strong position against neo-pentecostalism and is convinced that the movement is contrary to Scripture and makes one who participates worthy of excommunication. This is certainly a Scripturally sound position to take. What amazes us is that this Lutheran denomination takes a much stronger stand on this matter than many Reformed denominations. Groups of those who have received this “baptism of the Spirit” and have the gifts of healing and speaking in tongues have appeared in Reformed denominations and are growing rapidly. While there are those in these denominations who speak out against this movement, we have not heard that these Reformed denominations are prepared to censure such people. Nevertheless, the Lutherans referred to above are correct.

But there is one other interesting feature about this news item. Those who were censured for their participation in the movement were censured also for praying with others who were not in doctrinal agreement with the denomination. We find this very heartening and very much to the point with respect to this whole issue. More and more it is becoming obvious that neo-pentecostalism is a kind of short-cut to ecumenicity. The idea seems to be that people from all different denominations as widely divergent as Methodist, Reformed and Roman Catholic, can practice some form of ecumenicity in this matter of tongue-speaking and healing by the baptism of the Spirit. The point is apparently that there is a unity in this baptism of the Spirit which transcends and ignores doctrinal differences as irrelevant. All that counts is some kind of unity in charisma. In other words, the unity of faith is abandoned for a unity of tongue-speaking. The true unity of the Church of Christ is defined in terms of the gift of tongues rather than in terms of the truth of the Scriptures.

The congregation referred to above has seen the error of this position and is prepared to censure those who hold to it. Would that the Reformed Churches would have the same kind of conviction.

Special Report

A “Charismatic Renewal” Meeting- Report and Critique

[Editor’s Note: Responsible for the following report are six of the students of our Prot. Ref. Theological School: Messrs. Wayne Bekkering, Arie den Hartog, Mark Hoeksema, Marvin Kamps, James Slopsema, and Ronald Van Overloop.]

On November 3, 1971 six students of the Protestant

Reformed Seminary attended a Pentecostal (charismatic renewal) meeting at West Catholic High School in Grand Rapids, Michigan. One of the students had heard of these meetings, attended one, and spoke of it to the student body and professors. The thought was that the students be asked to attend a meeting and

write a report for the *Standard Bearer*.

We did not attend this meeting with open minds. We did not go in order to determine for ourselves whether such a meeting was right or wrong. Rather did we go with the firm conviction that the charismatic renewal movement is to be condemned on the basis of Scripture. On the basis of our past study of church history and Reformed and Scriptural doctrine, we knew that this movement is not in harmony with Scripture and is a deviation from the historic manifestation of the church throughout history. Nor did we attend out of mere curiosity: for to go to an un-Scriptural meeting just to satisfy one's curiosity is wrong.

Rather, our attitude was one of condemnation: we took a condemnatory position, which position is the only proper one. Our positive purpose, which explains our presence, was: to gain firsthand information with respect to the charismatic movement in our community; to expose the evil of such a movement; and to convey to the reader the appealing power and enticing character of this movement. Because the charismatic movement represents a great temptation to the youth of our church, we desire specifically to warn both the parents and youth of the church to resist this movement on the basis of Scripture.

* * * * *

The events of the evening included preliminary instructional classes and a prayer meeting. The classes were "given to afford the baptism of the Spirit." That is, they were held in order to prepare the participant to receive the baptism of the Spirit and to take part in the prayer meetings. The classes were called the "Life and Spirit Seminar." There were seven successive classes within the seminar: 1) Union with God and One Another; 2) Steps toward Union with God; 3) Gifts of the Holy Spirit; 4) Praying for the Baptism of the Spirit; 5) Growth Talks after the Baptism is Received; 6) Being Sanctified in the Spirit. Also offered was a general introductory course, which we attended. After the classes ended, all the participants reconvened in a large auditorium for a prayer meeting. Approximately 600 people were seated in a large circle, with the leader in the center of the circle. The leader was surrounded by other leaders of the group playing on various rhythmical musical instruments. There were many events which took place during the two-hour prayer session. There was a goodly amount of singing which was emotional and superficial. Songs that were sung included: *There is a Balm in Gilead* and *Spirit of the Living God*. The words of the latter are:

Spirit of the Living God fall a-fresh on me,
 Spirit of the Living God fall a-fresh on me,
 melt me, mold me, fill me, use me,
 Spirit of the Living God fall a-fresh on me.

Another example was:

I have decided to follow Jesus,

I have decided to follow Jesus,
 I have decided to follow Jesus,
 No turning back, no turning back.

The cross before me, the world behind me,
 The cross before me, the world behind me,
 The cross before me, the world behind me,
 No turning back, no turning back.

Tho' none may join me, still I will follow,
 Tho' none may join me, still I will follow,
 Tho' none may join me, still I will follow,
 No turning back, no turning back.

Upon the field, He'll be my captain,
 Upon the field, He'll be my captain,
 Upon the field, He'll be my captain,
 No turning back, no turning back.

There were also repeated refrains of "Jesus is Lord, Alleluia, My Redeemer, How I love you, Precious Savior." During the singing, many sat with closed eyes, yearning faces, concentrating expressions, and uplifted hands, striving for spiritual ecstasy. It was indeed appealing to the emotions — soft, sweet voices rising in moderate crescendos and slowly subsiding into a peaceful silence. During the intervals between songs, muttered personal prayers could be heard. Immediately following the personal prayers there was chanting in tongues, which was done individually. Yet, there was a unity: for all sang at the same time, all prayed at the same time, all spoke in tongues at the same time, and all ended at the same time. There were also "Spirit-directed" testimonies which were supposedly prophecies. For example, one middle-aged woman spoke of a physical healing experience which was accomplished through her faith in conjunction with the work of the Holy Spirit. Others read passages from errant modern versions of the Bible, personal interpretations of which passages they shared with the others in the meeting. Another woman gave an elaborate account of her baptism of the Spirit. She was unable to receive the baptism of the Spirit for a time because she clung to her expensive clothes and wig. Evidently the desire to retain these things prohibited the possibility of her being baptized in the Spirit. Having renounced these carnal things, she was overcome by the power of the Spirit in baptism, a power which she experienced so forcefully that she was cast upon the floor as she revelled in her experience. "He socked it to me!" she said. This all happened when she was convicted of the truth of I Timothy 2. The above occurrences were representative of those which took place during the prayer meeting.

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Particularly in the introductory class several principles were enumerated which form a basis for the conception of the Holy Spirit and His work maintained by this group. First, the point was made that water bap-

THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL

... OF THE ...
PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCHES
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

December 1, 1971

Dear Brethren and Sister in the Lord:

In this letter we wish to share with you some information and some thoughts about the outlook for the future of our seminary. As faculty, we are undoubtedly closer to the day-to-day operation of the school and have a closer knowledge of its present and future needs than any others. Yet the seminary is the school of our churches and their membership. And by this we mean not merely the Synod and the Theological School Committee and the Consistories; but we mean YOU as congregations and people of God. For this reason you ought to know about our school and its operation and its needs, so that you can make these matters your conscious concern in your prayers, in your discussions and fellowship with one another, and in your giving of support.

Especially do we wish to convey to you a sense of urgency with respect to the needs of our seminary for the immediate future. There are needs which will have to be met, if at all possible, in the very near future; and delay in meeting them will be harmful for the work of our school and our churches.

You will all recall that for several years the outlook with respect to future ministers in our churches seemed rather bleak. We had a rather severe shortage of ministers; and we did not have many students, or ministers-to-be. From our congregations and people many urgent prayers ascended to the throne of grace, asking that the Lord would raise up young men in our churches for the ministry. And this need was stressed among us by means of the spoken and the written word, too.

Well, the Lord has heard and is hearing these prayers. And He is not stingy in His answers to our prayers. He is providing abundantly.

Evidence? Here are some facts. For the past few years we have had seven students in our seminary--more than in many years. For the first time in very many years--going back to 1953--there will be a graduating class, the Lord willing, of four at the end of our current term.

Still more. At a faculty conference about some of these matters not long ago, we listed the names of young men of whom we knew that they were interested in pre-seminary training, and, eventually, seminary training. We soon had a list of eight names in addition to the men who are already in our school. Some of these have already begun their pre-sem work; some are hoping to begin it in the fall of next year. These are young men who have been in touch with the faculty; there may even be others who have not yet contacted us. This also, remember, is an answer to our prayers! The Lord is busy providing the young men whom we asked Him to raise up!

The question is: what is the significance of this for our churches and our seminary?

Our last Synod confronted this question, and its answer was: our thankful response to the Lord's answer to our prayers must be that we make provision for the training of these young men. To this end, Synod adopted plans for a pre-seminary program in our school. This beginning of a pre-sem course was to be initiated in the fall of 1972. And, as you know, a third professor was also called; but the Lord did not lead anyone to accept that call last summer.

This only serves to make matters more urgent, however. The pre-sem program has been adopted, and remains to be carried out. But besides, there are pre-seminarians ready to follow that program and to be trained! Some of them have frankly expressed an eagerness to get their training as much as possible in our own school. They are virtually knocking on the door of our school already! And you see, these young men are faced by the practical problem of planning their courses, but of not knowing what to figure on as far as pre-sem training in our own school is concerned. Someone might say: let them go to college for a year first. But there are several problems connected with this? One problem is that they cannot even plan any college work without knowing what they can expect to get from our own school. Which subjects shall they take? Which subjects will they be able to get with us? How soon can they plan on coming to our own school? one year? two? Another very serious problem they face is: which college shall I attend? Where can I get the necessary courses not only, but also where can I get training which is not downright detrimental from the point of view of Protestant Reformed principles? Both of those latter questions are becoming increasingly difficult to answer, you know.

There are other aspects which could be mentioned. But the above should give you some insight into this very urgent problem for our churches and our school.

Beloved, think about these things. And pray much! Pray that the Lord will keep us faithful and make us zealous to perform our calling. Pray for the School Committee and the faculty, who must wrestle with these problems. Pray, too, that the Lord will in due time provide us with another professor, so that the work of our school may go forward. Pray, too, for our students and students-to-be, that they may be encouraged in their purpose to prepare for the ministry, and that the Lord may open the way for them. And let us unitedly work for the advancement and enlargement of the work of our seminary. Ora et labora! Pray and labor!

Your brethren in the Lord,

A. Hanko
H. C. Lockman

P.S. A special note to our pre-sems and future pre-sems: keep in touch with us; and we will try to keep you posted on developments. Perhaps in the near future we can give you some more definite information and advice on your course.

tism was absolutely necessary because those who are thus baptized receive the Spirit as a potential power within them. Because the Lord Jesus Christ does not do anything without our consent, it is necessary to request the Lord to release the power of the Spirit within us and turn it into an actuality ("pull the cork out"), which is the baptism of the Spirit. We must open our hearts in order for the Spirit to work. Though from God's viewpoint the potential and actuality are both accomplished in water baptism, from man's viewpoint these are two separate occurrences. If one refuses to ask Jesus to release this potential, it never becomes an actuality. Those who open their hearts to the Spirit and experience the baptism of the Spirit receive either immediately, or, at some time in the future, either wholly, or in part, the following gifts and fruits of the Spirit: speaking in tongues and interpretation of them, healings or miracles, and prophecies. This latter is said to be a sharing of spiritual experiences. The fruits of the Spirit are those which are enumerated in Galatians 5:22, ff., and Ephesians 4:1-4: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, etc. These gifts and fruits are realized in the individual to the extent that he is faithful in prayer, Bible reading, witnessing to others, communal sharing of experiences with the body of Christ, and obedience.

A second principle concerns tongue speaking, which is of two kinds: private, which is a quiet, personal speaking in an unknown language for the benefit only of the individual; public, in which a member of the community speaks for the benefit of all in an unknown tongue. Of these two kinds we witnessed only the former at the meeting which we attended. However, we were told that public tongue speaking frequently occurs and that the criterion by which the genuineness of such speaking is judged is whether or not it is interpreted. If the speaking in tongues is genuine, there will always be an interpretation given by someone; conversely, if there is no interpretation given, the conclusion is necessarily that the tongue speaking was not genuine. Thus the speaking in tongues and its interpretation is obviously a closed system. Prophecy is also a gift of the Spirit. But by prophecy is not meant a revelation of God or a prediction of future events. The idea of prophecy, as the term was used by the community, was very ambiguous and was used as a sort of catch-all. Anything that did not fit in another category was put under the general heading of prophecy. The main idea or manifestation of prophecy was a sharing of personal interpretations of Scripture and a sharing of spiritual experiences.

Thirdly, the community spoke of the fact that the result of seeking communion and fellowship is the establishment of a "Spirit-filled" community. The prayer meeting which we attended was sponsored by this "Spirit-filled" community. Although there were several hundred persons in attendance at the prayer meeting, approximately 80 to 100 were members of

this community. The by-words of this community are: love, unity, joy and happiness. Their appeal to the idea of a community is based upon a wrong understanding of Acts 2-4. This community exceeds the boundaries of individual denominations and unites individuals of various faith in the common sharing of the Spirit. Individuals from various denominations were present: Roman Catholic, Christian Reformed, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Lutherans, various Pentecostal groups, etc.

* * * * *

All must be evaluated on the basis of Scripture; and many criticisms immediately can be made of such a movement.

First of all, the very nature of the principles which underlie these meetings and the movement in general are not clearly defined and set forth. These principles are in whole or in part un-Scriptural. The reason why these principles exist in a confused state is that the whole movement, as was evident from the meeting, is subjective and mystical.

Secondly, the movement claims revelation apart from the revealed Word of God as recorded in Scripture. The participants claim that the Spirit within them gives them a new revelation apart from Scripture. Thus they have little regard for the sufficiency of Scripture. They seek to substantiate their movement with random, unrelated quotations from Scripture, torn out of context. This, of course, does violence to the organic nature of God's Word; their principles are contrary to it.

Thirdly, the movement has an errant doctrine of the church institute *as it is constituted in the three offices*. Although it may pay lip service to the idea of the church institute, in reality it denies the sufficiency and necessity of the preaching of the Word. It claims that one must have Spirit baptism which must be accomplished apart from the preaching. This leads to the establishment of the idea of an elite group within the church. The people baptized by the Spirit are a church within a church.

Fourthly, they claim that this "Spirit-filled" community is able to unite ecumenically individuals of various ecclesiastical backgrounds. It is one, not on the basis of the truth of God's Word, but on common subjective feelings of undefined love, joy, peace, etc. It makes no difference what you love, or how you love, but only *that* you love.

Finally, as is evident from all of the above, Arminianism runs rampant in all of their thinking and teaching. They claim that Jesus is Lord, but yet deny His sovereign Lordship by maintaining that His Spirit is not able to operate in one unless the individual invites and allows Him to work.

This movement, as was evident from this prayer meeting, can be appealing to the child of God, and especially to the youth of the church. Its appeal is

found in the fact that Scriptural language and enticing music are used, supplemented by an emphasis on spiritual unity, spiritual warmth and love, and a communal joy in salvation through Christ. The entire meeting is characterized by sentimentality and emotionalism. The meeting in its entirety can have an hypnotic effect upon the participant. This danger must not be minimized. We found that we had to resist consciously this hypnotic power of emotionalism.

* * * * *

In conclusion, we want to direct some remarks of a positive nature to the reader with regard to such movements.

First, we can be thankful that we have the pure preaching as the exposition of the Word of God. For only the preaching of the Word instructs, comforts, and unites the people of God. The people of God can, in humility, listen to the voice of their Shepherd only as He speaks to them from the pulpit through His ambassadors. The emphasis must always and continuously be on the preaching of the Word. I Corinthians 1:18 states: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." Romans 10:14, 15a also empha-

sizes this: "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom (should be: "whom") they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?" We must not forget that true communion and fellowship in Christ are found only in personal appropriation of the truth of God's Word. Only as the people of God understand that truth can they enjoy the true communion of the saints. In the days and years to come we must satisfy our spiritual longings and desires by drinking deeply of the authoritative, revealed Word of God.

Secondly, the baptism of the Spirit is inseparably connected with the preaching of the gospel. The contents of this baptism, which are the fruits of the Spirit ("... love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance...") are only received under the preaching of the Word. If the fruits of the Spirit can be received apart from the preaching, what then is the necessity of the preaching?

We suggest to those who desire further study of this movement to read *The Modern Tongues Movement*, written by Robert G. Gromacki, published by Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company.

Feature

An Examination of Reach Out and The Greatest Is Love (2)

Rev. David Engelsma

The second condemnable aspect of the text of these Bibles is still worse. The unfaithful translation could be ascribed to carelessness, serious enough because we are supposed to have such reverence for God's Word that we tremble at it (see Isaiah 66:2). But there is also in *The Greatest is Love* and *Reach Out* a systematic, deliberate falsification of those words of God which the producers of these Bibles do not like. These Bibles falsify those outstanding passages in the New Testament that teach God's sovereign, eternal predestination, His eternal election of some men in Christ unto salvation and His eternal reprobation of other men unto damnation. I am not now going to defend or explain the doctrines of election and reprobation. I only want to show the fact that these Bibles change the texts that plainly teach these doctrines. I will show this by first quoting the text as it is correctly given in the King James Version and then giving the same text as it appears in *The Greatest is Love* and *Reach Out*.

1. Acts 13:48: "And when the Gentiles heard this,

they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." *The Greatest is Love* reads, in the second part of the text: "and as many as wanted eternal life, believed." The text teaches that the reason why some believe in Christ is that they were ordained by God unto eternal life. *The Greatest is Love* changes the text so that it says that the reason why some believe is that they themselves want to have eternal life.

2. I Peter 2:8: "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." *The Greatest is Love* reads, in the second part of the text: "they will stumble, because they will not listen to God's Word, nor obey it, and so this punishment must follow — that they will fall." The text teaches that God has appointed some men to stumble over Christ into hell through their own disobedience. *The Greatest is Love* drops the entire phrase that teaches this and substitutes a phrase that it

has invented for the occasion.

3. Romans 8:29: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." *The Greatest is Love* reads: "For from the beginning God decided that those who came to Him — and all along He knew who would — should become like His Son, so that His Son would be the First, with many brothers." The text teaches that in eternity God predestinated, or elected, some persons to be conformed to the image of Christ, that is, to be saved. *The Greatest is Love* changes this to read that God merely decided that whoever would come to Him (of which "coming to Him" there is absolutely no mention in the text!) would become like Christ. The text speaks of a choice of certain, definite persons, whereas *The Greatest is Love* speaks of an abstract decision concerning a certain event, namely, some people's coming to Him. In addition, the text says that God's eternal predestination of certain, definite persons is due to His foreknowledge of them, that is, His eternal knowledge of them in love. *The Greatest is Love* replaces this personal knowledge of certain men by God with a mere knowledge beforehand as to which men would come to Him.

4. Romans 9:10-13: "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." *The Greatest is Love* reads: "And years later, when this son, Isaac, was grown up and married, and Rebecca his wife was about to bear him twin children, God told her that Esau, the child born first, would be a servant to Jacob, his twin brother. In the words of the Scripture, 'I chose to bless Jacob, but not Esau.' And God said this before the children were even born, before they had done anything either good or bad. This proves that God was doing what He had decided from the beginning; it was not because of what the children did but because of what God wanted and chose." The text teaches that God loved Jacob and hated Esau before they were born. *The Greatest is Love* changes the text so that it will merely say that God chose to bless Jacob and did not choose to bless Esau — with the birthright blessing, apparently. The text says that God's words to Rebecca, prior to the birth of her twins were spoken so that the purpose of God according to election might stand, that is, God's free and sovereign election of some (Jacob) unto eternal life, in distinction from others (Esau). *The Greatest is Love* changes this to read that God chose certain *things* from the beginning ("This proves that God was doing *what* He had decided from the beginning; it was not because of what the

children did but because of *what* God wanted and chose"). The text simply does not speak of *what* God may or may not have chosen; it speaks of *whom* God chose, which *person*. *The Greatest is Love* also changes verses that follow in Romans 9, particularly, verses 17 and 22. In verse 22, it changes the phrase, "fitted to destruction," to read: "those who are fit only for destruction."

This deliberate perversion of God's Word is gross wickedness. In the Old Testament, wicked King Jehoiakim of Judah, not liking the words of God that were written in a book, cut out all the pages of the book and burned them in the fire (see Jeremiah 36). God punished him terribly for this mad wickedness, as Jeremiah 36:29-31 threatens. Revelation 22:18, 19 solemnly warns against corrupting the written Word of God. The punishment for those who deliberately do this is damnation. This is the sin of those who have produced *The Greatest is Love* and *Reach Out*, and it becomes the sin of those who knowingly promote these corrupted versions of the New Testament.

The reason why the producers have falsified these passages is evident. In their introductory remarks to *The Greatest is Love*, they show that they adopt the Arminian theology. They believe, therefore, that God loves all men, that He gave Christ to die for all men, that He tries to save all men through the begging and pleading of preaching and evangelism, and that it is up to each man now to exercise his "free will" by believing in Jesus. Upon this decision for Christ depends every man's salvation. Election, in this theology, is only God's decision in eternity that all who do believe (of their own ability) will be saved. And because He knows things before they happen, He also knows which people will (of their own ability) believe in Christ. Having adopted this theology, they sally forth into God's Scripture determined to bring it into line with their thinking. Does the Word of God teach, in Romans 8:29, that God predestinated, or elected, some definite, particular persons to be saved, so that their entire salvation is due to His election of them? Well, this would demolish the stock Arminian theory of predestination, that God merely decided in eternity that all persons who would believe would be saved. Romans 8:29, therefore, has to be adjusted, that is, mangled, to harmonize with the Arminian notion. Does God say as plainly as can be in Romans 9:13 that He hated Esau and made known that hatred before Esau was born, or had done any evil? Well, this would contradict the theory that God loves all men and, therefore, the text has to be changed, so that that obnoxious word, "hated," does not appear. Does I Peter 2:8 say that some men have been ordained to stumble at the Word and go to hell? Well, that would contradict the notion that God wants all to be saved and tries to save all, so the whole, offensive phrase must be dropped. (Jehoiakim cut out the passages with

his penknife and burned the paper they were written on.) Does Acts 13:48 teach that the reason why some men believed Paul's preaching was that God had eternally ordained them to eternal life, so that faith depends on election? Well, that would contradict the pet Arminian notion that election depends on faith, so the word, "ordained," is simply replaced by "wanted," which then will make faith dependent on man's will instead of God's.

But why go on? It is demonstrated that *The Greatest is Love* and *Reach Out* are deliberate, damnable falsifications of God's Word and God's doctrine. All true Christians, not even to mention *Reformed* Christians, whose faith is expressly attacked here, will recoil from them in horror and indignation.

It is incredible that these Bibles gain acceptance within Reformed Churches. In 1618-1619, at the Synod of Dordt, the Reformed Churches once and for all condemned the Arminian theology as *heresy*, the bringing again out of hell the Pelagian error (see the Canons of Dordt, II, Rejection of Errors, III). The Canons of Dordt teach, as the gospel itself, the doctrines of predestination, total depravity, limited atonement, efficacious grace, and the perseverance of saints. Every Reformed man, by virtue of claiming to be Reformed, subscribes to the Canons and condemns the Arminian teaching. Many Reformed Churches officially are bound to the Canons and its teachings. Every officebearer in these Churches swears his allegiance to the doctrines of the Canons and vows to oppose Arminian tenets. If Reformed people and Reformed Churches, knowing the facts about *The Greatest is Love* and *Reach Out*, yet promote them and approve them, they show that they are apostate. Would to God that in simple honesty they would cease calling themselves Reformed. If a man is genuinely interested in being Reformed, let him repudiate these vehicles of the Arminian heresy, and let him ask once why it is that a Reformed Church tolerates and even promotes these Bibles, which undermine the very foundation of the Reformed faith and, in order to accomplish this, pervert God's Word.

Since some people fall for these new versions well-meaningly, because they think that they help their children and young people to understand the Bible, we will take note briefly of the right way to help children understand Scripture.

First, see to it that your children, from the time that they are five or six years of age, receive thorough instruction in catechism classes from the Church. Make sure that this instruction is based on the uncorrupted Scriptures, that it is in harmony with the three, great creeds of the Reformed faith, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dordt, and that it consists of instruction in the truths of the Scriptures.

Secondly, get for your home copies of the best

translation of the Bible available, the King James Version. It is not perfect. One imperfection, for example, is its failure to use the word, "Jehovah," throughout the Old Testament as the main Name of God. But it is the best. It is faithful to God's Word and, therefore, reliable.

It is, for the most part, easy to understand. It is beautiful in its style. The use of this version has other benefits that we tend to forget. The words of the King James Version are the words of the Reformed confessions and of the historic Christian Church, words like regeneration, justification, predestination, and sanctification. By using the King James Version, our children are gradually absorbed into the realm of the Church of the past and the sphere of the Reformed creeds. These words are completely missing from many modern versions, so that a child reared on them is cut off from the Church of the past. It is a matter of sound pedagogy that the same Bible be used in the home, in the Christian school, and in the Church. It is confusing to a child to read, memorize, and learn one version of the Bible in the home, another in the school, and probably another in the Church.

Thirdly, read from the King James Version daily with your children. Have them follow in their Bibles, and have them participate in reading aloud. As you read, consider yourself a prophet to your children, which indeed you are. At appropriate points, explain what you are reading. Encourage your children, from the youngest age, to interrupt the reading with questions as to the meaning of the passage. You will discover that you have to face a daily barrage of questions, "Dad, what does this mean?", "Mom, what does that mean?" In no time a discussion ensues. These moments are alive with the presence of the Holy Spirit, leading the children (and the children's parents) into the truth.

Fourthly, so that you can do this with your children, see to it that you yourself are in a Church where, twice on Sunday, the whole, pure Word of God is preached, explained, and applied, year in and year out. See to it that you endure sound doctrine and that you are not included in the ecclesiastical multitudes today who have itching ears, who turn away their ears from the truth, and who are turned unto fables (II Timothy 4:3, 4, King James Version).

The result of this, under the blessing of the Holy Spirit, will be that your children, already by the age of twelve, will be sitting in the midst of the doctors of the Church, loving the Word of God, hearing the Word of God, and themselves asking questions, so that all men are amazed at their understanding.

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The Strength of Youth

Husbands, Love Your Wives

Rev. J. Kortering

Wives, be subject unto your husbands.

Husbands, love your wives.

Isn't it something how the Holy Spirit always touches us where it hurts? What we are most inclined to do, what comes naturally, we are either forbidden or warned not to do.

It is natural for a wife not to want to be subject to her husband. Submission, we noticed, includes the following: recognizing the headship of the husband as a divine appointment, listening to the husband when he speaks upon the authority of the Word of God, obeying him in the demands he makes, and seeking his advantage in all the details of life. What wife cares for such a strait-jacket. Her very nature rebels against it. Just as teen-agers don't want to listen to mom or dad, the laboring man resents the demands of the boss, the average citizen likes to resist the law, so a wife feels like rebelling against her husband. Yet the Holy Spirit comes to every Christian wife and touches her where it hurts, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord," Eph. 5:22.

The same thing, however, holds for the husband.

God places upon every husband the responsibility to do the following in exercising his calling as head of the home: making the will of Christ known to everyone in his household, expecting that the will of Christ will be followed by himself and every member of the family, punishing all disobedience and encouraging all obedience to this will of Christ. In exercising this calling, it is most natural for a husband to become a tyrant. Such authority may easily go to his head and he may think that being head of his wife makes him boss of her and the family. He may think that he can treat his wife as he pleases, either making her his slave or even leaving her if she no longer pleases him. Now the Holy Spirit touches the husband where it hurts, where he is most inclined to fail and says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it."

THE LOVE OF A HUSBAND FOR HIS WIFE

Before entering into the sacred bonds of marriage, it is important for a covenant young man to understand what God expects of him within the marriage relation. Once being married, a husband needs repeated reminders. In one brief word the Holy Spirit tells him: love your wife!

It takes some doing for us to properly understand what this love involves. This is primarily true because God's idea of love is so often distorted with man's

idea. Covenant young people have to filter out all the contaminants that so quickly pollute the pristine beauty of this divine reflection. One sees a pert lass walking bare-toed down Pennsylvania Avenue bearing a sign printed in blood-red, "Make love not war." Another scene: beaded youth squatting together passing their pot infested peace pipe and calling it a love feast. Still more: a terribly erotic scene on the marquee of the local cinema labelled, "true love."

How are we to hear clearly God's words, "Husbands love your wives?" Only by way of filtration and inspiration, cast aside all corruptions and search the Scriptures.

The opposite of love is hate. If husbands are to love their wives, they must also heed the exhortation of Col. 3:18, "Wives submit yourselves unto your husbands as it is fit in the Lord, husbands love your wives and be not bitter against them." Bitterness is an expression of hatred. All hatred has its source in the heart; one detests a person so much that he wants to hurt him and ultimately have him removed from his pathway. A husband can express this in two ways. First by non-violence. This may be by not paying proper attention to her; he may speak to her only when it is for his own advantage, or worse yet, he may give her the silent treatment. He may neglect her as a person; perhaps he works so long and hard that he either doesn't have time or energy to share his life with her in the least way. Perhaps he finds pleasure in recreation: sports of all sorts, watching television, being out with the boys, to the extent that he neglects his wife. Then there is a violent form of hatred: verbal abuse when he becomes disgusted with her, physically attacking her and making her afraid of his superior strength, sometimes sad to say, even to the extent of actually killing her.

Against this dark background, the light of Scripture illuminates the beautiful picture of true Christian love of a husband for his wife. Let's notice that we can distinguish three elements. First, when a husband loves his wife, she is his dearest friend. The emphasis is upon *friend*. Love is interpersonal; it is a reflection of God's love in Himself and His love for Christ and His people. Such love is the moving cause of His covenant with His people. So intimate is that friendship that it is a marriage relation: God marries us to His Own Son, and thereby we become His children. Thus the love of a husband for his wife is also that of friend with friend. And what makes a friend? It is this which constitutes

the second element, that is conversation. If a husband truly loves his wife, he will show it by his conversation with her. According to Scripture God's love for His people is that, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him and he will show them His covenant," Ps. 25:14. Divine love is demonstrated in a sharing of His secret will. Our love reflects this in our openness toward each other. A husband's love for his wife follows the same pattern: the more he loves her the more he shares his whole life with her. This includes his secret thoughts, his daily interests and activities, and his future plans. Finally, such love brings about the enrichment of the wife. The love of husband for wife is not self-centered; it has a more noble end, namely, that the friendship which he has with his wife will benefit her.

This love of a husband for a wife is basically the same as a wife's love for her husband. It is emphasized here for the husband, in order to off-set the temptation to abuse his headship.

How can a husband express this love to his wife? In three ways. First, in a spiritual union of faith. When a young man and woman are united in the Lord, they possess in common a regenerated heart. This heart possesses the love of God and this is what attracts them to each other. Such a husband shares his faith with his wife and loves her in Christ. He converses with her concerning the promises of God and always seeks to lift her up to a higher spiritual plane to the glory of God. Secondly, love is expressed in a true love of the *person*. Sometimes this is forgotten by a husband who thinks that beautiful gifts and showering her with all the conveniences that her little heart desires is all he has to do to show love. If such a husband doesn't love his wife as a person, he soon learns that his wife is alienated from him. Personal love is expressed in taking time to share life together, talking together, doing things together, sharing life's joys and sorrows. This is what leads an elderly couple to be able to sit quietly in a chair by each other and be able to think each other's thoughts. Their lives have been fused into a complete union. Thirdly, love is expressed in a sexual union of the physical body; this is mentioned last because it should take this place in relation to the preceding two. Only love that is spiritual in Christ and expressed daily in a personal union of one's whole life can be truly sealed in a physical union. Today the sexual side of life is blown way out of proportion to the reality of life. Many newlyweds are conditioned by the over-emphasis on sex and think that marriage is the magical door to marital bliss if only they can make out with each other in bed. Soon they realize that sexual love apart from the spiritual union with Christ and the personal fellowship in their daily lives becomes a cause of strife instead of bliss. The physical union must be an expression of the union of heart and soul and when this takes place it is to the enrichment of every hus-

band and wife. It is the calling of the husband to promote this.

THE EXAMPLE

Why should a husband desire to love his wife in this manner? We notice that the spiritual union of faith provides the answer, "As Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it," Eph. 5:15.

Let's consider four things.

First, Christ loved the church within the context of the will of God and so a husband must love his wife within that same context. Just recall how Christ loved His bride; it was the will of God that He redeem His bride. In love He was reconciled to this task; He would love His bride even unto the pains of hell, "Not my will, but thine be done," Luke 22:42. So it must be with a husband, he must be convinced that it is the will of God for him to take his wife not only, but be guided by the will of God in all his dealings with his wife.

Secondly, Christ's love for His bride was expressed in making His bride fit for His Heavenly Father. Notice verses 26, 27, "That he might sanctify and cleanse it . . . that he might present it to himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle." Christ loved His church so much that he desired to make her pleasing in God's sight by cleansing her from the horribleness of sin. So a husband must love his wife. Christ's love is unique in that it is an atoning love; a husband's love must be sanctifying. Through their love for one another, they both must rise above the lusts of the flesh and serve God with body, soul, and spirit.

Thirdly, the love which Christ has for His bride is a self-denying love. God so loved He *gave*; Christ loved so much He gave; "greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friend," John 15:13. So a husband must love his wife. He shows this love by giving; all that he has is his wife's. Most of all he gives of himself!

Finally, this love which Christ has for His church is perpetual. Christ's love for His bride is not a one time thing that could come to an end. It is an eternal love bond which began in the eternal counsel of God, continues through all of time, and will be consummated in heaven itself. Note carefully, the church as the bride of Christ often makes herself unworthy of Christ's love; she commits spiritual adultery. Yet, He does not cast her aside, in love he brings her back through repentance and forgiveness. You see how terrible it is to commit adultery; it is a breach of the love bond. Faithfulness, marital fidelity, promotes the love of a husband for his wife. At the same time we see the error of divorce. If a husband loves his wife he will never put her away; the love bond can never be broken. It may be necessary to separate on account of sin, but sin can never dissolve the union. Through trials and troubles, through joys and sorrows, the Christian husband loves

his wife until God terminates that union in death.

THE POWER

Now you can understand why a Christian husband must seek a Christian wife. Unless their marriage is in the Lord, both husband and wife mutually married to Jesus Christ, there is no power to obey this exhortation. Apart from Christ there is selfishness, lust, adultery, and divorce. By nature there is not one husband who can heed this exhortation. Soul searching brings every husband to his knees in repentance and prayer.

In Christ we can appreciate the amazing wonder that in an earthly way a husband can love his wife even as

Christ loves His church.

Such a home is truly blessed. Such a marriage is strong, for the cords of divine love hold it together. Such a marriage is blessed, for the blessings of God are showered upon it. Such a marriage is glorious, for it reflects the perfect marriage and reaches up to God in thankful praise to Him.

Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands as unto the Lord.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church.

Such a divine touch hurts, but it heals. Thanks be to God!

Foreign News Feature

News From The United Kingdom

Rev. Stanley R. Baxter

There were two conferences recently held in the United Kingdom which will be of interest to our readers.

In early October a Day Conference was held by the Southern Chapter of the Reformed Episcopal Theological Fellowship. This Fellowship is a private fellowship within the Free Church of England, otherwise called the Reformed Episcopal Church and the Reformed Episcopal Church, U.S.A. Membership is open to members of both the denominations "who pledge themselves to maintain its Protestant and Reformed character, and who are prepared to subscribe to the Aims and Basis of Faith." Among its aims are those of "fostering the spirit of Prayer and Fellowship and to encourage younger brethren who are called to a Reformed ministry. The Fellowship exists to foster:

- a) The study of the Holy Scriptures;
- b) The study of Church Principles;
- c) To stimulate study and discussion concerning those problems which confront Churches in the Reformed tradition. This shall be done through conferences and publication of suitable literature." The Basis of Faith is as follows: "The Basis of Faith shall be the Articles of Religion of the Free Church of England, otherwise called the Reformed Episcopal Church." In the case of the Reformed Episcopal Church, U.S.A., they have 35 Articles which are based upon the 39 Articles, and have adjusted their Basis of Faith accordingly. It should also be remembered that the 39 Articles of the Free Church of England are far more Reformed on a number of points than are those of the Church of England, the State Church.

The Day Conference was held at Christ Church, Crowborough, Sussex, at the kind invitation of the

Minister, the Rev. Eric Aldritt. There were two sessions. The morning session was taken up with the discussion of a paper read by the Rev. Paul D. L. Avis, B.D., of Emmanuel Church, Carshalton. The subject of this paper was "An Introduction to the Biblical View of Infant Baptism." This is a most important issue in a country which has a State Church which practices indiscriminate baptism, and where the Calvinistic influence is mainly among Baptist brethren. It was clearly brought out that the only basis for baptism was that based upon a true understanding of Covenantal Theology. There was a most stimulating discussion period; and it was generally accepted that it would have been very profitable to have spent the whole day on this subject. After a good lunch of cold beef at Christ Church House, the Conference resumed for its second session. The subject this time was "An Introduction to the Biblical View of Missions." The speaker was the Rev. Stanley R. Baxter, Minister of St. Paul's Church, Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex. With the present state of Evangelism in the United Kingdom which is Arminian and anti-Church through and through, it was felt that there was a real need for some suitable Reformed literature which could be used for evangelistic purposes, and that there was a need to look into the whole question of the Theology of Mission. This conference was a most profitable one; and it was agreed to meet again in January. It was also decided to publish some papers on the Ministry in the Free Church of England, particularly in relation to Reformed Episcopacy as it is practiced within the FCE and the REC.

The second Conference was sponsored by the English Reformed Fellowship. This Fellowship was

founded in London, December 15, 1970, to foster fellowship between Reformed Evangelicals throughout England, to bear witness to the great Biblical and Reformed principles, and to help formulate policy in matters of mutual concern. The Basis of the E.R.F. is as follows:

1) The full acceptance of the Holy Scriptures; their authority and sufficiency as not only containing, but being in themselves, the Word of God, and the supreme standard for the rule of faith and practice.

2) A cordial acceptance of the system of doctrine contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

The Aims are: 1) Doctrinal: To explain, expound and uphold the Reformed heritage of theology, polity, and worship. 2) Practical: To stimulate prayer, to strengthen fellowship, and to propagate Reformed truth by means of literature, meetings, and conferences, without intruding upon the prerogatives which the Church exercises under the headship of Christ. Unlike the R.E.T.F., which is a fellowship within the denominational context, the English Reformed Fellowship is interdenominational (but not non-denominational!!).

This particular Conference was held from Friday evening, October 29, until 3 P.M. on Saturday afternoon, October 30, 1971. The meeting was held at the Central YWCA building in London; and amusingly enough, the room next to us was taken by the (Roman) Catholic *Counter Reformation* Group. Some of our speakers were accompanied by Gregorian chants wafting in from the Roman Catholic Conference!!

The Chairman for the Conference was the Rev. Murdo MacLeod, M.A., who is the Chairman of the English Reformed Fellowship (although he is a Scotsman!). Mr. MacLeod is a Presbyterian Minister, the Free Church of Scotland, and is at present the Director and General Secretary of the International Society for the Evangelisation of the Jews (a Society which I commend to Reformed Christians who wish to support Jewish work and are not happy with the extreme prophetic views of certain Jewish Missions.) The subject of the conference was "The Church: Its Nature; A Community; Its Order; and, finally, The Church Today: Need, Opportunity, and Prospects."

Our first speaker was the Rev. Neil MacLeod, B.D.,

of the Free Church of Scotland, Glasgow, who spoke on "The Church: Its Nature." Although this was familiar ground to many present, it was nevertheless a needed introduction to the whole Conference. This session was followed by an evening meal available in the Dining Room of the YWCA. Our second session was addressed by the Rev. Dick Keyes, B.D., an American, Minister of the International Church Presbyterian Reformed, Ealing, London. Mr. Keyes spoke on "The Church: A Community." This promoted some warm discussion, as it was felt by some present that there was rather a subjective (in the wrong sense) presentation of the subject. On Saturday morning we resumed our Conference; and the speaker was once again Rev. Neil MacLeod, who had as his subject this time "The Church: Its Order." As could be expected, this also provoked warm discussion, the membership of the E.R.F. consisting of Reformed Episcopalians, "John Owen" Independents, as well as Presbyterian brethren. The Conference was an open one; so some of our Baptist friends were also present. The final session took the form of open discussion, with a forum consisting of the speakers and the Rev. John Legge, B.A., B.D., of North Allerton, Yorks. Although both the conferences were small, it is some evidence that there are still some groups in England who are taking the Church issue seriously and are seeking to promote the Reformed Faith. Do continue to pray for us all, that the Lord will be pleased to do a great work through these fellowships. The following addresses may be of interest to those who wish to be kept informed of the work of these fellowships.

Reformed Episcopal Theological Fellowship
Secretary, U.S.A., Rev. Dick White A.B., B.D.,
Christ Church Memorial,
Forty-Third and Chestnut Streets,
Philadelphia, Pa. 19104

General Secretary, U.K.,
Rev. Stanley R. Baxter, Dip. Th.
St. Paul's Church House,
71, Wickham Avenue,
Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex, U.K.

English Reformed Fellowship
Secretary, Rev. S. R. Baxter (address above)



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Book Reviews

A Theology Of The Holy Spirit

Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

A THEOLOGY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, by Frederick Dale Bruner; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan; 390 pp., \$8.95.

Recently many books have come from the presses about Pentecostalism and tongue speaking, due undoubtedly to the almost wild-fire spread of this movement even outside of denominations officially committed to the views associated with tongue speaking. I suppose the writing and publishing of many such books is almost predictable and unavoidable when such errant views and phenomena gain a prominent place on the ecclesiastical horizon; but I can never quite avoid the feeling that some authors and publishers are lurking in the shadows opportunistically waiting for a popular and more or less prominent phenomenon of this kind to make its appearance so that they can write and publish a book. Most such books are largely negative in the nature of the case; and most of them are of little value.

However, this book, in my opinion, is an exception.

It is well-written, thoroughly documented, exegetically founded in its critique, and therefore can serve as a valuable source of information and criticism of the Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal movement.

The book is divided into two main parts. The first part is descriptive. It speaks of: 1) The contemporary

place and significance of the Pentecostal movement; 2) The background and beginnings of the movement; 3) The baptism in the Holy Spirit in the Pentecostal movement; and, 4) The gifts of the Holy Spirit in the movement. There are especially two aspects of this part which I like. The first is that the author provides thorough documentation — usually from the Pentecostals themselves. The second is that he enters into the *theology* of the Pentecostal movement, rather than merely studying the phenomenon of so-called tongue speaking. And he certainly exposes this theology as something with which no Reformed man could ever agree.

The second main part of the book is exegetical. It deals largely with the passages from Acts and from Corinthians to which appeal is made for support of the Pentecostal views. But also this part of this study is positive as well as negative. And while I would not agree in every instance with the author's exegesis, nor with his theological conclusions, yet, in the main, he draws correct lines.

This is a valuable source book on the Pentecostal movement. I would warn that it is not easy reading. If you would follow the author, you must put on your thinking-cap. But the book is well within the grasp of the non-theologian. Highly recommended.

Divine Inspiration of the Bible

DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE, by L. Gaussen (translated from French by David D. Scott); Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, Michigan; 382 pages, \$5.95. (Reviewed by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema)

This is an excellent volume in a series of reprints called the Kregel Reprint Library. These reprints are chiefly intended "for Pastor and Student." And indeed, some of the books in this series would be of no help to others because of their technical nature. But for anyone who is willing to put on his thinking-cap, there is much profit and spiritual enjoyment to be gained from this volume. While the English is obviously dated (the book was originally published in 1841), and while the style is a bit heavy and plodding (partly because theologians of that day were wont to go into very careful detail), anyone who can read English can read this volume; and all references to foreign languages are put in parentheses and are translated.

To put it in the author's own words, "Our object in this book is, with God's help, and on the sole authority of His Word, to set forth, establish, and defend the Christian doctrine of divine inspiration." And this is precisely what the author accomplishes, and that, too, without compromise. The author not only takes a so-called "high view" of Scripture; but he takes what I would call the "purist view" of the Bible: it is in its entirety the Word of God, with no "ifs" or "buts". Moreover, the foundation of all that the author teaches is the Scriptures themselves. There is abundant appeal to Scripture in a very healthy and careful manner. The author is not satisfied with mere "proof-texting;" but he engages in very careful exegesis, pointing out the Scriptural implications of the passages which he cites in developing the doctrine of divine inspiration. The first two chapters alone, on "Its Meaning" and "Its Scriptural Proof," would, in this reviewer's opinion,

make this volume worth its price.

But also the remaining chapters, on "Its Doctrinal Aspects," "Its Objections Examined," "Its Evasions Examined," and "Its Scientific Criticism," are very instructive. We are living in a day when the doctrine of Holy Scripture is being subjected to many objections and evasions and much scientific criticism. Actually, however, all of these objections are very old, though they may be clothed in new garb and may be given new names. And while the author wrote for his day and with reference to the objections and evasions and criticisms of his day, nevertheless this book will serve as a very helpful guide and instructor over against today's

attacks on the Word of God.

The work is enhanced by a good subject index and Scripture index, and especially by a detailed chapter analysis, in which each chapter is very detailedly outlined. This latter feature enables one to use the book as a reference volume.

I may add that I found the section on the individuality of the sacred writers in Chapter 1 to be especially clear and sound; and I found Chapter 2 (Scriptural Proof of Theopneustia) to be very thorough and cogent.

Highly recommended.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The Faculty takes pleasure in announcing that Seminarian Meindert Joostens has been licensed to speak a word of edification in the Protestant Reformed Churches.

Prof. H.C. Hoeksema, Rector

ANNOUNCEMENT

Classis East will meet in regular session on January 5, 1972 in Southeast Prot. Ref. Church. Material to be treated in this session must be in the hands of the stated clerk ten days prior to the convening of the session. Consistories will please consider this to be an

official announcement.

Jon Huiskens, Stated Clerk

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Mary-Martha Society of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church of Redlands wishes to extend its sincere sympathy to one of its members, Jeanette Vander Veen, in the passing of her mother-in-law,

MRS. TRACE VANDER VEEN.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." (Psalm 116:15.)

Miss Sue Porte, Pres.

Mrs. Audrey Van Voorthuysen, Sec'y.

News From Our Churches

Last time we reported that Rev. H. Veldman planned to undergo surgery on November 4. We're happy to note, from the bulletin of his congregation, that "the operation was successful and his condition is as well as can be expected." It was anticipated that he

would be absent from the pulpit for about a month.

Following Rev. D. Engelsma's decline of the call to Redlands, the consistory there made a new trio consisting of Rev. R. Harbach, Rev. J. Heys, and Rev. G. Van Baren.

On November 12 there was an Open House at Covenant Christian High. The program included a speech by the school administrator, Mr. Roland Petersen, as well as several numbers by the a cappella choir, and a performance by the band, which Covenant has organized for the first time this year. Of special interest, also, was the opportunity to "browse around." The \$70,000 addition, you see, has only recently been completed. Two new classrooms have alleviated the overcrowdedness experienced during the first few weeks of school, and the two new shower rooms should be a good thing for the school's physical education program.

An August bulletin of our church in Redlands included the response of a listener to the radio broadcast of the Reformed Witness Hour. This evidence of God's use of that witness will certainly be of interest to many of our readers, so we'll pass it along.

"Yesterday as my family and I were returning from Los Angeles, we heard your program over KBBI, for the first time. It was a joyous experience to hear this message on "Calling," by Rev. Van Baren. We are of the same leaning on these matters, and have never before heard them expounded over the radio.

"We are unable to receive the program here at Vandenberg A.F.B., as we are out of range of the station. So we would like to receive future messages and other material you might have."

Our business manager will testify to the fact that our voice is, indeed, being heard. He has informed us that five sets of "The Triple Knowledge" have been requested by a university in Japan! He has also recently mailed a bundle of our material to Britain.

How do they learn of us? It seems that Mr. Vander Wal has asked that question of a correspondent in England. This was the reply: "Thank you for your letter of 2 May 1971. You ask how I came by your address. It was on an old envelope in a book that I found in a second hand book shop."

To quote the business manager — "Amazing!"

News concerning some Reformation Day activities in the west arrived too late for our November 15 column. The young people of our Hull congregation sponsored an evening program on Reformation Sunday. It included "special numbers, a speech by Rev. Moore, and an offering for the young people's scholarship fund."

The congregation in Pella, Iowa, asked Rev. D.

Engelsma to give a public lecture in the afternoon of October 31. According to Loveland's bulletin, "the consistory has given the pastor permission to be gone from our pulpit next Sunday, so that he can give this speech. He plans to speak in Pella on "The 16th Century Reformation of the Church." He will also preach at the evening service of the Pella Church, the Lord willing."

We have received a copy of a newsletter of the Evangelism Committee of our South Holland Protestant Reformed Church. The whole letter is worth quoting, but we'll have to settle for excerpts. The committee is an old one, by the way, but it has a new name. The reason suggested for the change was that "Church Extension," the previous name of the committee, seems to imply that efforts are made to "extend the body Christ so that it becomes bigger than it really is," which is, of course, impossible of realization. "Evangelism," on the other hand, denoting the heralding of the good tidings, "is a Biblical idea and is rich in meaning in itself."

A current project of the committee, according to the newsletter, is that of preparing copy "that can be used by the station as fill-in material for the 'unused portion' of our radio time." An anticipated project is the printing of a bulletin cover. "The front page of the Bulletin Cover will show a picture of our church building; the back cover will contain a statement: THIS WE BELIEVE. The inside will remain blank for messages prepared by our Pastor. Using names taken from telephone books, these will then be mailed for general distribution throughout the Illiana area. Naturally, this mailing will take place over an extended period of time. We hope to enlist the aid of our Young People's Society in this."

Another anticipated project is the publication of a pamphlet entitled *Consolation For the Sick*. Their intention is to make "into an attractive booklet a series of short messages that originally appeared in the bulletins of the First Church during the war years. These can then be distributed on pastoral calls; left in hospital and doctor waiting rooms; supplied to Rest Haven, Holland Home for the Aged, Elim and other local rest homes. They could also be made available to other of our congregations."

The newsletter ends, appropriately, with the following lines: "We go forward in the humble acknowledgment that the Lord requires faithfulness (I Cor. 4:2) of us as a congregation.

"May we be diligent, then, in the dissemination of the truth with which He has singularly blessed us."

D.D.