

The STANDARD BEARER



A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

The fact that He did not come down from the cross is no proof of His impotence, of the triumph of His enemies over Him, but rather of the certainty of the atonement by His willing sacrifice. But no, we do not even need to recall the former manifestations of His power, for we may now look at the cross in the light of His glorious resurrection. That resurrection is God's seal of the sacrifice of Christ and of the perfection of His obedience. "It is finished," — thus announced the Saviour from His cross just before He gave up the ghost. "It is finished!" — such is the testimony of God from heaven in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead! And by faith we receive that Word of God, and though all things of our present experience testify against us, we respond: "Indeed, finished forever!"

— Rev. Herman Hoeksema,
The Amazing Cross, 168-169

MEDITATION

Risen From The Dead

Rev. M. Schipper

"And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you."

Matthew 28:5-7

The first Easter message!

Spoken to women by an angel from heaven!

A comparison of the gospels will help to identify in part these women, who were the first to receive the blessed tidings: the Lord is risen from the dead!

Mary Magdalene, out of whom Jesus had cast seven devils, is mentioned first as being in the company of women who had come early in the morning to pay their last respects to the crucified, and now, as they supposed, dead Christ. On the way to the tomb they had discussed among themselves who would roll away for them the stone that covered the entrance. As they approached the tomb, however, they observed in the dim morning light that the stone was already rolled away. According to John's gospel, Mary must have concluded that someone had been there earlier and removed the body. Consequently she must have left the company to seek out Peter and John to inform them of her conclusion. Consequently, too, she could not have been with the women who were addressed by the angel.

We conclude, therefore, that among the women who heard the message of the angel were Mary, the mother of James and Joses, who was the wife of Cleopas, and probably a sister of the mother of Jesus; Salome, who was the mother of James and John, and the wife of Zebedee; Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward. And Mark leaves us with the impression that many other women who had followed Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem, who had also witnessed the crucifixion, were among them.

Altogether women they were who had cared for Jesus' earthly needs during His ministry, who had been present at the cross to witness the end, and who had followed Joseph and Nicodemus on Friday

afternoon as they bore the body of Jesus to Joseph's cemetery.

They had come in the early morning hour, after the Sabbath was ended, to finish the embalming process begun at the time the body was laid in the tomb. With hearts that were heavy with sorrow, they had come to show their last respects and devotion to what they supposed was a crucified and a dead Lord.

One cannot fail to be troubled with the question: Where were the men?

Striking it is that of all the twelve apostles, John is the only one of whom the gospels inform us that he was present at the crucifixion. It appears that with the death of Christ all their hopes ended in despair. Perhaps the thoughts of their souls can no better be expressed than by the mouth of Cleopas, one of the travelers to Emmaus: "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel. . . ." That Peter would not be there seems quite understandable. Was he not suffering remorse and brooding over the fact that he had willfully denied his Lord in the moment when it would be expected he would most confess Him? But he does his brooding at home, for you do not find him at the cross, or weeping at the tomb.

And so it is that women, not men, are the first to visit the tomb, — now an empty tomb.

They are greeted by an angel who had rolled away the stone, and was sitting upon it.

Luke informs us in his gospel, that when the women observed that the stone was rolled away, they entered into the tomb and found not the body of the

Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: and as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they began to speak to them.

In our text we are told there was one angel. There is really no discrepancy, when you consider that most naturally there would be only one who spoke. Whether there were a thousand or only one, makes no difference really, because the emphasis is not on the angels, but on the fact that God has a message to bring from heaven for His elect, for whom the angels are appointed as ministering spirits. It was a message of such great importance, that it forms the basis for the gospel of redemption that must presently be preached in all the world by the redeemed church. In the resurrection of Christ, death is swallowed up in victory! In His resurrection we have the certification of our justification!

A glorious message!

To perplexed and affrighted women!

Who cannot understand their fear? First of all, there was the stone which had now been rolled away. Those bent on spending a few moments of devotion to a dead body, could only draw the conclusion that Mary made, — some one had come to take that body away. For such fear they had no answer. Secondly, that fear could only be aggravated and increased when they saw not His body. And thirdly, that fear reaches its height when instead they are confronted by shining creatures who had just descended from the glories of heaven.

They are in need of a message that must allay all their fear!

Fear not ye. . . !

For I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified!

He is not here: for He is risen, as He said!

Glorious message, indeed!

Source of great joy!

Ye seek Jesus, the crucified, I know! Him, Whom they nailed to the accursed tree. Him, Whom ye saw writhing in pain, not only the pain imposed upon Him by wicked hands, but more particularly that imposed upon Him by His God; so that He cried out as one forsaken of God. That Jesus, Whom ye saw die on that cross, Who, when He was sure that He had finished the work of redemption, committed His spirit unto the Father Who gave it. That Jesus, Who did no evil, neither was there any guile found in His mouth; but Who nevertheless was treated as the worst of criminals, and executed before the eyes of all the world.

I know Whom ye seek!

But, He is not here!

The grave could hold him no longer! He is no longer in the darkness of Sheol, the sphere of the weak, the mortal, the corruptible, the sphere of flesh and blood of which death is the end.

He is risen, as He said!

Very early this morning, for it is the third day, before you could reach the tomb, the earth quaked, and the rocks did split, and the Prince of life broke the bands of death, and emerged on the other side of the grave, as the first fruit of the dead. Do ye not remember that He said to you: On the third day I shall rise again? Indeed, it is the third day! For there was one day that ended in the awful death on the cross, and there was another day in which He was swallowed up in the darkness of the tomb, and now, today, is the third day, when He is risen from the dead, as He said.

Fear not ye!

Let the enemies fear!

And, O, how they feared! They remembered how He had said that He would rise again, and so they sought to secure the grave, pleading with Pilate for a seal and a guard, that would make it impossible for the word to get out that He was risen from the dead. And when the guard beheld the angel who came to roll back the stone and to announce the resurrection, they feared and became as dead men. That power of darkness that crucified the Lord and would crucify Him again if they had the opportunity, which hates the doctrine of the resurrection as it hates the risen Lord, which manufactures the story that the disciples came while the guard slept and stole the body of Jesus, — that world is fearful. That fear, which knows no end, will be revealed again when the risen and glorified Lord appears on the clouds of heaven, when they shall cry out to the rocks and mountains to cover them from the face of Him with Whom they have to do.

But fear not ye!

For I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified!

O, indeed, if all you are seeking is a dead Jesus, then your seeking is misdirected, and will all be in vain. But, on the other hand, if you are seeking Jesus Who was crucified, then that seeking is salutary and good. Then there is much reason for rejoicing; for they who seek the crucified Christ, must find the risen Lord! Shall you find the risen Lord you must first seek the crucified Jesus! Not a noble man, a wise master, a perfect example, a mighty leader must ye seek. But a Mediator and Saviour Who sheds His life's blood, Who brings atonement for your sins, Who

satisfies the justice of God in payment for your guilt on the accursed tree.

They who diligently seek the crucified Christ, shall, indeed, find that He is risen from the dead as the seal of their justification!

Glorious message!

Comforting invitation!

Come, see the place where the Lord lay! Come, and see all the evidences of the fact that the Lord is risen, indeed!

To be sure, there is first of all the empty tomb. He is not here! Not because, as you may have feared, some one has come to steal or remove His body. But because He is risen, as He said.

But, in the second place, observe particularly the place where the Lord lay! Not merely the slab on which you saw His emaciated body laid on Good Friday afternoon, but especially behold His grave clothes. See how they lie there undisturbed, and precisely as they had been when they were about His body. And see for yourselves that His body is not in them. Notice that head piece, which lies there by itself. As the Lord left the grave with no need that one should come to remove the stone to let Him out, so He could leave the clothes undisturbed.

The resurrection, a wonder, indeed!

And the marvel of it all is that the resurrection is not a returning, but a going on! Not a return to the earthly, the mundane; but an ascension to the glorious life of the heavenlies!

Blessed comfort!

Joyous commission!

Go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: Lo, I have told you!

Witnesses they must be of the resurrection who will bring those disciples word, that they in turn may have a message to bring into all the world. And the evidences shall not rest only on their word, but on the fact that with their own eyes they shall see Him, as He had promised.

Joyous commission for the women, for they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring the disciples word.

Joyous commission also for the church of Christ, which presently may go into all the world bearing the good tidings:

The crucified Saviour is become the risen Lord!

EDITORIAL

The OPC and the "Free Offer" (5)

CONTRARY TO THE SCRIPTURES

Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

We are attempting in this series of editorials to treat both the Murray-Stonehouse pamphlet, *The Free Offer of the Gospel*, and the more recent booklet by pastor Erroll Hulse, *The Free Offer, An Exposition of Common Grace and the Free Invitation of the Gospel*. Thus far in this part of our critique — by way of summary — we have presented the first two items of alleged scriptural proof offered by the Murray-Stonehouse pamphlet, namely, Matthew 5:45-58 and Luke 6:35, 36. We have criticized the Murray-Stonehouse misuse and misinterpretation of these passages. And we have presented briefly our explanation of the passages in question. Then we

turned briefly to the pamphlet by pastor Erroll Hulse, in order to point out that he also proceeds from the notion of common grace to the idea of the "free offer." We criticized pastor Hulse's booklet on the ground that it is totally lacking in exegesis in connection with several passages of Scripture which it cites in support of the theory of common grace. And we noted that, like the Murray-Stonehouse pamphlet, it is guilty of *assuming* that which it ought to prove, of begging the question.

We also promised to show, in the course of our discussion, that the entire idea of a favor of God

toward the reprobate wicked is contrary to the current thought of Scripture. This we deem to be a very serious lack in both booklets. As we pointed out several months ago at length, when one adduces Scriptural evidence in support of a certain doctrine, he must not merely be able to quote some passages of Scripture in isolation from the whole of Scripture. He must not merely cite a few texts which might sound, superficially at least, to support the theory of a favor of God toward the reprobate and the theory of a free offer. Such use of Scripture can only lead to grave errors. The question is: what is the *current teaching* of Scripture? And in this particular instance, the question is: is the Murray-Stonehouse understanding and the Hulse understanding of the Scriptural passages cited in harmony with the current thought of Scripture? And we maintain that the position taken by both pamphlets in regard to these passages is *contrary* to the current teaching of Scripture. This we purpose to show conclusively at this time.

It is the position of the proponents of the "free offer" that God loves the wicked, also the wicked that never come to repentance, and that these wicked are the objects of God's grace and lovingkindness. This is the first issue which must be put to the test of Scripture. The second is that it is in this alleged love to the wicked, also the wicked who do not repent, that God bestows the things of this present life on them. It is in this connection, you will recall, that the Murray-Stonehouse pamphlet quoted Matthew 5:45-48 and Luke 6:35, 36. While they admitted that these passages do not deal with the "free offer of the gospel," they maintained that these passages tell us "something regarding God's benevolence that has bearing upon all manifestations of divine grace," and therefore upon the alleged manifestation of divine grace in the "free offer." Over against this, we hold that God does not love, but hates the wicked who never come to repentance. The latter are, of course, the reprobate. But for the sake of argument, we will not even use the term *reprobate*, but simply speak of the *wicked*. And we will simply allow the Scriptures to speak, and show that the current teaching of Scripture *literally* contradicts the position of the Murray-Stonehouse pamphlet (and also, of course, that of the Hulse booklet). We can quote Scripture at length, and simply allow Scripture to speak for itself with respect to this question. And bear in mind, please, that this is of the utmost importance. Scripture does not contradict itself. This means, therefore, that no individual passage of the Word of God can be in conflict with the current teaching of Holy Scripture. This is sound exegetical principle. It has always been the Reformed method of exegesis to explain a given passage in the light of the whole of Scripture. And this "light of the whole of

Scripture" we will now allow to fall on the issue at hand. Parenthetically, we may remark that when the late Rev. Herman Hoeksema dealt with this subject in Volume 33 in a series of articles which he for some reason never completed, he compiled a large number of passages from Holy Scripture to demonstrate this current teaching of Scripture. For the most part we will quote those passages.

Turning to the book of Psalms we cite the following:

Psalm 5:5, "The foolish shall not stand in thy sight; thou hatest all workers of iniquity."

Psalm 5:6, "Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man."

Psalm 7:11-13: "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, he will whet his sword: he hath bent his bow, and made it ready. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors."

Psalm 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

Psalm 11:4-6: "The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men. The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup."

Psalm 18:25-27: "With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward. For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks."

Psalm 21:8-11: "Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee. Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them. Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men. For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform."

Psalm 34:15, 16: "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth."

Note carefully that it is literally true of many of the above passages, so that they need not even be further explained, that God's attitude toward the wicked not only for the future but even in this

present time is the very opposite of an attitude of lovingkindness and grace. And this is also true according to the book of Proverbs. Pay attention to the following passages from this book which is replete with sharp antitheses:

Proverbs 3:31-33: "Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways. For the froward is abomination to the Lord: but his secret is with the righteous. The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just." More graphically it would not be stated. Notice: Jehovah's curse, the word of His wrath, is right in the house of the wicked, under his very roof! We ask: does the Lord bless the house of the wicked at the same time that His curse is in that house? Such an idea is obviously contradictory and inexpressibly foolish.

Proverbs 10:3: "The Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but he casteth away the substance of the wicked."

Proverbs 10:6: "Blessings are upon the head of the just: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked."

Proverbs 10:27-29: "The fear of the Lord prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened. The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish. The way of the Lord is strength to the upright: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity."

Proverbs 12:2: "A good man obtaineth favor of the Lord: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn."

Proverbs 12:22: "Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight."

Proverbs 15:6: "In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble."

Proverbs 15:8: "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight."

Proverbs 15:9: "The way of the wicked is an

abomination unto the Lord: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness."

Proverbs 15:26: "The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord: but the words of the pure are pleasant words."

Proverbs 15:26: "The Lord is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous."

The simple fact is that it is impossible to find in this book of Proverbs a love or favor of God to the wicked.

And the same is true of the prophets. The fundamental note of the prophets is found in a passage like Isaiah 3:10, 11: "Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him." Or attend to a passage such as Isaiah 5:20-25: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him! Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel. Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." And to mention but one more passage, take note of Isaiah 57:20, 21: "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

SEND US NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF POTENTIAL READERS;

WE WILL SEND SAMPLE COPIES.

The Standard Bearer

In Retrospect

Rev. G. Van Baren



Throughout the issues of the *Standard Bearer* one finds many, many meditations of the late Rev. G. Vos. In his inimitable way he presented the truths of the Word of God that touched the hearts of many children of God. Still, among many of our older generation, there are those who will begin, "Do you remember that meditation of Rev. Vos, when he wrote. . . ?" Herewith follows one of those meditations from the *Standard Bearer* of February 1, 1951.

RIDICULOUS HALTING

Rev. G. Vos

"And Elijah came unto all the people and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word."

I Kings 18:21

Times were evil in the days of Elijah, the prophet of the Lord.

There was a very wicked king on the throne, and he had ruled Israel for twenty-two years at the time of this speech of the prophet. And when Elijah speaks of two opinions, causing the people of God to halt ridiculously, you can imagine where they received their incentive; their example.

This wicked king had married a heathen princess, named Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians. And ever since her appearance on the stage of history, her name has been synonymous with the brazen harlot. She was a very wicked woman, indeed.

Israel numbered four hundred and fifty Baal-priests. And they were a sorry lot. Priests of that which is not. What vanity!

The Holy Bible tells us that the people of God walked in vanities. There was Baal-worship and the adoration of the Ashtaroth on every side.

No, there was no *historical* incentive to follow

these detestable deities. The history of Israel is comprised in the NAME! That was all. It was all Jehovah. They were a people of miracles. Every man, woman, and child was the offspring of Abraham, after he was dead, and after his wife, Sarah, was dead. They were a people that were born through the miracle of Jehovah. They were miraculously called too. And they went to the land of miracles. If you please: God dwelled there. The Holy God, before whose countenance the angels cover their faces.

Were they not a miraculous people? And did they not dwell in a miraculous land? Go to Jerusalem and you will marvel. There is a place where Jehovah dwells. It is called the Holy of Holies. God feels at home with man, elect man.

And now they will serve Baal, and adore Ashtaroth? For shame!

Yes, but wait: they are not done with Jehovah. Oh no, they have Baal and they have Ashtaroth, but they also have Jehovah on their lips. They serve both.

Jereboam had given expression to it: he pointed to

the two golden calves, and said: Behold the God that brought you up from Egypt.

And the result?

It is this: they halted.

And to halt is a ridiculous situation.

* * * * *

To halt is ridiculous. It is laughable.

Try to walk with one foot on the sidewalk, and with the other in the gutter.

To halt, literally, is to have different planes for your feet.

Figuratively, it is to be double-minded.

Spiritually, it is to be more abominable than the out and out wicked.

Let us see. Who was Baal? Baal was the sun-god of the Syro-phenecian nations. Literally it meant Lord or Master. It signified the productive power and fertility of the sun. In a word: it was expressive of power, might.

But it was all a dream. It did not exist. It was literally nothing and vanity. When Israel worshipped Baal, they worshipped the nothing, the nihil.

But on the other hand, there was Jehovah. Ah me, how shall I circumscribe Jehovah? What shall I say of Him?

He is the God of whom Moses sang. He had gone back through all the generations and had arrived at that moment when God created the worlds. And looking still further he saw Jehovah who is from everlasting to everlasting. Read the ninetieth psalm, and worship.

And He is truly the adorable God. He had revealed Himself to Israel. And that revelation found its climax in the Holy of Holies. That place spoke of the eternal Mystery: God and Man united into one. He had taken Israel from out of Ur of Chaldees, and He had labored with Israel until he dwelled in the land of God, in the Wonderland. And in that Wonderland He told them of still greater beauties to come. Read the psalm of Asaph (73).

And all His footsteps were grace, love, and lovingkindness.

Certainly Jehovah had revealed Himself to Israel, and all such revelation should tend to praise, honor and worship. In a word: the revelation of Jehovah should find among Israel just one reaction: they should serve Him.

But they did not. That is, they served Him alright, but they also served the great NOTHING. And that is Baal.

And so they made themselves ridiculous.

In their foolish halting between two opinions.

Mirabile visu!

* * * * *

Israel was halting between two opinions, and made themselves detestable in the eyes of God and man.

And God remembered His covenant, and He sent the man of God to speak to this foolish people. And the name of that man of God was Elijah. What an appropriate name! It means: Jehovah is God! His very introduction was a message itself. What do I say?! It was the only message he was about to bring.

What little child among us does not know of that wonderful man of God?

His main characteristic was this: he stood before God. He always fought for God. And through the Holy Spirit he prayed to God that it might not rain, and it rained not for three years and six months. And why? Because of this wicked halting between two opinions. Remember that Ahab had been on the throne for 22 years. Conditions were terrible in the land of miracles.

And at the conclusion of this three year period, Elijah called all Israel together at Mount Carmel.

There they come! I see thousands and thousands. And among them is the host of Baal priests. They are there at Elijah's bidding.

And when the scene is set, Elijah preached his introductory sermon.

And what a sermon!

He goes at once to the very heart of the abomination: How long halt ye between two opinions? He is a rather ruthless preacher.

Imagine yourself to be a wise man. You are going to reprove a friend. And you prepare many pretty speeches. You are going to captivate him with many subtleties.

Not so Elijah. The man has no tact at all. His introduction comes to this: Why be a fool, O Israel!

Yes, and they were fools. On the one hand they hang on to the great NOTHING. And that is Baal. They prostrate themselves before the NOTHING.

And on the other hand, they say that they serve Jehovah.

They made spiritual fools of themselves.

The picture of any man who endeavours to hang on to Baal and to Jehovah.

Ridiculous halting between two opinions.

Ludicrous behaviour.

Why halt ye between two opinions?

If Jehovah be God . . . follow Him!

But if Baal, then follow him!

By the way: note that there are but two possibilities. You either serve Jehovah or you serve Baal, or anything Baal stands for.

What awful injunction! Jehovah or Baal!

Much later we hear something that is somewhat of an echo to this injunction of Elijah: Christ or Bar-abbas!

Awful injunction: Jehovah or Baal.

Jehovah is all that is lovely, just and good.

Baal is all that is vain, idle, empty and corrupt.

Dear reader, do you know what makes me shudder at this point? It is this: how marvellous is God's patience. He suffers long and is kind. He is even willing to stand on a duo with the devil himself. And standing before Israel, He asks the question: Whom do you want? After all is said and done, the voice of Elijah was really the voice of God.

What is Israel going to do?

To ask the question seems sinful. What else but to choose God! Who will be fool enough to choose the devil, Baal, the murderer Bar-abbas?

Ah, but do not be too hasty: these people are halting. They try to keep from choosing. They walk on two planes. They say that they serve both Jehovah and Baal. And of that kind of people you can expect anything.

And so the choice is set before the face of God's people.

They are bidden to choose.

They may not halt between two opinions.

They must cease their ridiculous halting.

Later, much later, Jesus asks of His church in Laodicea: Oh that you were either cold or hot!

The luke warm is abominable.

And ludicrous.

* * * * *

And what is the result?

The people answered him not a word.

Tell me, would you not expect to see the columns of fire descending from a wrathful God? Here is God standing on a duo: Jehovah contra Lucifer! Here stands beauty such as will make heaven musical forever, overagainst ugliness such as will make hell abominable for all eternity.

And the people utter not a word.

Well, let us see. . . .

O God, forgive! We are so wicked and perverse.

Wonder what the angels were thinking at this

juncture?

The people just stand there. There is no reaction. What do I say? Not reaction? It is the abominable indifference of the apostate. It is the striking of the beautiful Face of God. It is the insult against heaven and heaven's God.

Does this not remind you of our very day? Is it any different now?

Who does not call himself a Christian? We all serve God, do we not? Everyone knows the Almighty, and everyone calls himself after His name. Try to call a man a heathen, a pagan, and you will have trouble on your hands.

Such it is in the church universal, be they orthodox or liberal.

Such it is in the world of the so-called Christian nations.

Yes, they know God and call themselves after His name. They are said to serve Him.

But they serve also Baal. No, I do not mean the old sun-god of the Syro-phenecians. People are too modern, they are too wise for that nonsense.

But they serve Baal nevertheless.

That is, they serve the great NOTHING.

There is a great hurrying, a great pondering, a great philosophizing of the vain, the empty, the idle, the deceptive, the lying. In short, there is a great service of the devil. And it were well if we do not look too far from home. Let us enter into the recesses of our hearts, and we will be surprised at the abominations we will find.

I would like to make this very clear: there is much halting between two opinions in anno Domini 1951.

There is much folly, much ludicrous behaviour among us today.

It is good sense today to read I Kings 18, and to apply it to ourselves.

Ridiculous halting.

* * * * *

And still, the choice is so easy. Of course, Jehovah is God, and He ought to be and He must be served.

Serve Baal and try at the same time to serve Jehovah, and you become a fool, and your end is hell.

Serve Baal? Yes, if you do, you become a fool.

Did you read that chapter in First Kings? Do, and you will be inclined to laugh.

It is one of the places of Holy Writ that uses irony in order to portray the fool in his folly. I receive the impression that Elijah stood near the altar with a

perpetual smile on his face.

At least he can hold himself no longer. He steps forth and politely addresses the priests of Baal. These poor deluded people are in a dither about their precious god. But Elijah intervenes and says, Just a minute! Baal is a god: perhaps he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, yes, he may even be asleep. Cry a little louder!

Holy irony of God!

And the priests jump against the altar: they cut themselves with knives, but the fire from heaven is absent. The sum of all their work is exactly zero.

And what would you expect? Baal is not. He is the NOTHING.

And the ridiculousness of halting between two opinions is manifested.

* * * * *

But Elijah is going to assure us that Jehovah is God.

And that He should be served.

You know the story. It is surpassingly beautiful. Do not forget that water. Water is the very enemy of fire. Elijah will prevent the invention of the sinner. Everything is soaking wet.

And then comes the prayer of faith to Him who is. Baal is the NOTHING. But do you know that the root meaning of Jehovah is the I AM? And He will prove it today.

The prayer: Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known today that Thou art God in Israel. . . .

Beautiful prayer of faith!

And the fire fell and consumed, and consumed. . . .

Of course, God is God. And salvation is of the Lord. And that is Jesus.

And so let us not halt. Let us stand firm on the Rock.

And the Rock is Christ.

TAKING HEED TO THE DOCTRINE

“Hyper-Calvinism” and the Call of the Gospel

Rev. David Engelsma

“Hyper-Calvinism” is a term of reproach and condemnation. It is the charge that a theological teaching which claims to be Calvinism has, in fact, so exaggerated and distorted Calvinism that it is not genuine Calvinism at all. The body of doctrines described as hyper-Calvinism is accused of having gone beyond true Calvinism, so that, although it has a semblance of Calvinism, it is, in reality, a perversion of Calvinism. Indeed, the seriousness of the epithet, “hyper-Calvinism,” is that it alleges a theological position to be false doctrine.

In Calvinistic circles, it is common to blacken with this brush all those who deny “the offer of the gospel.” Since the Protestant Reformed Churches are known to deny the offer, we are dismissed, often offhand, as hyper-Calvinists. This is persistently done

by some who know better. Writing in the Christian Reformed magazine, *The Banner* (September 28, 1973, p. 15), Rev. C. Boomsma repeats the old canard when he states that the Christian Reformed Church opposed the “doctrinal deviation” of “hyper-Calvinism in the Common Grace controversy.”

But there may also be others who misunderstand our denial of the offer and whose suspicion that we are hyper-Calvinists is due to honest ignorance. The reason for the misunderstanding is that there have been those who called themselves Calvinists and who denied that the gospel should be preached to all persons promiscuously and without distinction. They especially repudiated the notion that it is the duty of the Church and the preacher to call everyone who

comes under the preaching to repent and believe. This, they said, must be limited to those who manifest their election in certain signs of regeneration. They grounded their position in the doctrines of Calvinism. They argued thus: since God has elected some only; since Christ has died only for the elect; since all the unregenerated reprobate are totally depraved, incapable of heeding any call to believe; and since God's grace is irresistible in the preaching; therefore, there cannot be, may not be, and need not be any call to anyone except the elect. They referred to their position as a "denial of the offer of the gospel." The position of the Protestant Reformed Churches may, in the minds of some, be confused with this teaching, from which, in fact, it differs radically.

Our denial of the offer of the gospel is in no sense of the word hyper-Calvinism. On the contrary, the theory of the offer as currently held in Reformed, or Calvinistic circles is, to coin a word, "hypo-Calvinism," that is, a teaching that falls below the level of true Calvinism and that affects the falling away from Calvinism on the part of the churches that maintain it. It is the purpose of this article, and of several that will follow, to show this. There is need for this today, not so much to convince our enemies who are determined deliberately to misrepresent our doctrine, but to inform and warn others who have recently come to know and embrace some of the main tenets of the Reformed faith, but who have uncritically adopted the offer of the gospel.

Of late, there has been a resurgence of interest in Calvinism, as they call it, both in our country and abroad. This interest is not found in the nominally Reformed denominations, where for the most part one finds either ignorance of or opposition to the great, distinctive doctrines of the Reformed faith, but among small groups, mostly Baptist, that spring up here and there. These churches are consciously adopting and defending the conception of the offer that has been developed by the Christian Reformed Church and by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. But it seems that they do so, at least to some extent, against the background of the error of the denial that the Church ought to preach to all and sundry to whom God sends her and to call all men to believe. They seem to fear that the only alternative to the offer is the limitation of the call to those who indicate that they are already regenerated. These churches should consider that there is another alternative to the theory of the offer, one that in no

way hamstrings preaching or hinders the Church's ministry of calling all who hear the preaching to repent and believe. They should also consider our warning that the offer is a fatal concession to Arminianism, so that the introduction of it into a Reformed, or Calvinistic Church is, in principle, the ruin of the Church as a Reformed body.

There is another purpose of this short series of articles: to remind ourselves that our denial of the offer has nothing in common with the teaching of some in the past, and some also today, which may, with some right, be called "hyper-Calvinism," and to sound a warning against the danger of slipping off into that error.

* * * * *

In most cases, the charge, "hyper-Calvinist," is nothing but a deceptive attack upon Calvinism itself. Someone hates Calvinism, or the uncompromising, consistent defense of Calvinism, yet he hesitates to attack Calvinism openly and forthrightly, and therefore he disguises his attack as an attack on hyper-Calvinism and hyper-Calvinists.

An outstanding and clear example of this cowardly, deceitful method of attacking Calvinism is the attack on Calvinism by the self-styled evangelist, John R. Rice, in two books, *Some Serious, Popular False Doctrines* and *Predestined for Hell? No!*. Chapter 7 of the former is entitled, "Hyper-Calvinism — A False Doctrine," and the cover of the latter explains that the author is busy "correcting the errors of Hyper-Calvinism." Under pretense of opposing hyper-Calvinism, Rice fights the truth that men are saved by God's sovereign grace alone, and propounds the ancient heresy that man saves himself by the exercise of his free-will.

This is obvious in the scurrilous little book, *Predestined for Hell? No!*.¹ The author's tactics are the despicable tactics that the Arminians have always used against the Reformed faith. As the title indicates, the attack on election and salvation by sovereign grace alone is launched specifically against the doctrine of reprobation. The crafty Arminians are aware that men have more natural antipathy to reprobation than to any other doctrine, and feel that they can put the Reformed faith in a bad light from the outset, if they succeed in making reprobation the first and main subject of debate. This was exactly what Episcopius and the Arminian party tried to do at Dordt when, having failed in their political maneuverings, they proposed to the Synod that the Synod first take up the doctrine of reprobation.²

¹Murfreesboro, Tennessee: Sword of the Lord Foundation, 1958.

²The Synod wisely and justly refused to follow this order. It began with election and salvation by God's free and sovereign grace. The answer to the question, "Are some men ordained by God to hell, sovereignly and eternally?" is "Yes." But this is not primary — God's

election of His Church in Jesus Christ is. Nor is reprobation the issue between the Reformed and the Arminians — gracious salvation founded in election is. Today also, we defenders of gracious salvation must not allow the Arminians to set the agenda or to determine what shall be emphasized as primary and central.

Then, the author caricatures reprobation. On the cover is this picture: a disconsolate, unwilling man is forced into the livid flames of hell at the point of a sword tyrannically wielded by the arm of God. Already on the third page of the book, Calvinists are epitomized as people who teach that “there are babes in Hell not a span long.”

The contents of the book are an open, all-out assault upon the first four of the well-known “five points of Calvinism,” a rejection of total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, and irresistible grace.³ What it is that Rice hates with all his heart becomes plain when he quotes the man who is, for Rice, the quintessential hyper-Calvinist, Herman Hoeksema. To illustrate hyper-Calvinism, Rice quotes from Hoeksema’s *Whosoever Will*.⁴ What does Hoeksema write in the offensive paragraph? That God is a tyrant Who shuts His ears to the pleas of poor sinners to be saved, and thrusts them, willy-nilly, into hell? Nothing of the sort. Rather, Hoeksema proclaims these truths: “(salvation) is absolutely divine. Man . . . cannot possibly co-operate with God in his own salvation . . . the sinner is of himself neither capable nor willing to receive that salvation . . . But God ordained, and prepared this salvation with absolutely sovereign freedom for His own, His chosen ones alone, and upon them He bestows it. . . .” This is all: the total depravity of man by nature; salvation by free, sovereign grace alone; God’s gracious election of some men unto salvation. This, says Rice, is the heights of hyper-Calvinism. But, in reality, it is simply Calvinism, the historic Reformed faith.

There is no need to refute Rice’s arguments against Calvinism, nor to expose his defense of Arminianism from Scripture, although a lover of the Reformed faith is sorely tempted to do this, in order to lay bare the utter poverty of modern Arminianism. Rice blunders around in the Bible, as Luther said of Erasmus, the way a pig roots about in a sack of feed.

It serves our purpose to stress two things regarding the war-cry, “hyper-Calvinism,” that become plain from such works as those of John Rice.

First, the charge, “hyper-Calvinism,” masks an attack on *Calvinism*. Rice is an Arminian and a Pelagian. He admits to holding that every man’s salvation depends on the choice of his own free will — this is Arminianism. He also maintains that men only *potentially* died in Adam, and that the natural man

who has nothing more than the testimony of God in creation may be saved by this natural light — this is sheer Pelagianism. Rice is guilty of the one, great, “serious, popular false doctrine”: man saves himself by his own willing and running. As such, he is an inveterate foe of Calvinism, which maintains the true doctrine: man’s salvation is of God Who showeth mercy.

The attack on Calvinism by means of the charge, “hyper-Calvinism,” is another of the calumnies heaped upon the Reformed faith, as the Conclusion of the Canons of Dordt puts it. It is reproach for Christ’s sake that Reformed people must suffer in this life. But we do, with the Conclusion of the Canons, warn the calumniators “to consider the terrible judgment of God which awaits them,” and we do call as many as piously call upon the name of Jesus not to judge our faith on the basis of the accusations of our enemies. In light of the fact that foes of the Reformed faith have always misrepresented that faith, men today ought at least to consider that the charge, “hyper-Calvinists,” might be a cheap shot at a thorough-going, consistent Calvinism.

Secondly, it is significant that the heart of Rice’s opposition to Calvinism is his insistence that the doctrines of Calvinism make preaching, particularly the call of the gospel, impossible. In Rice’s terminology, Calvinism destroys “soul-winning.” He writes: “This doctrine (i.e., Calvinism — DE) insists that we need not urge a man to turn to Christ. He cannot turn until God forces him to do so. If God has planned for him to be eternally lost, he will not be turned to God. If God has planned for him to be saved, then ‘irresistible grace,’ the hyper-Calvinist says, will force him to be saved.” In the chapter entitled, “The Harm Done by Hyper-Calvinism Heresy,” the first two alleged evil consequences of Calvinism are: “I. Hyper-Calvinists Actually Hinder and Oppose Gospel Preaching and Soul Winning” and “II. Hyper-Calvinism is Either Indifferent to or Opposed to Foreign Missions.”

This was the charge laid against the Reformed faith by the Arminians at the time of the Synod of Dordt. The Arminians argued that election, limited atonement, and sovereign grace ruled out the serious call of the gospel to all who hear the preaching. In the Canons, the Reformed Churches proved that the charge was false, and that the lively preaching, including the serious call to repentance and faith, retains its full rights within the framework of the

³Rice claims to believe the fifth point of Calvinism, the perseverance of saints, which he calls “eternal security.” This is an insignificant oddity of some in the Arminian camp. Someone has wittily characterized this position of some Arminians as the teaching that “you can get in by yourself (i.e., into salvation), but you can’t get out.” In reality, there is a basic difference between Rice’s teaching of eternal security and the Reformed doctrine of perseverance. For Rice

and his ilk, eternal security is the certainty that everyone who makes a cheap decision for Christ will go to heaven, no matter how he lives after he has made the decision. The Reformed doctrine of perseverance is the truth that God preserves the regenerated elect unto eternal life in the way of his faith and faithfulness, i.e., through sanctification of life.

⁴*Predestined for Hell? No!*, p. 11. Cf. also pp. 95ff.

doctrines of Calvinism. The Reformed faith does full justice to preaching, including the call of the gospel, *while holding wholeheartedly and without qualifications to predestination, limited atonement, and irresistible grace*. Its response to the monotonous Arminian allegation that it has no place for the call of the gospel is never that it hedges on or compromises predestination (election and reprobation) and sovereign grace.

This is forgotten by many Calvinists today, to the peril of the faith that they profess to love. To the charge that the Reformed faith cannot in the preaching call all who hear to repent and believe, they respond by compromising the essential doctrines of

Calvinism. By adopting the theory of the well-meant offer of the gospel, these churches begin saying "Yes and No" to the great Calvinistic doctrines of grace: "Yes, God loved and chose only some men, but, no, He also loves and desires to save everybody"; "Yes, God's grace in the preaching is irresistible, but, no, God's grace for some in the preaching fails to save them"; "Yes, Christ of the cross is only for the elect, but, no, He is also for the reprobate." This is the theology of the offer. This is not the way to make place, in the Reformed system, for the serious call of the gospel to all who hear. This is not the way to safeguard the lively preaching. It is the way to surrender the Reformed faith. It is the way to lose the gospel of grace itself.

(to be continued)

All Around Us

Prof. H. Hanko

From time to time one must make an effort to catch up with a large number of relatively unimportant items which accumulate in the file. These are items which are of some interest to our readers and are worth some comment, but they really do not merit a column by themselves, nor even a half column in the Standard Bearer. One faces a time of decision when the pile accumulates: they must be used or they must be thrown away.

This column for this time is a "catch-up" column; and we include in it a number of these less-important matters.

Parochiaid

There are still a number of issues in the courts which are connected in one way or another to the general problem of parochiaid. *Christianity Today* reports on the following:

*Missouri school officials have refused to send public school teachers into parochial schools to help in federally funded remedial reading programs. The issue is now before the Supreme Court.

*In a number of states a kind of "reverse shared time program" is being practiced. Our readers will recall that "shared time programs" involved the sending of parochial students to public schools for instruction in such subjects as were "religiously neutral." This new program involves the sending of

public school teachers into parochial classrooms to teach "religiously neutral" subjects. The practice has been ruled unconstitutional by the Kentucky federal court.

*The parochial and private schools in Maryland had been lobbying for money from the public funds of the state to purchase books and provide bus service for their schools. They want \$7.5 million dollars. The state assembly had approved such a plan earlier, but it was rejected by the voters. If such a measure should be accepted, books purchased under such a plan would remain the property of the state, and would be screened to see to it that the books contained no "religious instruction."

*The voucher plan has been instituted in an experimental basis in New Hampshire. According to this plan, parents with children in private or parochial schools will receive vouchers from the state or federal government which can be cashed in at the school of their choice and which can be redeemed by the school with money from the public till. This experimental program is being financed in its initial stages by the federal Health, Education, and Welfare Agency (HEW).

*New York State had adopted an "interim plan" to allow up to \$1,700 in tuition grants covering the first two years for each student attending a public or private (including church-related) school on the college level in the state.

The more one hears and reads of all these various programs being tried, the more one becomes convinced that state aid to education in private schools is a plague to be avoided.

Childish Decisions For Christ

An interesting note was found in a recent issue of *The Banner* in which a psychiatrist and Sunday School teacher told members of a conference on Christian education about the dangers of children accepting Christ as Savior. This psychiatrist was particularly opposed to children accepting Christ in early childhood because it could well lead to confusion later on in life. Oftentimes, so the psychiatrist informed his audiences, such early acceptance of Christ leads to doubt rather than assurance in later years.

Although one is tempted to make more than a few comments on this opinion of the psychiatrist, what is particularly interesting is the unstated implication that a decision to accept Christ made later in life is without such dangers. This we dispute. The whole idea of accepting Christ as Savior is Arminian, in that it rests upon the fundamental premises that salvation is brought about by an act of one's own will. This always leads to doubt. For not only must one by his own will make the initial decision to accept Christ,

but one must also persevere in that — and, again, by his own strength and power. This can only lead to uncertainty and doubt. The Canons of Dordt specifically address themselves to this question in more than one place, and our Belgic Confession very beautifully expresses the truth of the matter when it says: "Moreover, though we do good works, we do not found our salvation upon them; for we do not work but what is polluted by our flesh, and also punishable; and although we could perform such works, still the remembrance of one sin is sufficient to make God reject them. Thus then we would always be in doubt, tossed to and fro without any certainty, and our poor consciences continually vexed, if they relied not on the merits of the suffering and death of our Savior." (Art. XXIV)

The doctrines of sovereign election and sovereign grace alone lead to assurance. And the believing parent (and teacher) makes no effort to lead a child to accept Christ, but instructs on the basis of the sure promises of God's everlasting covenant of grace.

Marriage Counseling A La The World

In all the problems of life including those which arise in marriage, the Scriptures give the only solutions. When the solutions of the Scriptures are abandoned, then other solutions are invented which turn out to be no solutions at all, but which aggravate the problems or create new ones. Sometimes, however, the desperate attempts to find solutions are really very funny. Such an attempt was recently reported in *Newsweek* — and in all seriousness.

It seems that in some counseling centers partners of a troubled marriage are aided by playing a game with electric trains. "To play the game, husband and wife sit at opposite sides of a large board divided by a low partition that prevents them from observing each other's moves. But they can see one another's faces

over the partition and are free to discuss tactics and strategy as the game progresses. Using individual control panels, each partner directs his own train forward or backward over one of two paths to a terminal point. There are two routes, a direct one and a long, winding one. A quick trip is rewarded with imaginary pennies and a slow trip is penalized. If both partners choose the direct route, there is a "collision" (indicated by a red light) just short of the terminal point, and one or both players must back up their trains so that the game may proceed. Each player also controls a barrier that prevents his partner's train from moving until he chooses to remove it.

"During this confrontation, each partner has options: he can play primarily against the clock (he

starts to lose pennies after 30 seconds); he can compete heavily against his partner by employing the barrier — though this can cost him time in getting his own train through; or he may decide to cooperate with his partner to get both trains to the terminal in the least amount of time.”

The way people play the game reveals, according to psychologists, unconscious patterns and rules which govern marital relationships. According to

various “interpretations” given by the psychologists, much is learned concerning what is wrong with the marriage, what needs to be done to correct the marriage, or whether divorce is inevitable.

When asked how happily married couples would play the game, the inventor of this method of therapy replied: “The fact is that happily married couples just don’t come to see marriage counselors.”

On Growing Old

Newsweek also carried a feature article rather recently on the subject “Can Aging Be Cured?” The thrust of the article was that science is bending every effort to increase the lifespan of people, and the hope is that within a short time, life will be able to be prolonged indefinitely. Already some startling breakthroughs have been made.

There are several thoughts which come to mind when one reads this sort of thing. 1) There is a certain irony about it. On the one hand, science does all it can to prolong life while on the other hand, science openly advocates ending life. The prolongation of life is claimed to be a worthy goal for those who often suffer from all kinds of illnesses and who have nearly finished their life’s path. The ending of life is considered to be a worthy goal for unborn babes

who, humanly speaking, have their whole life ahead of them if it is not brutally terminated by an abortionist’s sophisticated equipment. 2) The assumption underlying such efforts is that death is normal and that aging is a disease which can be, according to the title, “cured.” Scripture tells us that death is not normal; it is the sentence of God’s wrath upon sinful man. And aging is not curable, but is the inevitable realization of God’s curse. 3) Although even the child of God quite naturally clings to life, he realizes that growing old is not always something to be coveted at all costs. For one who belongs to Christ, death is the end of an oftentimes weary pilgrimage and deliverance into the blessedness of God’s house with many mansions. There are many things he fears more than death.

An Unfulfilled Prediction

A long time ago, perhaps as long ago as last summer, one of our readers sent me an article clipped out of a newspaper in which a number of scientists predicted “a moderate quake” within “several months” about 100 miles southeast of San Francisco. While earthquake predicting is a favorite pastime, not only among scientists but also in the companies of self-made seers and would-be prophets, this prediction was especially newsworthy because it was made by government scientists, it was backed up by a wealth of empirical evidence, and it was the first attempt to forecast the strength, exact location and approximate time of an earthquake. Well, the three or four months have come and gone and no earthquake has been recorded anywhere near that area.

While we do not dispute the fact that it is within the realm of possibility that scientists may reach a point in the science of seismography where they will be able to do some fairly accurate predicting of earthquakes much after the fashion in which they predict the weather, it remains a fact that scientists forget that God sends earthquakes. Scripture tells us not only that God shakes the earth, but that these very earthquakes are signs of the coming of Christ. There will always be a certain unpredictability about them, therefore, culminating in the final destruction of all things. God often surprises us, and God often surprises the scientists with their most accurate guesses.

STUDIES IN ISAIAH

Judah's Good Works Adjudged Sinful

(Isaiah 1:14-17)

Rev. Robert C. Harbach

Studies in and preaching from the prophecy of Isaiah should be essentially exegetical. If we follow the plan of reading out what is written in this portion of the Word of God, we will give little or no space to so-called "critical" interpretation. Our efforts will rather be that of the expository preacher. In this way we will avoid any waste of time and space on the intellectual dust of "higher criticism." True, criticism, indeed, is not only commendable, but is necessary. That is, we must constantly make judgments in the light of the Word of God — pass judgment on every form of error which is repugnant to the Word. But it is only misplaced effort, vainly expended, to impeach the truthfulness of this prophecy, to shred and dismember it of its authenticity, to enervate it of its power in sovereign grace. We, as believers, may be grateful that the question as to what parts of the Book of Isaiah are genuinely his, need not be left to the tortuous treatment of Teutonic criticism, nor to the subjective opinions of German unbelief. We may justly pour contempt on these conceited reveries of Modernism. For they are at best but the crumbling ruins of exploded errors accruing from academic curiosities.

The sinful condition of men is clearly terrible in the deepest sense of the word. Man's heart is totally corrupt, and "wholly gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil," so that he is enmity against God, and his imaginations are only evil continually. This is true also of God's own people. They are by nature the children of wrath, even as the rest. *Their* perverseness is vividly set forth in this context. They take up their own weapons of warfare against the Lord. They are denominated rebels, evil doers. Their condition is culpable. But it is also pathetic. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider" (1:3). Israel had gone away backward. Iniquity and sin multiplied

everywhere, and "the knowledge of the Holy One" seemed perished. There were many men of Belial, men of Sodom. This does not mean that Israel was not as "religious" as heretofore. If anything, he was even more religious. There was strict attendance to the ceremonial observances. They were careful to bring the proper sacrifice. Appointed sabbath gatherings and assemblies were carefully observed. Yet their lives were filled with hypocrisy, greed, oppression and murder, in that order.

1:14, "Your new moons and your appointed festivals My soul hateth; they are upon Me a cumbrance. I am wearied to exhaustion to lift them up." These words are directed to the rulers and citizens of the nation. Their worship is no longer acceptable to God. It is an abomination to Him. Though it was performed with outward devotion, He hated the whole of it. They had a form of godliness, but denied the power thereof. They no longer saw the spiritual meaning of their sacrifices and ceremonies. They no longer saw Christ in them. Thus they denied Christ and His atoning blood. They had only the mere shell of religion. All the rites, rituals and dead formalism of modern worship may appeal to the senses. Outward performances do not require much thought, and so are popular with the majority, much more popular than a doctrinal faith, more popular than anything spiritual. But the Lord, to speak very humanly at this point, is sick and tired of it all. He can never set His seal of approval upon it.

1:15, "And in spreading out your palms, I will hide My eyes from you; also, as ye add supplication, I will hear nothing (of it). Your hands are full of bloods." Hands are the figure of actions, deeds. But back of the hands is the whole man with the will, desires, and intellect. The heart is the ethical center of man's being, and from which are all the issues of life. The charge then means, "Your whole being, hands, lips, mouth, tongue, mind, will, desires and heart, as to its

nature is full of blood, that is, spiritually and morally totally corrupt.

The blood on the hands is the figure of murder. However, not only murder, but every form of transgression of God's commandments. This is not hard to see. Hatred is murder, essentially. He who hates, murders, even though he does not allow his hatred expression in word and deed. Hence the man who steals commits murder; for in stealing he is motivated by hatred for God and man: and hatred is murder. The same is true of adultery, or the sin of having other gods before God's face (spiritual adultery). So of the taking of the Lord's name in vain, or of desecrating the Sabbath. The impulse is always hatred of God and man; and hatred is murder. It is evident, then, that *blood* stands for (1) all manner of transgression of all the law; and (2) the total spiritual-moral pollution of man's moral nature.

Take notice of the fact that God says, "Your hands are *full* of blood." That is, there is not a spot on your hands, however infinitesimal, that is *not* covered with blood. No wonder the word is *bloods*, plural! Your whole nature is corrupt. Apart from grace, there is not a spark of goodness in you.

Israel was sacrificing unto God a multitude of sacrifices, appearing before God's face in His holy temple, and there lifting up their hands in the regular Jewish custom of the palms turned upward in prayer, yet doing so with hands full of blood. They tried to make their piety and religion a cloak for their hatred and murder. For those same hands when engaged outside the temple in their life's work were employed in breaking the poor in pieces. Therefore their worship was merely the cloak of covetousness. They made a false profession to hide their malicious aims.

The exponents of the theory of "common grace" would maintain that apostate Israel in sacrificing and appearing before God, and in making many prayers, were performing truly good works in the sight of God. But take notice of God's appraisal of man's so called good works. He says, "I am full of the burnt-offerings and rams. I delight not in the blood of bullocks. Who required of you this treading of My courts? (with hands full of blood?)" The implication is, I did not require this of you. For My soul hateth your new moons. They are a trouble to Me. I am weary to bear them. I hide My eyes when you pray. Your vain oblations, in a word, your entire worship, is an abomination to me. It is iniquity. Such is God's appraisal of the so-called good works of ungodly men.

1:16, "Wash you, make ye clean; make depart (the) evil of your works from before My eyes; cease ye to do evil." Here the Lord does not simply denounce these degenerate men, but at the same time He requires of them obedience. But this the wicked

cannot tolerate. They hate the idea of obedience to God. Nevertheless, God demands it. Not that man can of himself obey. That he cannot. He is dead in sin. And as dead he can do nothing good. He is free to do but one thing, that is, to continue to decay and putrify. However, God holds him responsible to obey. Man, to be sure, has lost his ability to perform it; but God has not thereby lost His sovereign right to demand perfect, personal and perpetual obedience. For the command, "Clean yourself!" does not imply the ability in man to do so. Rather, by this means God reveals to man his utter helplessness and inability, and his inclination to all evil. The sinner must be brought to see this, and be cast alone upon the Divine Savior. All other ground, though it be man's fine endeavors, is sinking sand! In the elect, obedience is the evidence of a good confession. So they "leave off evil." This is exactly what the ungodly do not intend to do. Yet they are responsible, nonetheless, to love the Lord their God with all their heart, and strength, and soul and mind. They never will; but God, just the same, demands it of them. So only the Lord's people —

1:17, "Learn to do well; search for judgment; make to go straight the oppressor (or, the oppressed). Judge the orphan; plead the cause of the widow." How can the believer do this? put it into practice? Only as he by faith pleads cleansing in the sovereign balm of Christ's blood. This is no doctrine of being saved initially by grace alone, and then being kept saved by works of our own. No, this is life emanating from the pardon side of the cross. The cross itself tells that it is not enough to cease to do evil. We must learn to do well. So the cross would teach us. It is not enough, for example, not to commit actual murder. "Thou shalt do no murder," saith our Lord. But that entails the doing of positive good to our neighbor; and not the mere prevention of doing him any evil. For we are not only to do nothing to harm his being, but must seek his well-being. This we must learn to do; for it is not in us by nature. Is not this the teaching of the cross? Doesn't the forgiveness of our sins imply this? Then we must take pains to secure knowledge of what the Lord requires of us. We must search for opportunities to do good. We cannot sit off by ourselves in a corner and say, "Well, I will not hate my neighbor today." No, we must look for the opportunity, and take it, to do him good. If we have sinned against any, we must seek his pardon, and make matters right to the best of our ability. If any are burdened, we must seek to ease them of their burdens. If it is in our power to help those who are oppressed, that is our business. We must be ever ready to speak for those who do not know how to speak for themselves. In this way only do we show that we know that to obey is better than sacrifice, and that faith without works is dead.

CONTRIBUTION

On Interscholastic Athletics

Dear Brother in Christ:

Should our Covenant Christian High School join in league agreement with public schools in the playing of basketball contests? The answer is "No."

The argument in favor of such involvement with worldly, secular, socialistic government owned and operated public schools systems is that the Christian in this life does not attempt to avoid contact with ungodly persons in the world. In some instances this is true. Contacts such as purchasing necessities from ungodly people and being employed by them come under a different classification. These contacts in some instances are essential for livelihood in this world. Buying and selling and employment are not sinful in themselves. There are commandments covering these matters.

However, this matter of our Christian High School joining in athletic agreements and contests with public schools is of an altogether different nature. These contests are not at all necessary and do not contribute to the spiritual welfare of our students; instead we enter into a sinful association with an organization and persons that are in disobedience concerning true principles of education of children

and youth. God commands parents, not government, to instruct and to provide instruction for their offspring. When parents allow government to usurp this parental responsibility and duty through public schools systems, our linking up with such schools is a sinful deed against our God. How is it possible to witness against the public schools system in America when we engage in co-operation with them. Do we then not show approval of the public school?

The same principles which guide us in our opposition to so-called neutral labor unions hold true here also, namely, "Be ye not unequally yoked (mismatched) with unbelievers" — "How can light associate with darkness?" — "Come out from among them and be ye separated."

Let no one forget it — the public school is direct, wicked rebellion against God and Christ; make no compromise with it of any sort! We must stand up bravely and witness for the truth of the Gospel and Christ's commandments as pertains to the instruction of children.

2 Cor. 6:14, 17 — Eph. 5:15, 16, 17 — 1 John 1:6 — 1 Peter 3:18.

Harold Tilma

Know the standard and follow it.

Read the STANDARD BEARER!

THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH

Spiritual Growth - The Importance

Rev. J. Kortering

All of us know people with problems. One cannot help observing that within the complex structure of life some people become entangled. It comes to expression in many ways.

Take Mary, a young girl who is just old enough to go out with fellows. All her life she has been sheltered within the sphere of parental judgment. Her parents told her what was right and wrong. She had good guidance in church, and the minister emphasized the will of God by precept and example. She attended a Christian school and pretty much associated with other young people of like faith. But, something is wrong. Mary is interested only in being accepted by the gang. She wants to be popular with anyone who will show interest in her. She flirts with the guys and leads them on a wild rampage for her affection. She doesn't care where they take her, as long as it is away from the scrutiny of dad and mom. Mary has the personality it takes to have plenty of friends, she does her level best to stay on good terms with them all. Sometimes it means a compromise with her moral values. And thus Mary has a real problem.

Look at Jim, who also was brought up in the Christian atmosphere of the covenant. He was different in that he did not really care much what he was taught. He didn't try very hard to do well in school, and was satisfied to get by with the least in catechism. Sometimes he would skip church, or quite often fall asleep when he did go. He too has a gal, but she doesn't attend the same church as Jim. They are engaged to be married and Jim has let it be known that he will be leaving his church to attend his girl friend's church. Oh, he knows there is a difference between the churches, but he doesn't really mind, and after all, it does not matter much anyway. His ignorance has led him to make such an important decision with little concern. So, Jim also has a real problem.

It is possible for us to join Jim and Mary together as a young couple. They are married now, and from

the outside it looks as if they are getting along very well. They are getting ahead financially, and they have a beautiful little girl whom they both love. It is however, quite a different story if we would sneak into their home some evening. It seems that every time they have a difference, they take to yelling and screaming at each other. Sometimes they have a verbal skirmish that leads to physical violence, and pans start flying and dishes get broken. They don't know how to talk out differences. They also have real problems.

One can find many examples of this kind. Certainly, one doesn't have to be young to fit into this classification. Look at parents who are bored with life. They work days and flop down in front of the television at night with nothing better to do than laugh at life and waste time. Some work so hard they don't have time for spiritual things. Others work for their moments of fun, and their sport or entertainment means everything to them. When trouble comes into such a home, the first thing they do is push the panic button because they don't have spiritual strength to triumph over hardship.

Examples may differ in degree and circumstances, yet what they all have in common is that the people involved lack spiritual growth. This is a matter of real concern to anyone who sees a loved one fall into this spiritual trap. Young people have ways of becoming ensnared. Are you one of them?

EXHORTED TO GROW

I suppose that it is because God knows human nature so well, that He has seen fit to inscribe upon so many pages of Holy Writ exhortations that have to do with spiritual growth. We are constantly reminded of the importance to *grow*. Consider Psalm 92:13-15, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in

old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to show that the Lord is upright: he is my rock and there is no unrighteousness in him." Does this describe you as a child of God, growing like a cedar tree? Look at I Corinthians 3:2, "I have fed you with milk and not with meat: for hitherto, ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." Some people of God need milk, others need meat, in order that everyone who is called Christian may grow! Hence we, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious," I Peter 2:2, 3. This growth is not simply a fact that we passively accept, but it is a responsibility we face. We must see to it that we do grow! "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen," II Peter 3:17, 18. Likewise, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," II Tim. 3:16, 17. Let these passages suffice as representative of the Word of God. Spiritual growth is normal, it is required, and for those that experience it, most wonderful. Again, are you growing?

Reflecting upon the Word of God, our Reformed Confessions also emphasize spiritual growth. In the Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 44, question and answer 15, "Why will God then have the ten commandments so strictly preached, since, no man in this life can keep them? A. First, that all our lifetime, we may learn more and more to know our sinful nature, and thus become the more earnest in seeking the remission of sin, and righteousness in Christ; likewise that we constantly endeavor and pray to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, that we may become more and more conformable to the image of God, till we arrive at the perfection proposed to us, in a life to come." Looking at the Netherlands Confession, Article 24, which deals with man's sanctification and good works, we read, "Therefore, it is impossible that this holy faith can be unfruitful in men, for we do not speak of a vain faith, but of such a faith which is called in Scripture faith that worketh by love, which excites man to the practice of those works, which God has commanded in his Word." Spiritual growth then has to do with the growth of faith which in turn becomes evident in our everyday lives. Love excites the practice of such works. Finally, we quote from the Canons of Dordt, "Hence spring daily sins of infirmity, and hence spots adhere to the best works of the saints; which furnish them with constant matter for humiliation before God, and flying for refuge to Christ crucified; for mortifying the flesh

more and more by the spirit of prayer, and by holy exercises of piety; and for pressing forward to the goal of perfection, till being at length delivered from his body of death, they are brought to reign with the Lamb of God in heaven," Article two, Fifth Head of Doctrine. We add to this article four, "Although the weakness of the flesh cannot prevail against the power of God, who confirms and preserves true believers in a state of grace, yet converts are not always so influenced and actuated by the Spirit of God, as not in some particular instances sinfully to deviate from the guidance of divine grace, so as to be seduced and comply with the lusts of the flesh; they must, therefore, be constant in watching and prayer, that they be not led into temptation. When these are neglected, they are not only liable to be drawn into great and heinous sins, by Satan, the world, and the flesh, but sometimes by the righteous permission of God actually fall into these evils. This, the lamentable fall of David, Peter, and other saints described in Holy Scripture, demonstrates."

VALUE OF GROWTH

When we speak of spiritual growth, we do not imply that there are not the normal ups and downs within our spiritual experience. Scripture emphasizes that every child of God has times in his life when he is spiritually strong, others in which he is spiritually weak. The idea is rather that of direction. We must evaluate our general spiritual direction. Is it evident to you that over the years, as you grow from childhood to adolescence to young manhood or womanhood, to adulthood, to middle age, to old age that there is spiritual development? We should look for this and take time to evaluate our lives so that we can be sure that this is our experience.

Besides this type of evaluation, we have to face the duty to nourish ourselves so that we can grow spiritually. There is a close proximity between physical growth and spiritual growth. Parents fuss over their children to make certain that they get the proper food, take their vitamin pills, get the necessary immunization, exercise properly and all the rest, in order that their bodies develop properly. This continues all through life. We are very much concerned about our health. We have to work at it, control our diet so as not to become overweight or underweight. We need proper foods. Health doesn't just come naturally. So also for our souls, if we are to grow spiritually, we must give diligence unto it. If you are troubled about spiritual growth, if you honestly can't see any growth, you may have to concentrate more on your nourishment. Are you taking time to be spiritual, are you diligent in God's Word and prayer, are you constantly evaluating your calling in life and measuring your actions whether

they conform? Do you study faithfully and get the most out of it? Food and growth go together, also spiritually.

Finally, we must remind you of the great advantage of spiritual growth. May these few words give us the incentive to make such a true evaluation, and seek nourishment so that we can grow. Consider first, that the more spiritual we are, the more God means to us. What young person doesn't really want to be sure that he or she is right with God? As long as you know God is for you, you have everything. When you aren't sure whether you are in the will of God, then you get yourself into all kinds of spiritual problems. For this reason the law for us is liberty, for when we are right with God we are spiritually free from the curse of God, from guilt, and thus able to glorify God daily. Secondly, when we are spiritually strong, we are true friends and can enjoy real friendship. Any friendship apart from God is not true friendship and cannot truly satisfy a child of God.

Spiritual strength enables one to enjoy true friendship with others. The reason for this is that God's love is necessary for any real friendship. If we are spiritually strong, we are filled with the love of God. Thirdly, out of spiritual strength comes spiritual direction. One who doesn't know what life is all about, doesn't know what he is to do with his life, doesn't know what is right or wrong, is terribly confused and miserable. Spiritual strength gives one unity of purpose and powerful living. Finally, a spiritually strong person can handle the crises of life. Young people encounter many disappointments in school, broken romances, temptations, troublesome times. One has to be spiritually strong to handle all these problems in life.

We hope to examine spiritual growth in the next few months. We must face the important questions: what is spiritual growth, how can we grow, what does it take to grow. As we consider this subject, spend a little time evaluating your spiritual life. Can you do some growing?

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH

Eschatology -- The First Period

THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

(80 - 250 A.D.)

H. Veldman

In our preceding article we had called the attention of our readers to the statement of the late Rev. H. Hoeksema, to the effect that the answer which the Apostolic Fathers gave to the question concerning the condition of the souls before the resurrection and immediately after death was rather vague. And then we quoted from Philip Schaaf, Vol. II, 599 f.f., verifying this observation of Rev. Hoeksema. We now continue this quotation:

8. With the idea of the imperfection of the middle state and the possibility of progressive amelioration, is connected the commemoration of the departed, and prayer in their behalf. No trace of the custom is found in the New Testament nor in the canonical books of the Old, but an isolated example, which seems to imply habit, occurs in the age of the Maccabees, when Judas Maccabaeus and his company offered prayer and sacrifice for those slain in battle,

"that they might be delivered from sin." In old Jewish service-books there are prayers for the blessedness of the dead. The strong sense of the communion of saints unbroken by death easily accounts for the rise of a similar custom among the early Christians. Tertullian bears clear testimony to its existence at his time. "We offer," he says, "oblations for the dead on the anniversary of their birth," i.e. their celestial birth-day. He gives it as a mark of a Christian widow, that she prays for the soul of her husband, and requests for him refreshment and fellowship in the first resurrection; and that she offers sacrifice on the anniversaries of his falling asleep. Eusebius narrates that at the tomb of Constantine a vast crowd of people, in company with the priests of God, with tears and great lamentation offered their prayers to God for the emperor's soul. Augustine calls prayer for the pious dead in the eucharistic sacrifice an observance of the universal church, handed down

from the fathers. He himself remembered in prayer his godly mother at her dying request.

This is confirmed by the ancient liturgies, which express in substance the devotions of the ante-Nicene age, although they were not committed to writing before the fourth century. The commemoration of the pious dead is an important part in the eucharistic prayers. Take the following from the Liturgy of St. James: "Remember, O Lord God, the spirits of whom we have made mention, and of whom we have not made mention, who are of the true faith, from righteous Abel unto this day; do Thou Thyself give them rest there in the land of the living, in Thy kingdom, in the delight of Paradise, in the Bosom of

Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, our holy fathers; whence pain and grief and lamentation have fled away: there the light of Thy countenance looks upon them, and gives them light for evermore." The Clementine Liturgy in the eighth book of the "Apostolical Constitutions" has likewise a prayer "for those who rest in faith," in these words: "We make an offering to Thee for all Thy saints who have pleased Thee from the beginning of the world, patriarchs, prophets, just men, apostles, martyrs, confessors, bishops, elders, deacons, subdeacons, singers, virgins, widows, laymen, and all whose names Thou Thyself knowest."

To Be Continued

Did you use the postage-free envelope

in the last issue?

Send us names and addresses

of potential readers.

ATTENTION!!!

SECRETARIES AND CLERKS!

Reports of standing and special committees of Synod must be submitted to the undersigned by April 15 if they are to be included in the Synodical Agenda. These reports ought to be typewritten; if lengthy, please follow standard outline form for easy reference.

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

Change of Address — Editorial Office

Prof. H. C. Hoeksema
4975 Ivanrest Ave., S.W.
Grandville, Mich. 49418
Phone: (616) 534-7308

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On April 2, 1974, the Lord willing, our parents, MR. AND MRS. DONALD DYKSTRA hope to commemorate their 50th wedding anniversary. We, their children, are thankful to our heavenly Father for sparing them these many years for each other and for us. It is our prayer that the Lord may continue to bless them through their remaining years.

Mr. and Mrs. Tunis Dykstra
Mr. and Mrs. Albert Dykstra
Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Dykstra
Mr. Don Dykstra
Mr. and Mrs. Rich Dykstra
26 grandchildren
4 great-grandchildren.

Hudsonville, Michigan

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Mr. and Mrs. Society of the Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church wishes to express its heartfelt sympathy to Rev. C. Hanko and to Alice in the death of MRS. HANKO.

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

Phillip Dykstra, Vice Pres.
Mrs. Jay Holstege, Sec'y.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Consistory and the members of the Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church of Hudsonville, Michigan, express their sincere sympathy to our beloved pastor and his daughter, Alice, in the death of their wife and mother, JENNIE HANKO. May the God of all grace comfort and strengthen you both by His Word.

"— Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Corinthians 15:54, 55).

Consistory of the Hudsonville
Protestant Reformed Church
Henry J. Boer, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Hudsonville Choral Society wishes to express its sincere sympathy to Alyce and Rev. C. Hanko in the loss of their mother and wife, JENNIE HANKO.

"For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." (Romans 14:8).

Norwin Brower, Pres.
Mrs. S. Miedema, Sec'y.

News From Our Churches

March 17 was the last of Rev. Harbach's four Sundays in Houston, Texas. He is, as you surely know, considering the call to serve there as home missionary. He was granted permission to announce his decision three weeks after his return from Texas. He was to be followed in Houston by Rev. Lubbers, who is currently considering the call to serve as pastor of our Prospect Park congregation in New Jersey. Rev. Kortering declined the call from Loveland, Colorado. The new trio of Loveland consists of Revs. Kuiper, Lanting, and Van Baren.

* * * * *

A couple of notices from a February bulletin from Holland, Michigan, might be of interest. Evening church services there have been changed to 6:30 P.M. Visitors will surely want to bear that in mind, lest they arrive in the middle of the congregational prayer. The other item, I think, can be best reported by simply lifting a paragraph from the bulletin. Here it is: "At the last meeting of the Board of the Society for Protestant Reformed Education a committee was appointed consisting of E. Kortering, B. Windemuller and W. Bonzellar to investigate the possibility of starting our own Protestant Reformed School in Holland. Anyone having ideas, comments or in any way able to give the committee assistance or advice, please contact one of the above mentioned committee members."

* * * * *

Rev. Engelsma, though still a pastor in Classis West, is now within reach of program committees of the east, as he probably learned before he had unpacked

all his books at 16515 South Park Avenue. According to a March 3 bulletin, at any rate, he was already slated to speak at the Eastern Ladies' League Meeting in the Protestant Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan. He plans to speak on the topic, "The False Church and the True Church in this Last Age," with special reference, according to the bulletin announcement, to the current Pentecostal Movement.

A couple of other speeches are, I think, noteworthy. On March 1, Rev. Van Baren spoke on "The Place of the Woman in the Church," for a combined meeting of the Men's and Ladies' Societies of South Holland. And on February 11 Professor O'Donnell spoke on the A.A.C.S., for the Mr. and Mrs. Society in Hull. The congregation was invited to attend, and notice of the meeting was also placed in Doon's bulletin.

How about this "Quiet Thought" from Southeast's bulletin of February 17: "If you missed the Dedication Program of our new seminary building last Friday, you really missed it!"

* * * * *

News is a little hard to come by at this time of year. so I have an opportunity to dip into my reserves — which is probably a good thing, since some of the material in it would already fit better under a caption "History of Our Churches" than "News From Our Churches."

Quite a bit of the "news" which has been
(continued on back page)

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Men's Society and The Mary-Martha Society of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church of Redlands, California, express their sincere sympathy to Rev. C. Hanco and family in the death of his wife and their mother, MRS. C. HANKO.

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

Rev. Marvin Kamps, Pres.
Mr. John Feenstra, Sec'y.
Mrs. Bernie Meelker, Sec'y.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Ladies Society of the Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church mourns the passing of a faithful member, MRS. C. HANKO.

We wish to express our heartfelt sympathy to our president, Rev. C. Hanco, and his family in the loss of his wife and their mother.

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Romans 8:18).

Mr. Kenneth Lanning, Vice Pres.
Mrs. John B. Lubbers, Sec'y.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The members of the Adult Bible Class of the Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church express their Christian sympathy to their Bible leader, Rev. C. Hanco, in the loss of his beloved wife, MRS. JENNIE HANKO.

May he and Alice, and his entire family find comfort in Psalm 18 — Psalter No. 36, which Mrs. Hanco requested we sing at our last meeting.

Mrs. Bernard Lubbers, Sec'y.

IN MEMORIAM

The Senior Mr. and Mrs. Society of Hope Protestant Reformed Church wishes to express their sincere sympathy to Prof. and Mrs. H. Hanco in the recent loss of his mother, MRS. C. HANKO.

"Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved His appearing." (II Timothy 4:8).

Mrs. R. Kooienga, Sec'y.

accumulating in my box has to do with church extension efforts by various of our congregations. From a September bulletin of Loveland we learn that pamphlets on "Calvinism" were made available to members of the congregation through the bulletin racks. In addition, about 600 of these same pamphlets were mailed by the Church Extension Committee to addresses within the city of Loveland.

In October of last year the committee distributed to members of the congregation a report concerning its activities during the year. It was noted that "we are still sending out pamphlets locally — approximately 500 every month. Thirty-nine are also sent elsewhere in Colorado and nine outside of Colorado. The titles of the pamphlets sent out this past year are as follows: 'Children — the Blessed Gift of God', 'Children — Willingly Cared For', 'The Christian School — Why?', and three pamphlets entitled 'Calvinism' ... The pamphlet entitled 'Key 73 — What Must We Say About It?' was also mailed to the forty-eight members on our permanent mailing list."

Elsewhere in the newsletter, the committee reported that "another means we used to witness to the truth was the use of the radio broadcast. The thirteen 15-minute speeches which Rev. Engelsma had spoken earlier over the radio were rebroadcasted."

Further reference was made to a couple of lectures sponsored by this obviously hard-working committee. The purpose of it all came out very nicely in the last line of the report. I quote: "We would like to close this letter by asking that you pray diligently for this work of witnessing to the reformed truth in order that God may be highly praised, honored, and glorified and that His people might come to the light which God hath prepared for those who love Him."

* * * * *

The same thirteen tapes, incidentally, were put to use by another of our small congregations. From an August bulletin of Isabel we learn that "Forbes is now airing over the radio a series of 15-minute tapes by Rev. Engelsma." For the people of Isabel, the announcement continued, "the signal is weak, but if you have a good radio you can pick it up over KSDN, Aberdeen, 930 on your dial, at 6:00 P.M., MDT."

D.D.

THE STANDARD BEARER

Semi-monthly, except monthly during June, July, and August.
Published by the Reformed Free Publishing Association, Inc.
Second Class Postage Paid at Grand Rapids, Mich.

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

Department Editors: Prof. Robert D. Decker, Mr. Donald Doezeema, Rev. David J. Engelsma, Rev. Cornelius Hanko, Prof. Herman Hanko, Rev. Robert C. Harbach, Rev. John A. Heys, Rev. Jay Kortering, Rev. Dale H. Kuiper, Rev. George C. Lubbers, Rev. Marinus Schipper, Rev. Gise J. Van Baren, Rev. Herman Veldman

Editorial Office: Prof. H. C. Hoeksema
4975 Ivanrest Ave. S.W.
Grandville, Michigan 49418

Church News Editor: Mr. Donald Doezeema
1904 Plymouth Terrace, S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

Editorial Policy: Every editor is solely responsible for the contents of his own articles. Contributions of general interest from our readers and questions for the Question-Box Department are welcome. Contributions will be limited to approximately 300 words and must be neatly written or typewritten, and must be signed. Copy deadlines are the first and the fifteenth of the month. All communications relative to the contents should be sent to the editorial office.

Reprint Policy: Permission is hereby granted for the reprinting of articles in our magazine by other publications, provided: a) that such reprinted articles are reproduced in full; b) that proper acknowledgement is made; c) that a copy of the periodical in which such reprint appears is sent to our editorial office.

Business Office: The Standard Bearer
Mr. H. Vander Wal, Bus. Mgr.
P. O. Box 6064
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

Business Agent for Australasia: Mr. Wm. van Rij
59 Kent Lodge Ave.
Christchurch 4, New Zealand

Subscription Policy: Subscription price, \$7.00 per year (\$5.00 for Australasia). Unless a definite request for discontinuance is received, it is assumed that the subscriber wishes the subscription to continue without the formality of a renewal order, and he will be billed for renewal. If you have a change of address, please notify the Business Office as early as possible in order to avoid the inconvenience of delayed delivery. Include your Zip Code.

Advertising Policy: The Standard Bearer does not accept commercial advertising of any kind. Announcements of church and school events, anniversaries, obituaries, and sympathy resolutions will be placed for a \$3.00 fee. These should be sent to the Business Office and should be accompanied by the \$3.00 fee. Deadline for announcements is the 1st or the 15th of the month, previous to publication on the 15th or the 1st respectively.

Bound Volumes: The Business Office will accept standing orders for bound copies of the current volume; such orders are filled as soon as possible after completion of a volume. A limited number of past volumes may be obtained through the Business Office.

CONTENTS:

Risen From The Dead	242
The OPC and the "Free Offer" (5)	244
The Standard Bearer in Retrospect	247
"Hyper-Calvinism" and the Call of the Gospel	250
All Around Us	253
Judah's Good Works Adjudged Sinful	256
On Interscholastic Athletics	258
Spiritual Growth — The Importance	259
Book Review	261
News From Our Churches	263