

# The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

This book is intended to be more than a mere memorial, to be perused and stowed away. The various writers have contributed their material with a view to making this a compact summary of all that has been entrusted to us, for the edification of many, and especially for the instruction and guidance of our covenant youth. We cherish the hope that this will find a place in every home as a ready reference and that it may serve as a guidebook in our societies. It will also serve as a valuable gift to those who publicly profess their faith in the midst of our churches. Taken from the "Forward" of God's Covenant Faithfulness", See page 413 .

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## 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.

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**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.

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Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

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**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.

## MEDITATION

## Children of the Light

Rev. H. Veldman

*"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."*

Eph. 5:8

In this anniversary year of our Protestant Reformed Churches, we do well to reflect and take inventory of ourselves. What shall we say? Shall we glory or boast? Yes, but never in ourselves. We may certainly boast as we reflect upon the past and look ahead to the years that lie before us. Let us, however, in all humble gratitude, remember that the Lord has preserved us, only by His sovereign grace, so that we stand, as of this moment, exactly where we stood fifty years ago. It was only of the Lord's mercies that we were not consumed.

How fitting is this Word of God! We have here the entire gospel. We have there the whole truth of our Heidelberg Catechism. We read, in this Word of God, of what we were, of what we have become and are, and also of what is our calling. It is these truths that we have not failed to emphasize. And all this was possible only because of the mercies of our covenant God, revealed in Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord. Apart from Him we were and are darkness. It is only in Him that we became and are children of light. Let us, therefore, walk as children of light.



\* \* \* \* \*

What a tremendous contrast! We were sometimes darkness! We are now children of light! And we are children of light only in the Lord! And as such children of light in the Lord we are called to walk.

The language of this Word of God is so simple. Any beginner in the Greek language can translate this text very soon after beginning his study of this language. There are, grammatically, no problems here. Why? Does this simplicity of the text serve the truth of this Word of God? Is not the text all the more impressive because of its simplicity? We have, grammatically, no problems here. So, the grandeur of this Word of God stands before us in all its simple beauty. All we see here, in this Word of God, is the sublime truth of the Word of God!

And what a contrast! The contrast is between light and darkness, between the kingdom of God and of the Christ and that of the devil and of this world; the text speaks of God and of Man, of the flesh, of the world, of Satan and hell, of heaven and earth, of time and all the things of time, of eternity. "Ye were darkness" — that refers to the entire kingdom of sin and of the world; "Ye are light" — that refers to the kingdom of God and of Christ and of the light; "Ye are light in the Lord" — that completely shuts out man and ascribes all to God: "Walk as children of light" — that is your calling in the midst of the world.

We were darkness. What an annihilating, devastating judgment of the natural man, of what we are by nature! This is what we were, this is what the whole world is, as outside of Christ and His salvation. We were not merely darkened; or, we were not merely in darkness; but we were darkness. Darkness is estrangement from the light, from God, is death itself. Darkness is the expression of whatever is opposed to the light, is expressive of whatever is opposed to the good, to God, the absence of and opposition to the light. We were darkness. O, the text does not say that we sought it now and then, that we were misled, now and then, to forsake the light and to stumble in darkness. The text does not say that, besides all the light that is in us, we were also characterized by a dark, shadowy side which plagued us now and then. The judgment of God upon what you and I are by nature, and do by nature, upon all that the world is and always seeks and does and builds, is: darkness! The most beautiful, the most powerful, the most attractive, the most impressive of the world and of all mankind — it all falls beneath the one crushing, annihilating judgment of God, the Judge of all the earth: we were darkness!

And let us understand that this is by nature our being. We were darkness, or, by nature we *are* darkness! Our body and our soul — it is all darkness. Our blood and nerve-system, our head and hand, our

eye and ear and mouth — it is all darkness! Darkness is our mind, our will, our desires, all the motives and stirrings of our soul, all the deep movements of our heart and reins — it is all darkness! The darkness is not simply around us, is not simply in us; we are darkness; this is our being. Our whole being is by nature darkness. And, of course, this also explains why all our works are by nature darkness. We may have appeared as children of light, as when we attend our church services, etc.; but, as far as we are concerned, it was all an act of darkness. In fact, even all the light that is in us, our natural light, we held under in unrighteousness. Fact is, we are darkness by nature, and how can the light ever shine out of the darkness?

This truth we have preached and taught during all the fifty years of our existence. Never have we deviated from this truth an iota. As churches we have been true to this fundamental aspect of the gospel of our God.

\* \* \* \* \*

We are light. We can speak of light in more than one sense of the word. We can speak of physical light, the light of the physical eye, of natural light, the light of our understanding (we may be working on a problem and suddenly say: I see it); and we can also speak of spiritual light. Light is that movement, operation of God upon the nature of man, which is adapted to the service of God by virtue of its creation, whereby man turns unto the Lord in love and friendship, loves God and conducts himself in the midst of all things as the friend servant of Jehovah.

Light is not merely knowledge — then darkness would be merely ignorance. Light is spiritual, a spiritual movement of life which proceeds from the living God upon the nature or being of man which is adapted to His service.

God is the God of all light. Eternally He goes out to Himself as the Triune God, sees and knows Himself and has fellowship with Himself in the sphere of absolute goodness and perfection. And that we are light means that we see God, see Him spiritually, that we have fellowship with that living God, turn to Him and seek Him with all the love of our heart and mind and soul and strength.

Now we are light. This does not mean that we are now somewhat enlightened. This Word of God does not speak merely of a reformation, an improvement, a mere change in our character so that we were somewhat reformed and improved. This text speaks of a radical, an essential change. What occurred here was another birth, a new birth, a new nature, and in principle, completely new creature. We were darkness, and then there was no light in us; we are now light and, be it in principle, completely delivered from darkness. It is true that we are holy only in principle.



However, the text speaks of the child of God, as he is born of God; and of that new creature it is true that we have become what we never had been before.

Only, we are light in the Lord. That we are light in the Lord certainly means that this salvation is not of us. Was this change from darkness into light perhaps our choice? Was it our free will, the exertion of all our powers which effected this change? Did we permit God to work this change in us? O, what a blasphemous, God-dishonoring, heinous conception this is, which would ascribe this tremendous, this mighty, this greatest work of divine grace to the choice of a miserable, wholly insignificant and helpless sinner! To this Arminian blasphemy we say: A thousand times NO!

We are light in the Lord! The Lord here is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator of God and man, the Head of all God's elect, ordained and qualified of God, and now exalted as Israel's Lord, Israel's great King, to lead them out of darkness into God's marvellous light. We are light in the Lord; and this occurred, first of all, in the way of the cross, in the way of His broken body and shed blood. This passion of our Lord Jesus Christ is first, must be first. We must first be redeemed. God's justice must be satisfied; our sins and guilt must first be paid. This darkness must lose its right to reign in us; life and glory everlasting must first be merited. And then we become light in the Lord. That we are light in the Lord means that this wonderful change occurs in fellowship with Him. Our Lord Jesus Christ, by His irresistible grace and Spirit, calls us out of darkness into His light, regenerates us by the explosiveness of His grace, causes us to be reborn out of God, changes us from above, makes us children of light, unites us with Himself by a true and living faith.

What shall we say, as we now reflect at this moment of our history, also with respect to this aspect of the work of the God of our salvation? We shall say, in all humble gratitude, that also this we have preached and taught through all these fifty years. We have not deviated from this work of grace, not even an iota. We have been faithful to this truth of God's particular and sovereign grace. We have indeed proclaimed that all salvation is exclusively of the Lord.

\* \* \* \* \*

As children of the light we must walk as children of light. This is the third great truth set forth in this Word of God. This, too, we must not misunderstand. We must walk as children of light, not to become children of light, but because we are children of light. A son does not behave as a son in order to become a son. He surely conducts himself as such because he is a son. This is naturally true; this is also spiritually true. We must walk as children of light because we are children of light.

This is our urgent calling. The word "walk" refers to all our life's manifestation, in the home and in the school and in the church and at work. This "walk" is the calling of all God's people, young and old, husbands and wives, parents and children. How urgent is this calling! If we fail in this, do not reveal ourselves as children of light, then all our orthodoxy will be dead orthodoxy, lifeless, worthless; if this be true, individually, it were better had we never been born and had a millstone been hanged around our neck, and we had been cast into the bottom of the sea. And if we fail in this as churches, we will eventually perish.

So, walk as children of light. This is our confession,

(Continued on next page)

With reference, however, to the present Article, I will answer you from the mouth of the same godly writer (Augustine). "These (saith he) are the mighty works of the Lord; exquisitely perfect according to every bent of His will. And so perfect in exquisite wisdom, that when both the angelic and the human natures had sinned — that is, had done, not what God willed, but what each nature willed, even by a like will, in each creature — it came to pass that what God, as the Creator, willed not, He Himself accomplished according as He had willed; thus blessedly using, as the God of perfect goodness, even evils to the damnation of those whom He had righteously predestinated unto punishment, and to the salvation of those whom He had mercifully predestinated unto grace. For, as far as these transgressing natures were themselves concerned, they did that which God willed not; but with respect to the Omnipotence of God, they could by no means have done what they did without it, nor without its concernment therein. For by the very act of their doing that which was contrary to the will of God, they were themselves thereby fulfilling the will of God. Wherefore, these mighty works of God, exquisitely perfect, according to every bent of His will, are such that, in a wonderful and ineffable way, that is not done without the will of God which is even done contrary to His will, because it could not be done at all, unless He permitted it to be done; and yet, He does not permit unwillingly, but willingly. Nor, as the God of goodness, would He permit a thing to be done evilly, unless, as the God of Omnipotence, He could work good even out of the evil done."

— John Calvin, *The Secret Providence of God*, pp. 289, 290



It is also our calling. This we can do only through prayer and in the light of God's Word. May we, also and particularly as churches, dedicate ourselves anew to live unto the glory of God's Name. He called us out of darkness into His marvellous light, and this for the purpose that we may declare His praises, the praises of Him Who alone is worthy to receive all praise and adoration. Thankful to God for the past,

knowing our past and always instructing our children in that past, let us resolve, by God's grace, to rededicate ourselves to the truth that to God alone belongs all the glory, now and forever.

We are saved only by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God. To Him alone be the glory, now and forever.

## EDITORIALS

### Editor's Notes

*Prof. H. C. Hoeksema*

*GOD'S COVENANT FAITHFULNESS*, the volume commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Protestant Reformed Churches, will have been off the press for more than a month by the time you read this. Well over 1200 copies have already been distributed. Have you purchased copies for yourself and your children? As has been mentioned before, this will be a valuable historical memento in years to come. Since it is a dated book, designed especially for this Golden Anniversary Year, it will not be available once this year's supply is exhausted. Yet the book will be valuable not only to yourself but also to your children in years to come; it contains in word and picture the 50-year history of the churches which are dear to our hearts. If for no other reason than this, you should make it a point to urge your young people to obtain this book for themselves and make it a point to buy copies for your younger children. But there are other reasons. This book is instructive. The second main part of the book contains a summary of our Protestant Reformed position. It has sections on our history, our doctrine, and our world-and-life view. For those attending the Field Day at convention time in August — and we are looking for a large denomination-wide attendance — the book will be on sale at that time. But why delay? Send your order, enclosing \$5.95, to: Reformed Free Publishing Association, P.O. Box 2006, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501.

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In this issue and the next I had hoped to catch up

on Question Box; and we are making headway, as you will see. But just when I thought I was catching up (and this is written, you understand, before my departure for "down under" in mid-June) I received some questions in the mail. These will have to wait until my return, the Lord willing, and therefore until the September 1 issue.

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This year's Synod met considerably later than usual, and therefore it was not possible to include a report about Synod's activities in the July issue. Prof. Decker has promised to prepare such a report, however, for our August issue. If he writes the report while inspired by the lofty mountains visible from Lynden's parsonage (he plans to supply Lynden's pulpit for a time this summer, D.V.), that could prove to be a lofty report!

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Note to associate editors. All copy for the August issue should be sent to Prof. H. Hanko. Copy for September 1 and September 15 should again be sent to the Editorial Office, as usual.

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Another new book from the RFPA! By the time you read this, Rev. David Engelsma's *Marriage: The Mystery of Christ and the Church* should be on the market. By all means get this book; it is worthwhile and instructive reading. The price: \$3.50. Send your orders to: Reformed Free Publishing Association, P.O. Box 2006, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49501.

### A Special Event

Friday, May 23, was a very special occasion for our Theological School. It was the date of our first pre-seminary graduation. A few years ago our synod inaugurated a 4-year pre-seminary program at the

seminary, the equivalent of a full college program. Most of the required subjects in this pre-sem program of 125 hours are taught at the seminary; the remainder of the credits required are obtained by our



students at a local college. This year we reaped the firstfruits of that new program. Five young men received their pre-seminary diplomas. One of them, Kenneth Koole, had already entered his seminary program, and, in fact, has completed at least a third of his seminary course. The others, who, the Lord willing, will begin their seminary training next fall, are: Wilbur Bruinsma, Michael De Vries, Richard Flikkema, and Richard Peterson. Congratulations!

On the morning of May 23 we had a brief graduation program in the seminary's Assembly Room, with the Theological School Committee and friends and relatives of the graduates present. The program was followed by a social hour. All in all, it was a happy occasion. And again we have abundant reason for thanking to our God.

In the accompanying picture are our graduates, with the faculty. Left to right: Michael De Vries, Wilbur Bruinsma, Prof. R. Decker, Kenneth Koole, Prof. H. Hanko, Richard Flikkema, Prof. H. C. Hoeksema, Richard Peterson.



The brief commencement address, a transcript of which follows, was delivered by your editor.

## Lest We Forget

There are especially three significant facts connected with this happy occasion which come to mind.

In the first place, there is the significant fact that this is the very first pre-seminary graduation which our school and our churches are observing. This is a milestone for our Theological School, and I believe that our graduates may count it a distinctive privilege that they are the first graduates of our pre-seminary department. We have had pre-seminary training in our school before, of course. In fact, to some degree we have had such training in our school since its beginning; and in recent years, starting approximately in the mid-1960s, there has been a renewed emphasis upon such training, and a kind of trial period with a view to the establishment of a formal program. But it was only a few years ago that this formal pre-seminary department was established. And while some of today's graduates had only a small part of their pre-seminary training here, and others had a large part of it here, the fact remains that this is the first graduating class of pre-seminarians. May it be not by any means the last! And may we have the sanctified foresight to go forward and to enlarge and expand this program as much as possible and as soon as possible! I am convinced of its need, and convinced also of its benefits. And I make bold to say that in the future our churches shall also reap abundant benefits from this program.

In the second place, I find it to be significant that this pre-seminary graduation takes place in the Fiftieth Anniversary Year of our churches and our

seminary. For one thing, that means that we have not stood still for fifty years. We have made progress. In fact, celebrating this graduation here, in the assembly room of our seminary building, we are surrounded by tangible evidence of that progress also. This is a joy to me personally, and it should be reason for joy for all of us. At the same time, this occasion of our Fiftieth Anniversary reminds us of the past, and of our heritage, which we through the covenant faithfulness of our God may still have and still maintain in a lively way.

In the third place, in connection with the fact of our Fiftieth Anniversary I am reminded of the swift passage of history, and of time and generations in the church of our God, and particularly our Protestant Reformed Churches. This fact impresses itself upon me at this natural occasion for inventory very emphatically. I am referring now not so much to the increasing signs and awareness that our Lord is coming quickly. That, too! But what impresses me is the fact that the first generation of our churches is rapidly disappearing from the battlefield, while the third generation is just as rapidly called to take its place. This group of graduates this morning represents exclusively the third generation in our churches. They know nothing by experience of our origin not only; but what is even more impressive is the fact that all of them have lived through less than half of the history of our churches.

For all of these reasons I thought it expedient to speak this morning on the subject: LEST WE FORGET.



## WHAT WE SHOULD NOT FORGET

In general, we should not forget, but remember, what took place in 1924. That is to say, we should not forget the reason why we are Protestant Reformed, the reason of our origin and the reason for our continued existence 50 years later. Along with that, we should not forget what took place in the early 1950s, about the time of the twenty-fifth anniversary of our denomination. I mention that not only because the events of that time constituted a crisis for our denomination, a crisis in which our very existence was threatened for a time, so that it was very difficult for us to continue as a communion of churches. But I mention it also because 1953 and 1924 were very intimately related. Fundamentally, what was at stake in 1953 was the very reason of our existence and our origin as that came to light in 1924. We might have continued as a separate denomination if our enemies had triumphed in 1953; but the reason for our separate existence would have been gone, and the name Protestant Reformed would have had a hollow ring.

Let me briefly enter into some particulars. What, specifically, must we remember?

It is not the many unpleasant events, the much malicious personal animosity, the perverse scheming and plotting, and the wicked stratagems which were devised which we should remember. There were such things at both the occasions which I mentioned previously. But, apart from the lessons which we may learn from those things — and, surely, one of the lessons to be learned is that we should not be too naive — I say, apart from any lessons to be learned from those things, they are much better forgotten. And we may safely leave them to the Lord.

But there are two principles which we should remember.

The first is the church political principle which is a fundamental principle of our Reformed form of church government, the synodical-presbyterian form of government. That is the principle that a synod or a classis has no judicatory authority in a local congregation. A broader ecclesiastical assembly has not the power of the offices in the church. It cannot preach; it cannot administer sacraments; it cannot discipline. A classis or a synod cannot depose a consistory. In fact, it is incorrect to speak of classis and synod as higher and highest assemblies, but only as broader and broadest assemblies. Positively speaking, this is the principle of the autonomy of the local congregation — to be distinguished from independentism on the one hand, and from collegialism, on the other hand. It is the anti-hierarchy principle, a principle which our churches learned to cherish in their history at great cost.

The second principle is a doctrinal principle. It is a principle that is very familiar to all of you, but which, I warn you, must never become contemptible to us for its very familiarity. It must never become commonplace, but always be counted a very precious heritage. I refer, of course, to the principle that God's grace is always particular, and efficacious in His elect people in Christ. Negatively, that principle is that the grace of God is never common, and that it is never a mere offer. Along with that, of course, goes the principle that outside of the regenerating grace of God, man, being by nature totally depraved, is incapable of doing any good and inclined to all evil.

It is these principles which were denied by our mother denomination in 1924. And it is these same principles — let us never forget it — which were again at stake in the years 1950 to 1953. I remember well how as a young minister I was simply appalled at the fact that in Classis West one of the consistories came with an overture concerning the Declaration of Principles which was under discussion in those days which was nothing more nor less than the proposition of the First Point of 1924. And I remember well how I was even more appalled at the fact that not one of my colleagues at the Classis criticized that overture. And I remember well how I was most appalled at the fact that no one even had the courage to discuss or to debate the matter, even when I personally made the criticism just mentioned. That was indeed, therefore, the issue.

And we must remember that these things constitute the reason why we are Protestant Reformed, and why, before the face of God, we *must be*!

There are, of course, more elements belonging to our heritage. Chiefly, and inseparably connected with the preceding, there is the truth of the organic conception of the development of the covenant of God, and that too, in connection with the organic development of all things, according to the sovereign counsel of God, and along the lines of election and reprobation. I say emphatically: this, too, is inseparably connected with what I have previously mentioned, and that in such a way that the truth concerning God's covenant cannot be maintained apart from the truth that God's grace is always particular. Nor is that church political principle which I mentioned incidental. We must remember that it is always the forces of hierarchy in the church of Jesus Christ which are ultimately also the forces which deny and oppose the truth of our Reformed heritage.

## WHY WE SHOULD NOT FORGET

These things we must not forget.

There is danger that we might forget them, indeed.

One of the reasons why there is such danger is the



general reason of the passage of time and the changes which accompany that passage. I am reminded of that very vividly this morning when I look at these young men, our graduates. Make no mistake. I am thankful for them. I am thankful for the fact that they have come to our school from among our churches, and that they are committed to our Protestant Reformed heritage. But the fact of the matter is that as far as our history is concerned, they are babes in the woods. They have not experienced much of that history. And they have not experienced the two significant events in that history which I have already mentioned. Their portion has been and will be to experience other events, and undoubtedly also other crises. But my point is now that the mere passage of time and the mere lack of experience constitutes a danger, nevertheless. It is simply a fact that one remembers more vividly and more clearly that which he has experienced and that for which he has had to fight and that which he has obtained and retained in the crucible of testing. This makes it the more incumbent upon us, both as faculty and as students, to see to it that this heritage is passed on by way of instruction and learning.

There are other reasons which may be mentioned. There is the reason that others, particularly those who oppose us, though they be Reformed in name, like to forget these things. And there is the reason that under certain circumstances some of us like to forget these things. The truth of the Word of God is never popular. It is narrow. It is intolerant of the lie. And it is not pleasing to the flesh of any of us to be unpopular, to belong to the minority, to belong to those who are despised. It is not pleasing to the flesh always to have to fight for the truth, to fight to maintain it, to fight, if need be, even against those who are near you and perhaps dear to you in the same church or communion of churches. All these things are reasons why there is a danger that we might forget.

And we must not forget. We must not forget because it is our calling to maintain the church of Jesus Christ in the world according to its marks. We must not forget because this is chiefly determined by

the *truth*. Hence, the truth we must know. The truth we must never forget, but always remember. And we must not forget, because if we forget, we cannot be faithful to our calling as churches and as people of God in the midst of the world.

### HOW NOT TO FORGET

Our last question is: how shall we not forget? How shall we remember?

And I wish to answer that question particularly with application to our pre-seminary graduates today.

Largely your studies until now have been preparatory. True, you have had so-called content-courses. And in these courses, in so far as you have studied in them at our school, the principles which I have mentioned have already come to light. But for the most part you have been busy in your studies obtaining the tools which are necessary for your future seminary studies. It is in this connection that I want to emphasize that you must use those tools. You must use them proficiently. You must put them to use in your future studies in our seminary department. But I want to emphasize particularly that you must use them to study and to prepare strictly in the service of the truth of the Word of God as He has given it to us as a very precious heritage. And I mean strictly in the use of learning to know and to understand that peculiar heritage which the Lord has given us as Protestant Reformed Churches. All your learning, all the degree of academic excellence which you have attained or which you may attain in the future, will be of absolutely no worth unless it stands in the service of the truth. If you are to remember our heritage, remember the principles which I have mentioned, then you must study. You must use all the means which God has given you in order to study the principles of the truth, as well as to study all heresies repugnant thereto, in order that you may become prepared to maintain that truth, and, the Lord willing, to preach it and to teach it to the people of God in the years to come.

May God give you that grace and that consecration in the future.

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## TAKING HEED TO DOCTRINE

### “Hyper-Calvinism” and the Call of the Gospel (11)

*Rev. David Engelsma*

That Biblical, Reformed preaching includes the call to every hearer to repent and believe is plainly and emphatically the teaching of the Canons of Dordt. “. . . the command to repent and believe ought to be

declared and published to all nations, and to all persons promiscuously and without distinction, to whom God out of his good pleasure sends the gospel” (II, 5). There are “many who are called by the gospel



(who) do not repent, nor believe in Christ, but perish in unbelief" (II, 6). The Canons hold that it is God Who calls all those who hear the gospel and that His call is unfeigned, i.e., serious: "As many as are called by the gospel, are unfeignedly called . . . It is not the fault of . . . God, who calls men by the gospel . . . that those who are called by the ministry of the word, refuse to come, and be converted. . ." (II, IV, 8, 9).

This Reformed Confession is thoroughly Biblical on this point. Scripture teaches that one element of the proclamation of the gospel is the demand of every hearer, "Repent! Believe!"; and Scripture terms this a "call." In addition, Scripture makes clear that this summons is a *divine* summons — God's call. Jesus teaches this in the parable of the marriage of the king's son in Matthew 22:1-14. God sends out preachers to call to the salvation that He has prepared in Jesus Christ many persons, both Jews and Gentiles, who make light of that call and reject it. God's call, through His servants, is: "Come unto the marriage!" (vs. 4), i.e., "Believe on My crucified and risen Son, Jesus." The Lord Himself indicates the teaching of the parable to be that "many are called, but few are chosen" (vs. 14). This verse exposes the error both of hyper-Calvinism and of the well-meant offer. Against the former, it plainly teaches that God in the preaching of the gospel calls more men to believe in Christ than the elect, as many men, in fact, as the Church finds on the highways of history. Against the latter, the advocates of the offer, the text plainly teaches that many of those who are called by the external call of the gospel are not elect, i.e., that God does not call them out of any love or with any "sincere desire to save them."

Acts 17:30 states that "(God) now commandeth all men every where to repent." Passages such as Mark 16:16 and John 3:18, which warn of the terrible guilt of not believing on Jesus Christ, indicate that the gospel very really did call men who ultimately perish to believe in Christ and that it very really was their responsibility to do so. All of Scripture shows that it was the practice of the prophets, of John the Baptist, of Jesus, and of the apostles to confront all their audience with the call to repent and believe.

As regards those who reject the call, the Canons and Scripture maintain that, even though they had not the least ability to heed the call, so that it was totally impossible for them to do what the call required — the impossibility of a dead man raising himself — they themselves are completely to blame for their refusal to believe. "The cause or guilt of this unbelief . . . is no wise in God, but in man himself" (Canons, I, 5). "It is not the fault of the gospel, nor of Christ offered (i.e., set forth — DE) therein, nor of God, who calls men by the gospel . . . that those who are called . . .

refuse to come . . . the fault lies in themselves" (Canons III, IV, 9). It is their bounden duty to believe; they know it to be their duty; God most earnestly and truly declares in the very Word that calls them that obedience to the command pleases Him, whereas disobedience angers Him (Canons, III, IV, 8); the reason why they refuse to come is that they consciously, deliberately, wickedly, and foolishly hate Christ and life and love sin and death. Hence, God punishes them for this gross iniquity: "But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city" (Matt. 22:7).

Since the gospel shows men the way of life and since it sets forth God's grace in Jesus Christ, those who reject the call are guilty of despising life and holding the grace of God in contempt. Advocates of the offer have sometimes argued that without a grace of God for each man personally who comes under the preaching, justice cannot be done to the Biblical teaching that those who spurn the gospel are guilty of the enormity of despising the grace of God. On such reasoning, we would have to conclude also that without a "Christ for everybody" there can be no guilt of unbelief, i.e., rejecting the crucified Christ. Those who do not believe the gospel sin against the grace of God, not as if they resist and frustrate God's grace directed to them personally in an attempt to save them — which is the heresy of the well-meant offer — but in the sense that they say, "No," to the Christ presented to them in the gospel. Objectively, they stand before Jesus Christ, the Revelation of the grace of God, just as in the Lord's Supper an unbeliever stands before the sign of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus, so that, in their unbelief, they are guilty of despising God's grace in Christ, just as the unworthy partaker at the Supper is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord — even though, as a matter of fact, that grace was never intended for them or extended to them. Theirs is a far, far greater guilt — and punishment — than that of the pagan who only holds under in unrighteousness the truth of God that is revealed in creation. Acts 13:46 ascribes such guilt to those who refused the apostles' call to believe: "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Similarly, Hebrews 10:29 charges the apostate with the sin of treading under foot the Son of God, counting the blood of the covenant with which he was sanctified an unholy thing, and doing despite to the Spirit of grace. So really is this guilt theirs that both Christ and the apostles — and the Reformed preacher today — are *angry* with those who refuse to believe (cf. Mark 3:5; Acts 18:6).



It is clear, then, that the Reformed preacher, although he repudiates the well-meant offer, can call sinners, any sinner and all sinners, to repentance and faith and that he can do this with all seriousness and urgency. Needless to say, he can do full justice to the tender, comforting aspect of the call of the gospel that applies only to God's elect, regenerated people — the call that is directed specifically to those who are broken and wounded with the guilt of their sins (Is. 61:1); those who are consciously sinners (Luke 5:32); those who labor and are heavy laden (Matt. 11:28); those who, pricked in their hearts, cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 3:37); those who, on account of their sins, are thirsty for righteousness (Is. 55:1) and willing to receive the water of life (Rev. 22:17). Such regenerated but grieving sinners, he tenderly directs to the Savior, saying, "Come," "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus," "Take of the water of life freely," "Believe," and promising them remission of sins, rest, salvation, and eternal life (cf. Is. 55:2, 3; Matt. 11:28; Acts 3:38; Acts 16:30, 31).

Indeed, the "offer-man" is unable to call sinners. Inherent in the idea of the call is a lordly authority — the authority of the Lord of lords, Jesus the Christ. An "offer-man," if he is consistent, must *beg* sinners; and this disgraceful practice abounds today. It is revolting to anyone who has caught a glimpse of the majesty of God, the excellent glory of the risen Jesus, and the sovereignty of grace to hear the "offer-men" begging recalcitrant sinners please to accept Jesus and come to the front. They conjure up the spectacle of the Baal prophets ranting and raving in their "altar call" for their powerless god to send the fire. Is it out of place for us to stand on the sidelines and urge these preachers to cry harder and longer because probably their god of salvation, namely, the free will of the sinner, is sleeping?

There is a command to all hearers to believe. But this "external call of the gospel" is not a well-meant offer. It is grace to God's elect who, as God calls them in the preaching, receive the gift of the Spirit's irresistible drawing in their hearts, so that they infallibly believe and are saved. To the others, the reprobate, neither is the call directed to them by God out of grace nor is it actually grace to them. Rather, it is God's righteous, serious declaration to them of their duty and His serious insistence that they perform their duty. The call makes known to them what they ought to do, not what God wills to do with them. Right after they have insisted that God unfeignedly calls all those who hear the gospel, the Canons deny that "God on his part shows himself ready to reveal Christ unto all men," as if God "applies to all sufficiently and efficiently the means necessary to conversion" (III, IV, Rejection of Errors,

5). God's purpose and desire with the call to those whom He has not elected is not their salvation, but their damnation. Hence, He does not give them the faith which He demands and, instead, hardens them by the preaching of the gospel. He has mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He wills, He hardeneth (Rom. 9:18). In every age, the elect obtain salvation, and the rest are blinded (Rom. 11:7).

There are several things that will not be found in Reformed preaching to the unconverted. Reformed preaching will not approach the audience with the declaration: God loves all of you, and Christ died for all of you. It will not say to every man: God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. It will not proclaim to all hearers: God is gracious to all of you and sincerely desires your salvation. This message is a lie. Not only are these statements false, but they are also the bane of effective missions. Never did the apostles take this approach, or proclaim this message, to the unconverted. Such a message is incipient universalism, which assures the sinner that all is well with him in his sin — God loves him, and Christ died for him! — so that there is really no need for him to repent and believe. Arminianism, which blusters of its concern to save the lost, peters out in universalism which blesses all religions, as well as the irreligious, and sees no need of any preaching of the gospel. Biblical preaching assures the sinner of God's love for him personally only in the way of his faith in Christ crucified.

To the objection that has been made, that if the preacher cannot say to every sinner, "Christ died for you," he cannot command him to believe anything, the answer is simple: a preacher does not call a man to believe some *thing*, but he calls him to believe on *Someone*. He presents Christ and calls the hearers to believe on that Christ.

Secondly, Reformed preaching to the unconverted will never tell the audience that their salvation depends upon their free will, decision for Christ, acceptance of the offered salvation, opening their heart to let Jesus come in, etc. On the contrary, it will make unmistakably plain that their salvation does not depend and cannot depend upon them — not their willing and not their running (Rom. 9:16). For Reformed preaching proclaims the gospel of grace. To preach that salvation, in the end, depends on man's will is to preach another gospel than the gospel of Christ. One could as well preach that salvation has to be earned by the sinner's works of obedience to the law. Reformed preaching will make clear, especially today, that the believing which is called for is not a new, grand work of man meriting or effecting salvation, but the total renunciation of all of man's efforts and entirely the gift of God worked in the sinner by the Holy Spirit. It will loudly



declare: "no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father" (John 6:65).

Finally, Reformed preaching, i.e., Biblical gospel-preaching will not promise salvation to everybody. It will promiscuously publish the promise that whoever believes shall not perish but have everlasting life, as the Canons teach (II,5). The preaching of the gospel is, at its very heart, the proclamation of the promise. But the promise itself is particular. It is addressed to the believer (John 3:16); to the willing (Rev. 22:17); to the one who labors and is heavy laden with the burden of the guilt of his sin (Matt. 11:28). The promise is for the elect alone. This is Paul's doctrine in Romans 9. The word of God promising salvation to Israel must not be thought to be without effect, because so many Israelites perished (vs. 6). For there were only some in that nation who were the "children of the promise" (vs. 8), i.e., persons to whom God gave the promise and persons brought to

life spiritually by the promise. These were the elect (vss. 10 ff.). Therefore, the Westminster Confession of Faith is correct when it limits the promise of the covenant of grace to God's elect: God "promise(s) to give unto all those that are ordained unto eternal life His Holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe" (Chapter VII,III). Thus, the promise is sure and certain. The elect believer can rely on it for time and eternity; faith clings to that sure promise (Rom. 4:19-21). A universal promise, i.e., a promise made to every hearer, is at once a promise dependent for its efficacy upon the sinner and a promise that fails in multitudes of cases. Such a promise would be unworthy of God, of no value to those who perish, and a source of enormous doubt for the believer.

All of which is to say that Reformed preaching is untainted by the well-meant offer.

(to be continued)

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## FEATURE

# Five Plus Three Equals Zero (2)

*Rev. John A. Heys*

Last time we pointed out that when a church that has the five points of Calvinism as its confession adds the first point of "Common Grace", it loses that first point of Calvinism, namely, total depravity. For one who maintained the truth that man is spiritually dead loses that truth the minute that this one speaks of a man with ability to perform a work. And "Common Grace" in its first point speaks of a man who can accept and consider an offer of the Gospel, and in the third point speaks of an *ability* that the unregenerate has whereby he is able to do something in the sphere of the civil that is good in God's sight.

At this time I like to show that this "offer of the Gospel" takes away the remaining points of Calvinism as well and leaves you with nothing of the Reformed faith when you adopt and maintain the three points of "Common Grace."

The second point of Calvinism is unconditional election. And that according to Scripture means that God chose His people eternally, before they could do good or evil and entirely apart from any conditions of doing good or evil. Paul says that of Jacob and Esau, before they were born, in Romans 9:11-13. But the "offer" of salvation to all who hear the preaching of the Gospel makes it an election in time and on the condition that man accepts the offer. In fact, it

makes it a human election that follows the fulfilling of a condition by man. After all, an offer always depends upon the one to whom the offer is given. He really determines whether it is accepted or not. And thus man elects himself. You say that as soon as you say that God offers him salvation in the Gospel. You say that the one to whom the offer is made decides whether or not he will become an elect. That is human election, which decides for God who the elect will be; and it is also a conditional election. And this point of an offer of salvation in the Gospel to all who hear, of which the first point of "Common Grace" speaks, causes the whole second point of Calvinism, which teaches an unconditional and eternal, divine election to disappear into nothingness. The first point of "Common Grace" added to the second point of Calvinism results in zero as far as Reformed truth is concerned. You have to choose between the first point of "Common Grace" and the second point of Calvinism. You cannot maintain both.

The third point of Calvinism is limited, or better, particular, atonement. And it means that Christ atoned for our sins, and atoned only for the sins of the elect. The Saviour received His name, Jesus, exactly because He would "save *His people* from their sins." He said Himself, "I lay down my life for the sheep." In John 17:9 Jesus also says, "I pray for



them: I pray not for the world." Certainly here we have a very limited group for whom Jesus prays. And if salvation were prepared for all who hear the preaching of the Gospel, why does Jesus not pray for all who hear it? And having maintained an unconditional election of totally depraved men, one would have to maintain an atonement that was only for these elect.

But what does the first point of "Common Grace" do to this atonement? In the "offer of the Gospel" it denies, first of all, that it is atonement. An offer speaks of a possible atonement, or a possible escape from guilt and punishment to receive glory. But whether this will be or not depends again on the acceptance of the offer. Christ did not really pay for these sins, He only made it possible that they be paid for. For it is also quite plain from "an offer of the Gospel" that some to whom it is offered do not have such an atonement. If Christ really atones for the sins of some, and He did, then it can no longer be offered to them. It is theirs. The first point of "Common Grace" offers salvation and atonement to some who will not receive it. Then it is not actual atonement, and then it is not limited only to the elect but to all who hear the offer. And to the confession of the third point of Calvinism, the first point of "Common Grace's" offer of the Gospel, and you have lost that truth of limited atonement. The first point of "Common Grace" added to the third point of Calvinism results in zero of the Reformed faith.

The same is true of irresistible grace, for it lies in the very nature of an offer that it can be resisted. If it cannot be resisted it is no more an offer. And then it is no more grace either, but by accepting one deserves the object offered. He makes himself worthy. But an efficacious call is by no means an offer; and God does not leave the size and the constituency of His church to man's whims and willingness to accept an offer. God calls irresistibly in His grace and never gets Himself in a position where He may be frustrated and disappointed. Let us not add the first point of "Common Grace" to the fourth point of Calvinism, for we will have nothing of Reformed truth left, if we do.

And the same holds true of the fifth point of Calvinism, namely, the perseverance of the saints. For it depends upon the second, third and fourth points of Calvinism. Because God chose unconditionally and saves only these by an irresistible grace, there is a perseverance of the saints to the very end. And since "Common Grace" with its "offer" denies these three previous points of Calvinism, it also negates the fifth when it speaks of an "offer of the Gospel." Take and keep the five points, and throw away the three, if you want to have Reformed doctrine and the truth and true comfort.

### A SUBTRACTION THAT MULTIPLIES

Quite plainly, then, the adoption of this theory (for that is all that it is, a man-made theory that is not supported by the Word of God) multiplies the heresies that have come into this world. Arminianism with its offer of salvation had been in the world for a long time. In fact it was the Synod of Dordrecht in 1618 and 1619 that drew up the Canons to defend the truth and show the error of Arminianism. But now in 1924 was added another aspect to this error. And being a denomination of goodly size, there was a multiplication of the churches that now sided in with Arminianism and spoke of the offer of salvation to all who hear the preaching. The theory took away the truth from these churches, and today has led them even farther away from the truth to corrupt also the truth of God's love, and to deny very openly the limited atonement of the Scriptures. Formerly the mother church was a bastion of the Reformed faith, a group of churches that staunchly defended those five points of Calvinism and preached them with vigor and conviction. But suddenly by official decision all these churches through their Synod become defenders of Arminianism with its conditional theology. And there was a multiplication of the congregations that now were in the Arminian camp. This does not mean that every member in the mother church was willing to take all the implications of this lie, but it does mean that officially and through the Synod all these churches cast away the five points to adopt the three when they adopted the three points of "Common Grace."

Multiplied, too, were the number of heresies now being defended in the church world. Basically the lie is always the same. But each time there is a doctrinal controversy that lie has appeared in a new garb and form. And in 1924 this was also the case. The grace of God was now under attack and was pressed into the service of Arminianism. In 1618 and 1619 Arminianism stressed the error that faith is the condition which God stipulated for the obtaining of salvation. Condemning this, the Canons in I,B,2 reject the errors of those who maintain that God chose "out of all possible conditions (among which are also the works of the law), or out of the whole order of things, the act of faith which from its very nature is undeserving, as well as its incomplete obedience as a condition of salvation." That was the form the Synod of 1618 had to fight. But in 1924 it became a more subtle approach of God's favor upon His creatures in general as is plain(?) from the offer of the Gospel. A new twist to the old lie multiplied the errors that the child of God now had to fight and to reject.

### A MULTIPLICATION THAT DIVIDES

On the other side of the picture there was a multiplication of the number of denominations in



Protestantism which further divided the churches that came out of the great Reformation. A new denomination that at the beginning in 1925 numbered only three churches came into being. And Protestantism that came out of Roman Catholicism was splintered even further. There had through the years been a multiplication of groups and factions in Protestantism. Now there is a further division, a further split and splintering because that lie of "Common Grace" may not be maintained. O, yes, this denomination came into being also because unjustly and illegally they were put out of the mother church. It was not their desire to divide and separate. But they had no choice in the matter. They were declared out; and they had to oppose that Arminianism that had been introduced in a new garb. We had to be separate in order to keep the five points of Calvinism. We saw by God's grace that to adopt the three points would be to lose the five of the Reformed truth.

And, sad to say, as so often is the case in reformations, there was the dividing of families and separation of friends.

Families were torn apart and members went in different directions. Some stayed with mother church, and others felt compelled to leave and defend the truth. Friends parted and were friends no more. That is what happens when an addition is made that actually subtracts and, subtracting, multiplies the errors and denominations.

This is not the most serious consequence. The serious element always is that God is denied His glory. He becomes a weak beggar Who can only offer and so often is disappointed. And for the glory of God we must maintain the truth, no matter how it divides our families and makes separation between what formerly were friends. No heresy must divide us and separate us from God. But we may not allow in our midst any teaching or doctrine of man that separates God from His glory. And therefore we must keep the five and reject the three. For five are worth more than zero. And zero we surely will get if we add the three of "Common Grace" to the five of Calvinism.

## THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH

### An Advocate for the Devil?

*Rev. J. Kortering*

How can we condemn something if we don't know first hand what's wrong with it?

Heavy, you say!

Indeed.

But let me wrestle with you for a few minutes with this problem that probably has caused some degree of consternation in your life already.

#### EVIL – FIRST HAND

We are surrounded with evil on every side. This is so, not because evil is in things themselves. We can look at the beauty of the sunshine in creation, or we can focus our eye upon the people that are close about us; we can consider our communities, our work, etc. Now, there is no evil in any of these by themselves. Rather, evil is a matter of the heart and our inner self. What we do with them determines good or evil. Since many around us do wickedly with many of God's good gifts, these evil acts surround us. Also, since we have an evil nature these evil acts have a direct appeal to our sinful desires. And of course, behind all of this is the old devil who would like to destroy our faith and cause us to be swallowed up in the cesspool of corruption by denying God and wallowing in moral depravity.

The question we face is this, can we know evil without experiencing it? Must we become involved in the sin itself before we can really understand the horrible nature of that sin? Isn't it true that the more we experience the horror of sin, the more we will be able to live holy lives unto God, simply because we have tasted the bitterness of sin and thereby appreciate the sweetness of the gospel?

Obviously we tread on precarious ground, so we must proceed carefully.

#### LET US SIN THAT GRACE MAY ABOUND

There are some who counsel with youth and say, yes, there is a measure of truth in this that we should recognize. Young people should to some degree come into contact with the terrible reality of sin in order that they may learn to flee from it.

You young people are curious; probably that too is a sign of youth. You ask, what's it all about? This same curiosity carries over into the realm of sin; what's it all about? How bad really are the movies, what goes on during the programs when the warning sign comes on the television informing the viewers that the content of the following program has material that may be considered unfit for children. What happens when you drink a few cans of beer or



trip out with some drug? The anticipation of the forbidden produces a strong urge.

It doesn't take much effort to rationalize approval. You are going to the movies (X-rated or not), to find out for yourself what is wrong. You are going to sneak away for a few hours with that slick paperback to judge for yourself what's considered to be porno. You aren't approving any of this, you are simply finding out for yourself what's wrong with it. It could be an escapade to the sleazy night spot where the blast of rock fills the air and the place stinks of whisky and thick-tongued people dance obscenely together. This too is an "educational experience". Where do we stop? Do we go to the strip to gamble? Do we sneak to the brothel and spend time with a whore? Is that to be considered educational too?

The reasoning that the more we come into direct contact with sin the more we are able to reject it is devilish.

Yet, there are plenty of "Christian" ministers, "Christian" youth directors, "Christian" teachers, that brazenly advocate just this. Some assign the reading of bold pornography; others take young people to see the "Exorcist"; still others get heretics into their youth groups to "expose the young people to different views". Coffee houses are great for this, you can get any combo group to sing, any person that wants to spin his philosophy, any movie, all to educate.

But, you say, what's wrong with this?

Consider a few things. First, God's Word emphasizes so often that we must *abhor* sin, never *use* it for a supposed good end. Are we wiser than God? The Bible says, "Flee fornication", I Cor. 6:18. The Heidelberg Catechism explains that such an exhortation does not simply mean the act of sexual intercourse outside of marriage, but also "whatever can entice men thereto", Question 109. We as young people must hate evil; we must realize it is like a fire that destroys; and, if we take fire into our bosom, we cannot help but be burned. I'm sure that if we are honest with ourselves, the reasoning that would justify our deliberately coming into contact with evil with the idea of learning to hate it, is nothing more than pretense. We want to justify satisfying our evil curiosity. That too is sin before God. Secondly, we don't have to experience sin in order to know it to be sin. That's nonsense. The Bible describes all sin for us in clear detail and we don't have to think that we cannot really know it to be sin unless we experience it. I suppose that would mean that we cannot know the horror of murder until we killed someone; and who wants to believe that? Finally, if we deliberately play with sin, even under false pretense, God will hold us responsible for that. Today, a person can't go innocently to the theatre, visit the night club, spend

time with the fast crowd without *permanently* being affected. Exposure to sin leaves scars, terrible ones. We have a sinful nature and if we expose ourselves to that which our sinful nature craves and inwardly desires, how can we know that we will not be drawn into the cesspool of corruption and never return? Our depraved wills are passionate for gratification. Our Christian calling is not to satisfy our curiosity, but to turn from it and flee away.

There were people in Paul's time who reasoned the same way, they said, "Let us sin that grace may abound", Rom. 6:1. In other words, let's taste the terrible ways of sin in order that we may rejoice more in grace. Paul's answer, "God forbid, how shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

### IS IGNORANCE BLISS

Perhaps we might react to this attitude and say, no, we do not want to become participants in sin, but we want to see in others and become aware of the sad consequence of sin in their lives so that we will be better able to turn away from it for ourselves. What's wrong with that? We are interested in seeing to what extent man has developed in sin, not in becoming participants in their sins.

We might even grow a little impatient and retort, you mean to say that we have to flee from every expression of sin in others? Why that's impossible! We can't help it if others engage in sinful acts, and we might be better for it if we observe closely how sin changes their lives. To do otherwise would mean that we hide our heads in the sand and act like the proverbial ostrich and try to avoid the world around us. Is ignorance of evil bliss? Movies and books as well as worldly places give us this information.

In answer to this let me observe first of all that we surely must be spiritually alert to observe the affect of sin upon people, whether they be Christians or unbelievers. It is important for us to be keen observers of the Scriptural reality that the wages of sin is death. This God has said from the beginning and Paul has confirmed. Just pay attention to the ungodly neighbor, talk to the unbeliever who works with you in the shop, observe the difference between the Christian and the ungodly when they face "tragedy" in their lives, sickness or death. See the fruits of faith in distinction from the rebellion of the natural man. Take good note and judge for yourself whether faith makes a difference or not. You do this carefully and I am sure that you will thank God for your salvation and feel a deep sense of pity for the unbeliever who remains in the wretched condition of sin and hopelessness.

This does not mean however, that we have to pry curiously into the hidden recesses of the depraved soul to see how terrible it really is. It doesn't mean



that we have to make a case study to determine how far the wicked fall. That could be very dangerous. Let me illustrate. You could very well make a study of satanism. The more you study the more you learn about horrible things. Do you, however, have to know all that goes on at their meetings in order to conclude that it is wicked and that we must condemn every form of satanism? There are things that go on that shock the sensitive soul. Many things that couldn't even be written in a paper such as the *Standard Bearer*. Sexual perversion, self abuse, murder that makes one tremble before God. Do we have to know these details? I say, God spare us; we don't have to attend these meetings or see movies to be shocked and bruised of spirit; no, we know enough that we should stay as far away from them as possible.

Furthermore, there are some children of God who have gone through the terrible depths of depravity and become converted by God's grace. We might ask why? Surely, this happens. There are dope addicts, drunkards, criminals, unbelievers, heretics, who are delivered from a life of sin and brought to the knowledge of faith in Jesus Christ. We do best to listen to them. All warn that the life of sin is a living hell and that we must flee anything that might even tempt us to experiment with such evil. We do not have to encounter the sad experience of sin in order to learn evil; we are also able to learn of such evil from those who have been delivered from it. If this conversion is truly of Christ, they will not brag of their past life and go into all kinds of details concerning their former life; they will simply warn. This too is under the guidance of God whereby he leads all His children in the way of repentance and faith unto everlasting glory.

Finally, the best antidote for overcoming evil is to dwell upon the pages of Holy Writ. If we truly understand this, we will also realize that there is no vacuum created by such a view of life. Surely we

must flee from every form of evil; we must not curiously pry into the lives of the ungodly to learn how bad things really are. We can best leave this alone and not be enticed with every form of abomination. But, doing this, we must do more. We must fill our souls with the knowledge of God's Word. The Bible exposes sin to the full, but it also directs us to our positive calling as children of God. We must reject the devil not only, but we must at the same time draw nigh unto God, James 4: 7, 8. Instead of spending so much time examining the evil that is in the world, we can far better spend that time being instructed and encouraged in the truths of God's Word. In the pages of that Word we will learn to see sin as God wants us to see it and then *repent*; not glory in it, not be enticed by it; but, to hate it and to turn away from it day after day. We also will then see God's holy law, spelled out so clearly upon the pages of that Word. With the Holy Spirit's work in us, we will come to understand what is our calling in this world and walk positively in God's will.

It is in the pages of the Scripture that we are taught that sex is created by God to be used in the service of God and not for sinful pleasure. In the Bible we learn that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit and thus must be cared for as one cares for God Himself. In the Bible we are guided into the paths of truth so that our faith is expressed in harmony with God's revelation. That same Bible shows us good works and directs our feet upon the paths of righteousness.

Do we need an advocate for the devil? Do we have to allow someone to show us the depths of sin and tempt us thereby, in order really to learn to abhor sin? Are we going to let the devil have time with us, pleading his cause and trying to deceive us?

Let's answer with a resounding, no!

We need the Holy Spirit of God to guide us into His truth. Herein is liberty and life everlasting.

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## NEWS ARTICLES

### Jamaica Journey

*John M. Faber*

The emissaries to Jamaica have submitted an official report of their findings which will appear in the *Agenda Of Synod* and which will be made known to our membership. But I would like to tell you of my personal first-time-visit to that tropical island.

We left Grand Rapids on April 15 with traces of snow still on the ground, changed planes in Chicago

and deplaned in Montego Bay in 86 degree weather. In the coastal parts of the country, the sun shone every day of our stay. Showers were the usual afternoon fare in the mountains. The temperatures remained between 72 and 86 degrees; not muggy, and with the constant northeast trade winds fanning the north coast in the daylight hours. Although the official tourist season was over, there were still quite



a few white visitors from many other climes. The airport is very busy all afternoon and evening as English, Canadian and American Jets unloaded and loaded passengers and freight.

The country is very lush and mountainous, and is literally covered with bananas, mangos, oranges, orantiques, breadfruit, grapefruit and many other food trees. To me it seemed that breadfruit and bananas must be available to anyone who cared to pick them. They grow all over the roads. There are beautiful valleys between the mountains with lush pastures dotted with well-fed cattle. One of the valleys reminded me of the Hudsonville lowlands. We even saw a huge onion field! Irrigation ditches furnish the necessary water for some of the crops. These also serve as bathtubs and laundry tubs for many of the natives.

The tropical climate probably contributes to the general lassitude of the people. If one needs a rest (and can afford the exorbitant rental and food prices) this is the place to get it. No one — just no one, is in a hurry. The only exception might be the country road drivers. But even this type of driving takes no more exertion than pressure on the gas pedal. In general, all are standing around waiting for tomorrow. Standing or sitting furnishes the exercise for today; tomorrow more of the same. That lassitude is evidenced even in the life of the children. In three week's time I saw but three children playing skip-rope, and that takes a minimum of three. They too, stand around doing absolutely nothing. The city streets, in contrast, are teeming with cars and pedestrians, the latter going probably to another standing place. Goods of all kinds are carried about on the people's heads. Baskets of fruit, boxes of who-knows-what, cases of soft drinks, whole bunches of bananas, lumber and every conceivable burden that must be conveyed from place to place are cleverly balanced atop the head. One must see it to believe that a ten-quart pail full of water can be so balanced. One sees it on the mountain roads when the children are sent to fetch the free-government-supplied stuff from the roadside water pipes. What is more unstable than that commodity to carry in such a fashion!

The city streets are lined with open shops with one counter and shelves behind it. Each shop usually sells one commodity to the exclusion of any other. There are a few supermarkets run by the wealthier merchants, usually Chinese. Alongside of shops there are myriads of self-employed vendors of all sorts; their businesses set up at the curbs wherever they may expect to snare a customer. Grocery prices are very high: eggs, \$1.30; Butter, \$1.30; Hamburg, \$1.25; and other items are comparable to that. The average wage is very low; the banana field workers recently-raised wage is \$5.00 per day.

The mountain roads had been described to me, but cannot be fully appreciated until one has driven them. Narrow, twisty and full of rocks and/or chuck-holes. The insane drivers had also been described to me, but one has to see them too, to believe the tales. They must all be fatalists, for their total unconcern for pedestrians, cars, goats or cattle around the next blind curve can only be understood in that light. And the left-side-of-the-road driving, legal in that land, only adds to the confusion of the right-side-driver from the States. After driving over 1200 miles over those roads, and climbing the steep, stony and muddy paths up and down to the churches, I had a much greater appreciation of the stamina of Rev. and Mrs. Lubbers and the other ministers and their wives who made the weekly rounds. Even the footpaths have hairpin curves! If the theory of evolution were true, one would find all the mountaineers to have one leg longer than the other to stand on an even keel. It might be handy at that! And now that I have again told you about the roads full of people, goats and cows (and even one huge pig in the main street of one city) you still have to see it to believe.

"How about the church buildings?" you ask. Some are of concrete blocks and floors; some are of wood with wooden, stone or dirt floors. Some are partly board and zinc construction, no more than "huts in a banana patch." One, Belmont, has but one wall, made of upright bamboo poles with four bamboo corner posts and a pole ceiling covered sparsely with palm fronds which allow the sun's rays to filter through and the rains to pour through. Can you imagine worshipping in such a meeting place with dirt floor and narrow boards for seats, with no backrest? We did it and listened to a sermon that was as Reformed as we are accustomed to hear home in Jerusalem. Personally, I enjoyed the communion of saints in the open-air "church" as well as I do in my home church with its carpeting and opera style seats. Of course, when it rains in Belmont, at church time, the congregation cannot meet. Their need for materials to construct a concrete block building is urgent. We can furnish them these things as we did in other places.

We found the people enthusiastically receiving the preaching of the Word. True, they are not yet founded in the Reformed faith as we are who have been brought up in it from our infancy; but that faith is being set forth before them by the ministers in varying degrees. I was especially struck by the child-like faith of the people. The primary requisite of any Christian to receive the simple teachings of Scripture was found in those congregations which we visited. The majority of worshippers literally hung on the words of the minister, even to the extent of joining him when he quoted the more familiar Scriptural texts. They like to sing the songs of Zion. They use the



Psalters in the main. But when they sing from their collection of gospel hymns, they are still in need of supervision as to the doctrinal content of their favorites. I would not want to carry over into our worship services their habit of audibly agreeing with the statements of their ministers and their occasional "amens" when especially pleased with individual utterances. Neither would I try to regulate their services by introducing into their services our strictly on-time regimen and our silent agreement with the sermon we hear. Nor would I want to exchange our pipe organ accompaniment with their guitar, tambourine and hand-clapping substitute that some of them have. But in their humble "churches" and in those remote mountain hide-a-ways, it is not a bit incongruous. I rather enjoyed it.

The Mission Committee's official report suggests to Synod that a missionary be called to work there. That decision has been endorsed by my experience. There

is yet much work to be done there. The people need, and are willing to receive sound doctrinal preaching. The four young ministers can be helped in their work to a great extent. They have done extremely well with the seminary training they have received. But post-graduate work would be of great help. They need to be encouraged to work with the children, for, as one of them said, "The future is in the children for they are tomorrow's church." They are already assimilating the teaching of the Heidelberg Catechism. We heard a class recite the answers to the 33rd and 34th questions of that confession, and we silently wished that our Sunday School children could do as well.

Back home again when I hear my minister pray for the saints in the isles of the sea, and for the gathering of the Church from every tribe, nation and tongue, I can give them faces; I know some of them.

## Doon's New Church Building Dedicated

*Rev. R. G. Moore*

It was my privilege to be in Doon at the time of the dedication of their new and beautiful church building. Rev. R. Moore sent the following article and pictures for publication in the *Standard Bearer*. Our readers share with Doon congregation their joy in this evidence of God's goodness to them and pray that they may find their delight in the favor of our God in the way of His truth.

— H. Hanko

May sixteenth was a very special day in Doon, Iowa. Our Protestant Reformed Church in Doon had the blessed privilege of dedicating their new church building. Indeed it was an inspiring time for the congregation of Doon, for it brought us face to face with God's covenant faithfulness. He has richly blessed us with covenant seed and has kept us in the faith so that the need arose for a new church edifice in which to worship Him.

In the year 1926, in March, God gathered together seven families and two individuals to organize our congregation in Doon. A few years later, about 1932, our small congregation was able to purchase the church building where we have worshipped until this May. For many years the old church building served us well, and it pleased God to gather together His people there under the preaching of His Word.

The Lord richly blessed us through these forty-nine years of existence. There was steady growth in our congregation. Much of this growth came from within as God gave to our congregation an abundance of covenant seed. He also worked in their hearts to remain faithful to the truth and gave them opportunity for employment in the immediate area. Our congregation presently numbers thirty-four families

and one hundred fifty-nine souls. As a result of this steady growth and on account of the age of our old building the Lord led our congregation to undertake the construction of a new place of worship. Our covenant God also gave us the means to undertake this work even when it seemed so difficult for a small congregation, and on May sixteenth we were able to have dedication!

Our congregation asked our minister emeritus, Prof. H. Hanko to join us on this joyful occasion to speak for our dedication. He exhorted us from God's Word in I Sam. 4 to maintain faithfully the truth, giving our glory to God in all things. Particularly he instructed us to proclaim faithfully the gospel of Christ, lest the name Ichabod appear over the doors of our new church building. Ichabod means, "The glory is departed."

There were letters from our sister congregations of Hull and Pella who joined in our joy in the praise of God's covenant faithfulness. Further, many members of our Hull and Edgerton congregations came together with us to join in our thanksgiving. Thus our new building was filled to capacity on this joyous occasion for fellowship. In the afternoon there was an open house at which time the general public had oppor-





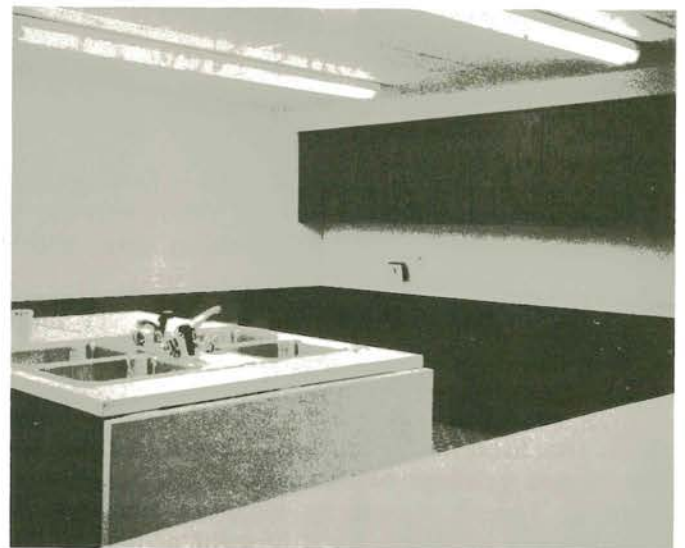
MAIN ENTRANCE



BASEMENT (MAIN ROOM)



AUDITORIUM FROM REAR



KITCHEN



AUDITORIUM (LOOKING FROM PLATFORM)

tunity to visit with some of our people and see the new building.

We invite all the readers of our *Standard Bearer* to stop in Doon and worship the Lord together with our congregation. We now have room for you to come together comfortably for worship with us. We are still struck with awe as we come together in worship. It impresses us with the wonder of God's grace, for we do not deserve such a blessing. But this is the wonder of His grace, for Christ's sake God blesses His own, blotting out their sin in the blood of the cross. Our prayer is that we may truly dedicate this building unto the service of God, and that we may have grace to continue to go forward in faith, until He brings us into the heavenly tabernacle, not made with hands, which our Lord hath before prepared for us! May all our glory be in the Lord.



## GUEST ARTICLE

## The Development of a Reformed Psychology

( continued )

## THE CHARACTER OF A REFORMED PSYCHOLOGY

But what is that psychology? How are we to conceive of that psychology which we have said is so necessary?

We must conceive of it, first of all, not merely as Christian, but as specifically Reformed. Let me explain that. There are forms of so-called Christian psychology; perhaps you are aware of some of them. One of the more familiar is perhaps that psychology which is practiced by a man named Clyde M. Narramore, who has a radio broadcast originating out of California. Another is that of Jay Adams, who has a counselling center in Philadelphia, Pa., and who has written several books on this subject of a Christian psychology. Another is that kind of psychology which used to be practiced at Pine Rest Christian Hospital in Grand Rapids, Michigan. And there are more. All of these are Christian psychologies, but all of them fall short for a variety of reasons. Some divorce the work of psychology from the church, and especially from the office of the ministry; that, by the way, is one criticism that I have of Jay Adams. Many, in fact, all, without exception, I think, do not stress the Reformed idea of the covenant; many do not have a proper conception of the doctrine of sin and grace; they do not have an antithetical Reformed world-and-life view; and most are very heavily influenced by the psychological theories of the world. So we must not speak of a Christian psychology — that is not enough. We must speak of a Reformed psychology. A generally Christian psychology is a broad roof indeed; it covers a multitude of evils. But when we speak of a Reformed, and especially of a Protestant Reformed Psychology, we speak of something different. We speak of a psychology that stands in harmony with our Reformed view of Scripture and of the Reformed Confessions: one which stands in the line of continued development of the faith of our fathers, going all the way back to Calvin and even farther. But what then specifically characterizes such a Reformed psychology which we must have?

In the first place, and primarily, a Reformed psychology must be God-centered. This seems to be a contradiction, because we said a little while ago that in psychology we study the idea and being of *man*. We do not study the doctrine of God; we do not study the attributes of God: who is God, what is God — that is not psychology. It seems strange, therefore,

to speak of a God-centered study of man. But yet it is precisely the nature of a Reformed psychology that it is theocentric. Psychology must be theocentric in the sense that it is Scriptural. Scripture, after all, is God's Word; it is God's speech, God speaking through the inspired writers to His people, God's revelation to His people. And that Scripture reveals God's will for all things, and reveals also the proper idea and conception of man. Therefore, when we are Scriptural, we are truly God-centered. In that sense of the word we bow to the Scriptures. We accept God's Word to us as to what man is and in what relationships he stands. Our whole view of man is completely determined by what God says. You ask me, "What is man? How do I learn what man is?" I say, "Go to the Scriptures." There you will find the answer. The Word of God will tell you what you are; the Word of God will tell you what you must be; the Word of God will tell you all you need to know for your eternal salvation and for your life in the midst of the world. Even those facts which science tells us must, therefore, be interpreted in the light of God's revelation to us, and never apart from it.

In the second place, Reformed psychology must in the nature of the case be a covenant psychology. And that immediately implies the proper conception of man. We must speak of man in terms of his creation, of his fall, of sin, of the curse and its results, of all the problems and difficulties which stem from that sin of our first parents. We must speak of man in terms of God's people who through Christ stand in the covenant of friendship with God. We cannot spell that out in detail here. But suffice it to say that we must construe all things, also psychology, covenantally. That implies also a view of the Christian man as he stands in Christ the Head of the covenant. Christ has redeemed us from sin and the curse; Christ calls us to live a life of sanctification through His Spirit; Christ is He through Whom alone we stand in the proper relationship of friendship to our God. That after all is the heart of the matter, is it not? The whole matter of sin and grace? All of our thinking must be in those terms, without exception. We must not have any of that modern garbage about arrested development and all the rest of that nonsense. We talk concerning sin, concerning the hard reality of the effects of sin in our lives. We cannot speak of spiritual-mental problems, we cannot speak of any area of psychology, without speaking in terms of sin. Let me put that bluntly: if you have a problem of a



spiritual-mental-psychological nature, whatever it may be, your problem is one thing, and that is *sin*. Perhaps a specific sin, perhaps not. Perhaps a chain of sins, one leading to the other, but nevertheless, your problem is simply sin. That is the heart of the Reformed psychology. It is sin, for which the only cure is the blood of Jesus Christ, not all the head-shrinkers in the state of Colorado, or in all the 50 states put together. The grace of God, that is the only remedy. A Reformed psychology must therefore be not only God-centered, but also covenantally Christ-centered.

In the third place, a Reformed psychology must necessarily be construed in terms of the offices in the church. Through the church, Christ the Savior of His people, speaks to those people. He is the Head of that church, Who rules that church by His Word and Spirit. All of our life must necessarily center around that church, because in the sphere of that church God reveals Himself in the line of the covenant. The church is absolutely necessary because it is the communion of the saints, the body of believers who are united in Christ as their covenant Head, and to whom Christ speaks as His body. And more specifically, we must speak of psychology in terms of the offices, and especially the office of the ministry. The minister is the ambassador of Christ in the world; he is Christ's representative to God's people in the sphere of the church. It is therefore the responsibility of the minister to care for the souls of the sheep; the apostle John quotes Christ Himself when he writes in Chapter 10 of Christ as the Good Shepherd Who knows His sheep and cares for them. It is the truth of Scripture and the Reformed Confessions that the minister of the Word of God stands as the official representative of that Christ Who is the Shepherd of His sheep. It is his duty and responsibility to care for the spiritual needs of His people, especially because he above all speaks concerning that vital matter of sin and grace. Christ, Who saves His people from their sins and from all of life's problems, speaks through the minister. Read Romans 10. Read Hebrews 13:17, where God's people are admonished, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief." Therefore the spiritual, psychological care of the sheep is the duty primarily of the minister through the preaching of the Word. That is primary: for it is through the preaching of the Word that Christ speaks to His people concerning redemption from sin and its effects. The preaching of the Word is the most effective psychology there could possibly be, because the preaching of the Word, whether it teaches, whether it admonishes, whether it guides, whether it directs, whether it comforts, whatever it does, speaks to the needs of God's people in this life, and speaks

very practically, too. You know that from experience. The minister must, moreover, further instruct his people in the truths of Scripture, so that they may better know the truths of sin and grace as applied to their lives. And it is also his responsibility to attempt in the light of, and on the basis of Scripture to solve any spiritual-psychological problems that may come to his attention because, I repeat, through the office of the ministry Christ speaks to His people concerning all things, also spiritual-mental-psychological problems and their solutions. That, then, must be our starting point. Whatever else we may say about a Reformed psychology, and there are many more things which we can and must say, with that we must begin. Then we are on the right track. Then we cannot go wrong.

### THE ATTAINMENT OF A REFORMED PSYCHOLOGY

And then, too, we are on the road to the attainment of a Reformed psychology. How do we get there?

In the first place, as far as our leaders are concerned, it is their responsibility to develop the idea and practice of a Reformed psychology. This has been done and is being done at the present time. We must not think, you know, that this whole idea of psychology is new; there are those that would like to have us think that, but it is not so. Much work has been done in the past, only in the past we called it by a little different name. We called it a world-and-life view. But yet, development continues. That must be done in the seminary, in the training of ministers of the gospel, of shepherds of God's sheep. That has been done in the past, and that is being done now, and it will be done in the future. Our leaders understand the necessity of a Reformed psychology. They understand it far better yet than I do. They understand, too, that it is very difficult for God's people to live in this complex modern age. They know that God's people need answers to the problems of life. I know that they know that, because they have told me. That is true also of our ministers as they are in the parsonage and in the pulpit. Our ministers undoubtedly need further training in education in this whole matter of psychology, in the whole matter of the care of God's people. They must always learn, even when they get to be old, because they always learn something new. And they must practice what they learn in the pastoral ministry.

But that is not what you really came to hear tonight — what our leaders have done and must do. You came to hear what you must do. And while we cannot talk about that in any great detail, let me lay down just a couple of guidelines.

In the first place, and this above all, do *not* under



any circumstances, seek help from the sphere of the world. Do not do it. If you are in trouble spiritually and you go to the world for your help, you are asking for more trouble, and you will get it. Do not forget that when you step into the sphere of the world, you step among those who deny God and who deny His Word, who deny His revelation of what man is and must be. Do not ever forget it! Do not be taken in by all of their pious talk, because it is not true. I ask again: how in the world can one who does not acknowledge sin and grace, who does not acknowledge Christ as the Shepherd of the sheep, solve problems for a child of God? That is impossible, because they are sin-problems.

But that is negative; that is what not to do. There are many things which you can do.

First of all, you can cooperate with those who are trained and called in the care of the souls of God's people. And that means primarily the ministers of the gospel. They have been trained in the Scriptural and spiritual care of God's people. They are those to whom you must turn for help. In that connection I ask of you, though you are not my congregation, I ask of you as God's people: go to your minister before it is too late. You know, I am rather young yet; I have not had a great deal of experience in this whole field, not nearly as much as the grey-hairs who have preceded me; but there is one thing that they all say, and that is, "When my people come to me, they have waited too long. They have gotten themselves in so deeply that I tear my hair trying to get them out again." I have heard that said, I think unanimously, by our ministers. Go, then, before it is too late. You have enough common sense to understand that; I don't have to instruct you. Do not go to the minister with every tiny little problem; if you don't know what color shoes to wear to the neighbors — that's no problem for the minister to solve. You are aware of that. But when you have a sin-problem, when you have a problem of a spiritual-psychological nature, go

to the minister. Go to him as he stands as a representative of the Shepherd of the sheep; you will avoid a lot of difficulties for yourself and for everyone else if you do. It might not be easy, but do it anyway; you will not be disappointed.

In the second place, live Scriptural life-principles. You say, "That is easy to say." But if you stop and think about it, that is no pious platitude or panacea, no simple cure-all. For when you evaluate your life in the whole aspect of psychology in the light of the Word of God, then you understand that truth; when you live as God's people according to His Word, then your problems are easily solved, or they do not arise at all. When you live according to the Scriptures, then you know yourself; you know your relationship to the world, to others in the church, and to God. If you live according to those two great commandments that Jesus set forth in Matthew 22: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and mind and soul and strength. This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" — that is life right there. You say, "But that is too simple." Oh, no, it is not; that is not simplistic. That is the truth of God's Word, and that is the only answer that you have to all of your problems — the life of God. Study that Word, therefore; read that Word; discuss that Word among yourselves; discuss it in your societies; seek to counsel one another along life's pathway. As far as problems and solutions are concerned, seek to develop in your understanding of what you are and who you are and what according to the Scriptures you are called to be. In brief, *live* a Reformed psychology.

May God give us the grace that, as we continue to develop in this area of Reformed psychology, we may do that in harmony with His Word and to His honor and glory.

## QUESTION BOX

### About Woman Suffrage

*Prof. H. C. Hoeksema*

From an aged sister in Grand Rapids comes the following question:

"Here I come with a question, rather old-fashioned in nature; but to me it is always of importance.

"Voting time is again around the corner, and the question came up whether women should vote. About 45 to 50 years ago we did not trouble ourselves about it very much. It was simply 'no' on

the basis of Scripture. But today it is different. It is surprising how many of our ladies vote. Our discussion led to many pro's and con's. The pro's stood firm in their conviction that a Christian woman should take part in elections and express herself in such important decisions, show deep interest in her country, be a good citizen and be patriotic. Besides, this was our Christian duty. Well, the con's protested that on the basis of Scripture a woman has no right to



own this power because her task as woman is so different. The power lies along a different path, to strengthen the family ties, home environment, teaching and rearing children, etc. Of course, we realize that times have changed. We do not have a King Nebuchadnezzar, who can demand people to bow before a golden image; nevertheless the prince of this world grasps every opportunity to blind God's people to worship him. The principle is the same. And what has resulted of all this trampling under foot of God's wonderful purpose with the creation of woman? All this women's liberation — equal rights — women in office in church and state. By running to the voting booth are we really showing ourselves to be of a different, new principle? Or do we agree with them in their ungodly way?

"Well here is my question. And will you give your candid opinion as to what Scripture teaches us. Should a Christian woman partake in voting, either in church or in political affairs?"

### Reply

First of all, let me share a secret with our readers. This question comes from the Holland Home in Grand Rapids. And it is evident, I think, from this letter that at the Holland Home they can still have some rather lively discussions about things, and discussions also about worthwhile subjects. Mind you, the sister who wrote me is in her 80s!

In the second place, I do not think that the questions raised here are so very old-fashioned. Certainly, the question concerning woman suffrage in the church is not an old fashioned question. In our own churches it is not a question at all: both the offices and voting are limited to male, confessing members. But in other Reformed denominations the introduction of woman suffrage is of comparative recent date. Moreover, the question of women in office in the church, which is very closely related, is a very current subject. In the Netherlands, in the Gereformeerde Kerken women have already been admitted to office in the church. At present there is a very lively discussion going on concerning the question of women in office in the Christian Reformed Church in this country. A synodical committee has already advised that there is no principal objection. And if this position is adopted, it can only mean that in due course the practice of admitting women to office must necessarily follow. I take it that most of our readers are acquainted with the various passages of Scripture involved in this discussion. And it is not my purpose to discuss them at this time. I only wish to point out that one's fundamental view of Holy Scripture is closely connected with this entire question. If the Scriptures have a time-bound character — and I refer now particularly to the Scripture passages in question in

connection with this subject — then it can also be successfully argued that the exclusion of women from the offices in Christ's church, while it may have been valid in another day, is no longer valid today. We do not hold to this position, however.

That brings me to my third remark, namely: that historically the entire movement for woman suffrage and women in office, both in the churches and in the political realm, has gotten its impetus from the worldly and thoroughly ungodly and rebellious "women's liberation movement." And then we must remember that while, of course, the so-called women's lib movement has had more publicity and has set new goals for itself in recent times, nevertheless that movement itself is not of recent origin. It was the movement for the liberation of women (and personally I believe that the word *liberation* is far too good a word for this) that was behind the struggle for woman suffrage already many years ago. And to me, this would be sufficient reason to condemn woman suffrage. It is a movement that is of the world, and therefore a movement with which the people of God should have nothing to do. I think it is evident from various remarks of my questioner that she senses something of this also; and I believe that my questioner is quite right in this respect. Moreover, I do not believe that you can separate successfully the various items involved in the so called women's lib movement. Inevitably, the trend will be that if you accept their claim to woman suffrage, you will be swept along in the tide and will be compelled to accept all the many other claims of this movement as well.

This reminds me of another point, namely: that the right of women to vote also involves the right of women to occupy offices in the state. These two go together. If you are prepared to accept woman suffrage, you must also accept the right of women to occupy government offices. I will accept neither one.

Involved in all this is the entire teaching of Scripture concerning the God given position of the woman, as my questioner also suggests. A passage such as Eph. 5:22-24 is pertinent: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing." I Tim. 2:12-15 is also pertinent: "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."



## Book Review

*Holy Scripture*, by G. C. Berkouwer; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 377 pages, \$8.95 (cloth). [Reviewed by Prof. H.C. Hoeksema]

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This is another of the English translations of Dr. Berkouwer's "Studies In Dogmatics." This one volume in English covers the original two volumes of the Dutch edition. I reviewed the Dutch volumes in the *Standard Bearer* when they were published, and I offered an extensive critique of the Dutch edition a few years ago in our *Theological Journal*. I shall not repeat my criticisms of this work, nor offer an extensive review here. I only wish to repeat: 1) Dr. Berkouwer's "Studies In Dogmatics" are must reading for all ministers and seminarians who wish to be up-to-date with respect to current theological trends. There is no question about it that Dr. Berkouwer is one of the most influential theologians of our time. This is especially true with regard to the doctrine of Holy Scripture. If you have not read, or cannot read, the original Dutch volumes, then by all means read the English edition. 2) I am of the conviction that this work on Holy Scripture represents a serious departure from the Reformed confession concerning Scripture. I explained my criticisms in this regard in the reviews previously mentioned, and shall not repeat them here. I do wish to sound the warning that he who reads this book ought to study it very carefully and critically, and should not absorb the teachings of Dr. Berkouwer.

This is an abridged translation. This is mentioned and explained in the "Translator's Introduction" as follows:

"This work has not only been translated but edited. The material of the original two-volume work, *De Heilige Schrift*, has been decreased by approximately one-third. Such editing is always subject to question and the rationale for it needs to be made clear.

"My chief concern has been to make Berkouwer's central message regarding the nature of Holy Scripture accessible to the largest English-speaking public. Accordingly, I have concentrated on the development of Berkouwer's own point of view and its immediate sources rather than detailing all of his interaction with persons holding other viewpoints. While this will deprive the scholar of some bibliography, it has hopefully made the main body of this important work more understandable to the non-specialist. Berkouwer has always been concerned that theology be relevant to those in the pulpit and the pew as well as to those in the study. It is my hope that this work will prove useful to members of all three groups in their work and in their daily interaction with Holy Scripture."

It is certainly true that the two volumes of the Dutch edition were filled with details of Berkouwer's "interaction with persons holding other viewpoints." And this undoubtedly made these volumes somewhat difficult to read. They certainly were not what one would call "popular reading." And from this point of view, I believe that the translator by his editing has made his translation more readable. Nevertheless, while I have not made a detailed comparison, my general impression is that the abridgment has somewhat detracted from the value of this translation, at least for anyone who wishes to make a careful study of Berkouwer. I do not believe that one can properly understand Berkouwer's point of view without paying careful attention to "his interaction with persons holding other viewpoints." It is plain, too, that considerable material has been omitted: for the original two-volume work has been decreased by approximately one-third. In my opinion, this means that anyone who wishes to make a careful study of Dr. Berkouwer's views concerning Holy Scripture will still have to go back to the Dutch edition.

Nevertheless, I recommend the reading and study of this volume for those who are limited to the English language.

## News From Our Churches

By the time this appears in print, Rev. C. Hanks and Prof. Hoeksema will be well into their work on the other side of the world. About the middle of June they left Michigan and the United States, and headed for Australia and New Zealand. According to Southwest's bulletin, they will, "as representatives of our

churches, be busy working with contacts in that area until about the first part of August." Along with the writer of that announcement, "we wish them God-speed and we pray that the Lord may richly bless them and their activities among the brethren 'down under.'"



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Rev. Van Overloop and two other representatives of the council of Hope Church spent several days near the end of May investigating the mission field in Houston. The June 8 bulletin of Hope Church included a summary of the report with which the three returned to their consistory. They reported that "their time was taken up in seven visits with the individual families and six meetings (including two worship services) with most of the group collectively. There are ten families which attend the services with some regularity. The nucleus of the group ... manifested an earnest desire to organize, a love of the truth, a desire to walk holily, and a sincere willingness to receive further instruction. In the opinion of the emissaries, sufficient officebearer material was found in this nucleus. Other factors reported were a potential for growth and a strong desire to be financially independent. Having considered all this the council decided that, D.V., organization should take place early this fall, pending the approval of the Mission Committee."

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During the first part of May, Rev. Kortering traveled northwest, to spend a few days in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, in order that he might, along with Rev. Woudenberg, study the progress of the work there. Rev. Lubbers arrived in Lynden a few days later and he and Rev. Kortering together conducted church visitation. Rev. Lubbers then continued on to Redlands and Loveland for further visits and lectures.

A rather busy couple of weeks it was for Rev. Lubbers. In addition to the church visitation, he showed his pictures of Jamaica in Lynden on May 11. The following day he was in Redlands where he lectured on the Biblical concept of sanctification. A couple of days later found him in Loveland, where he again delivered that lecture entitled, "What It Means to Live a Sanctified Life." On the 18th he preached both sermons in our Loveland Church. Then it was back to Pella. He and Mrs. Lubbers were home just long enough for him to mow the lawn and write the bulletin, and for her to wash and iron, and then they were off by car for Grand Rapids for a wedding later in the week.

There was one series of eight consecutive days in there, during which Rev. Lubbers spoke no less than eight times. One of those eight speeches happens to have been given at the Rest Home in Pella. It was entitled "The Great Shepherd, and a Wonderful

Confession." In addition to the speech, incidentally, he also sang a solo. The old people there, he said, assured him that they appreciated the song; but, he added ruefully, they didn't say anything about the singing.

After all that, he deserved a little recreation. In Grand Rapids he played eighteen holes of golf on Memorial Day, and matched exactly the score of Prof. Decker. The latter managed a 53 on the last nine. He's not talking about the first.

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The last of May and the first of June is the time for graduations. From the various bulletins we notice that Rev. Lanting addressed the graduates in Loveland, Rev. Moore in Doon, and Rev. Engelsma in South Holland. In the Grand Rapids schools, Prof. Hoeksema spoke at Hope's commencement exercises, Rev. Veldman at Adams', and Prof. Hanko at Covenant's. One other graduation program there was, yet. At a Friday morning, May 30, exercise in the Seminary auditorium, four young men graduated from the pre-seminary department. Congratulations to Wilbur Bruinsma, Michael De Vries, Richard Flikkema, and Richard Peterson.

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The people of our Doon congregation held the dedication service for their new church building on Friday, May 16. Prof. Hanko, who was pastor there before his call to the seminary, gave the address.

The Men's Society of our Randolph Church sponsored a public lecture on the evening of May 21. Rev. Van Baren drove out on that occasion, and spoke on the subject, "The Antichristian Kingdom - How Near is it?"

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We have a requested announcement, yet, from the Anniversary Field Day Committee:

"We urge everyone to remember the Field Day August 6. Note that the location of the celebration has been changed to Douglas Walker Park, west of Byron Center on 84th St. If you are planning to come and have not yet notified the committee, please do so. This information is necessary for the evening meal. You may call either 451-3400 or 453-3253. If out-of-town, mail your card or just a piece of paper with your name, the number attending, and the ages of the children, to 1550 Ferndale S.W., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504. See you there."

D.D.