

# The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

That we fear God in our homes means that God truly lives in our homes. . . . He lives in the conscious life of the members of the home. . . . It is known in the morning that God is there, it is known throughout the whole day that God is there, it is known in the evening that God is there. . . . In all that takes place in our homes we have to do with God. . . .

Concretely all of this means of course that in the God-fearing home the Word of God is ever an open book. . . .

The God-fearing home is a house of prayer. . . .

See "The Fear of God in the Home" — page 19

## CONTENTS:

Meditation —	
The Providence of God .....	2
Editorials —	
Of Writing and Publishing .....	5
Seminary Convocation .....	7
Seminary Convocation Address —	
Pass the Word! .....	7
From Holy Writ —	
Exposition of Galatians .....	12
Translated Treasures —	
A Pamphlet on the Reformation of the Church .	14
Faith of Our Fathers —	
The Westminster Confession of Faith .....	16
In His Fear —	
The Fear of God in the Home .....	19
Book Reviews .....	22
News From Our Churches .....	24

## THE STANDARD BEARER

ISSN 0362-4692

Semi-monthly, except monthly during June, July, and August.

Published by the Reformed Free Publishing Association, Inc.

Second Class Postage Paid at Grand Rapids, Mich.

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

*Department Editors:* Rev. Wayne Bekkering, Rev. Arie den Hartog, Prof. Robert D. Decker, Rev. David J. Engelsma, Rev. Richard Flikkema, Rev. Cornelius Hanko, Prof. Herman Hanko, Rev. John A. Heys, Rev. Kenneth Koole, Rev. Jay Kortering, Rev. George C. Lubbers, Rev. Rodney Miersma, Rev. Marinus Schipper, Rev. James Slopsema, Rev. Gise J. Van Baren, Rev. Ronald Van Overloop, Rev. Herman Veldman, Mr. Kenneth G. Vink.

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

*Church News Editor:* Mr. Kenneth G. Vink  
1422 Linwood, S.E.  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49507

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

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

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

*New Zealand Business Office:* The Standard Bearer,  
c/o OPC Bookshop,  
P.O. Box 2289  
Christchurch, New Zealand

*Subscription Policy:* Subscription price, \$8.00 per year. 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

The Providence  
of God

C. Hanko

*Ques. 27. What dost thou mean by the providence of God?*

*Ans. The almighty and everywhere present power of God, whereby, as it were by His hand, he upholds and governs heaven, earth, and all creatures, so that herbs and grass, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, meat and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, yea, and all things come, not by chance, but by his fatherly hand.*

Lord's Day 10. Heidelberg Catechism.

Our book of instruction takes us on a short detour. Often when you travel you are suddenly impressed by the scenery that looms up in front of you, and the urge prevails to leave the highway and enjoy a broader view of the country. This little excursion usually proves to be well worth its while. This is certainly the case in this Lord's Day. The previous question discussed the confession, "I believe in God, the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." In this confession there is no reference made to the providence of God, but it speaks only of creation. Yet already in the previous answer reference was made to God's providence — unavoidably so. Now our fathers take us on this excursion to explore more in detail this ever comforting, reassuring, blessed truth of the holy Scriptures. We gladly follow them.

Once more our Catechism reminds us that this is a very personal, experiential matter for us. "What dost *thou* mean by the providence of God?" Moreover, the child of God is addressed. Our Father is sovereign God over all creatures. Our Father lives in intimate relationship of fellowship with us through our adoption in Jesus Christ. This places us squarely before the importance of Father's perpetual work as it touches every phase of our lives. What does this mean to *you*?

Generally we speak of the providence of our Father-King from the threefold aspect of God's preservation, co-operation (always remembering that this word does not accurately express the idea), and God's government. To maintain the more personal approach of the catechism, we will speak of the three elements, providing, preserving, directing.

#### Providing.

The figure is used here of God's hand. We are in the palm of that hand as it upholds us, constantly giving us our life and being. That hand reaches out to provide for our every need. The finger of that hand touches the earth, and the mountains quake, the seas roar. That finger also touches us with health or illness, joy or sorrow, or whatever Father deems good for us. We are always in Father's care.

Years ago I read a book entitled, "Living out of God's Pantry." The author, whose name is long since forgotten, stressed the fact that God cares for His children in a miraculous way. He cited many examples, among which was one that I remember, and that characterized all the rest. A family had become destitute; there was no food on the table. In the cold of winter the little boy opened the door, explaining that God sent ravens to feed Elijah, and that God could do as much for them. A rich man happened by, wondered about the open door, ventured in, with the result that God miraculously supplied the family needs out of the storehouse of

His providence. That is nothing short of Deism, which places God far above the earth, and makes the world a huge machine that can run by itself, but occasionally when things go wrong God must step in and set them right by His providence. This same error is prominent among the faith healers of all sorts. We, however, confess that the Most High God, Who dwells in the high and lofty place, is also very near to us. He is in the raging storm and in the rumbling earthquake, but is also present in the gentle breeze that wafts as a still, small voice. He directs each ray of sunshine, and drops each drop of rain where He wants it to fall. If that sounds like exaggeration, think of all the insignificant hairs of our heads, which God numbers. "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things. . . . In Him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts 17:25, 26). We are, therefore, as in the palm of God's hand, under His watchful eye, close to His attentive ear, near to His heart, under the very breath of His mouth that breathes blessings upon us, even one gift of grace upon another.

The wicked and the righteous both receive the same sunshine and rain, and many other good things from the hand of God. Yet the wicked always receive them in His wrath, for the wrath of the Lord is in the house of the wicked. And the righteous receive all things in God's goodness, for His favor is upon His people. It may seem at times, as Asaph experienced in Psalm 73, that the wicked prosper in spite of their wickedness, and the righteous suffer in spite of their righteousness; yet when we go to God in prayer, and ask Him to open our eyes to the wonder of His Word, we see that God prospers the wicked to their own destruction, while it is our comfort that God guides us by His counsel day by day, afterward to take us to glory. "Herbs and grass, fruitful and barren years," and all such ordinary things are all supplied by His fatherly hand. He who cares for the sparrow cares much more for us.

#### Preserving.

The longer we ponder this gracious work of God's providence the greater the mystery grows. There is always the consequential fact, that shortly after their creation Adam and Eve fell into sin. What about God's providence in that instance? Were there two powers operating at that moment, God and the devil at war together, with the sad outcome that Satan gained the first victory? What happened to the almighty and everywhere present power of God's providence? Or was it thus, that there are infinite possibilities and contingencies in God's decree, so that if Adam remained standing history would have taken one course, and if he fell history would move in a different direction? That would make God dependent upon man's whims and actions. What, then, must happen to me short of disaster? Or once again,

did God possibly turn His back a moment while Satan meddled in His affairs in paradise, with the terrible result that sin now reigns, and God is compelled to bring restoration in a sadly ruined world? Where, then, is the sovereignty of our God? Perish the thought, for it is unworthy of God Himself, and certainly contrary to His Word that teaches the comforting, reassuring truth of God's power that controls and directs all things every moment from the dawn of history to its finish!

How wonderful to turn to the pages of Holy Writ. We read that the hearts of kings are in God's hand, so that He directs them even as He controls the rivers in their courses. Pharaoh is a good example of that, for God says, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee" (Rom. 9:17). Another example of God's providence comes to mind. God drew Satan's attention to His servant Job. God gave the devil power over the Chaldeans and the Sabeans, over wind and lightning to deprive Job of all His possessions and his ten children. Satan was even given power to afflict Job with agonizing sores, so that his life was pure misery. Yet Satan had no power over Job except for the power God temporarily entrusted to him. Our thoughts turn to the greatest event of history, the crucifixion of our Lord. The whole world conspired against Him to destroy Him. It appeared as if this might be the great moment of Satan's triumph over God. And yet we read in Acts 4:27, 28, "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, and the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for *to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined to be done*. What could be more emphatic than that? God determined the death of Christ in the hands of wicked men. God directed every move they made. Yet Judas, along with Pilate and Herod and all the others, still gnaws his tongue in hell for this horrible deed. God's sovereignty and man's responsibility are so intricately interwoven by the wisdom and power of the Most High, that it defies our comprehension. Wonderful! We see it, but shall never fathom the depths of the riches of the knowledge and judgments of God. Under our breath we can only say, "How else could we be saved?"

That providence of God is evident in all such outstanding events in our lives as our birth, the choosing of a life mate, or the choosing of a vocation, but also in the smallest details of our daily walk. Often we find ourselves vainly struggling against providence, much to our chagrin. Allow me a single example. I oversleep some morning, even a bit

deliberately. If I hurry I can still make it to work on time. But the speed limit of 55 miles an hour deters me, although my car and my desire could readily travel 65 or 70 miles an hour. Then I run into a traffic snag. On a morning like this! Next I have all the traffic signals against me, so that I sit biting my nails. Until I realize that God is controlling traffic and signal lights and all the rest, but I have been taking matters in my own hands and tried to run my own life, forgetting the prayer I may have repeated that morning, "Thy will be done." What peace could be mine, if I learned to live by the good hand of my God every minute!

Directing.

History is like a ship at sea. The ship of God's church left its harbor at the dawn of creation to travel across the stormy sea of time. There were the storms of man's fall in paradise, the universal flood, the oppression in Egypt, the Babylonian captivity, the cross of our Savior, the Reformation, and many more. Even these storms were God's mighty power operating according to the counsel of His will throughout history. In fact, Christ in heaven now sends and directs those storms for the welfare of His church. At the same time, Christ, the Pilot, steers the ship of His church through treacherous waters, along dangerous shoals, through waves of persecution and trials, without ever veering from His course, ever directing His ship toward the eternal haven of rest.

Or, if you will, the Lord builds His church. He gathers each elect stone for His temple and sets that stone in its appointed place. All the events of history help toward building that church, so that the wicked serve as scaffolding and tools for Christ's purpose. Each stone must be cut, chiseled, shaped, and polished (how painful that treatment often is) until it fits exactly in its own appointed place in the House of our God. Paul says, "In whom (Christ) all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:21, 22).

In the light of the rise and fall of many world powers, even ultimately of antichrist himself, and in the light of all the trials and afflictions that God's people suffer in this present time, we can anticipate a glory that makes it all worth while, an eternal exaltation in the God of our salvation. In anticipation we already sing, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the lamb forever and ever." Amen.

Know the standard and follow it.  
Read **The Standard Bearer**

## EDITORIALS

Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

### Of Writing and Publishing

This issue marks the beginning of Volume 56 of our magazine. At our staff meeting last June we tried to make some plans for this volume which, we hope, will enhance its value and interest. The changes are the following: 1) Rev. M. Joostens asked to be relieved of writing duties for *In His Fear*. This department will be in charge of Rev. Arie den Hartog and Rev. Wayne Bekkering. We welcome Rev. Bekkering to our staff. 2) The department *Signs of the Times* will be the joint responsibility of Revs. James Slopsema, Richard Flikkema, and Kenneth Koole. The latter two are new to the ranks of our staff, and we look forward to seeing their contributions in our magazine. 3) *The Strength of Youth* will be the sole responsibility of Rev. Rodney Miersma this year, and Rev. Ronald van Overloop will transfer to the department *The Voice of our Fathers*. He hopes to begin a series on the Westminster Confession. 4) Prof. Robert Decker will devote all his efforts to our missions rubric, *The Lord Gave The Word*. 5) Again we hope to present some guest articles from time to time. And although I have not as yet heard from all the brethren to whom requests for such articles were sent, I can inform you that Revs. Wilbur Bruinsma and Michael De Vries have agreed to join the ranks of guest writers.

It is rather difficult to plan an entire volume for a year in advance; and so our plans sometimes go a bit awry. No one knows this better than your editor-in-chief. There are various reasons for this. Sometimes the circumstances of the work which has the first priority of our pastors make it difficult to fill the promised quota. Sometimes the fountain of ideas seems to run dry. Sometimes discouragement can set in. After all, it is no little task, even from the point of view of quantity of material, to put out a magazine like ours twice per month. We have a strictly part-time, unpaid staff. One issue of our magazine requires some 55 to 60 typewritten pages of copy. And those deadlines of the first and the fifteenth of the month arrive with terrible regularity. A department editor must sit at his typewriter alone, weeks

before what he produces will appear in print, and try to produce something appropriate, instructive, and interesting. His only incentives can be his own interest in his subject, his conviction that he has something to write which will in some way be helpful for God's people and the cause of His church, and the hope that when his product appears in print, it will at least be read.

Hence, I wish to take this opportunity at the beginning of a new volume-year to encourage my co-editors, and at the same time to encourage and stir up our readers and supporters.

The specific area in which I wish to lend such encouragement is this. Our *Standard Bearer* does indeed have a place, and it is read. Quite possibly it is not always read as much as it should be by our own constituency; pastors and elders on family visitation can and should play a part in increasing such faithful use of our magazine among the families of our denomination. But what I have in mind is the fact that our magazine has played a vital role in bearing forth the banner of the truth of God's Word and of our Reformed faith outside the boundaries of our churches, on the mission field and in our contacts with other Reformed churches. This I know from experience — from personal contacts and from correspondence. I have become increasingly convinced over the years that the printed page is one of the most effective means in spreading abroad the message which we as Protestant Reformed Churches are dedicated to spreading and in making some of the initial contacts which we wish to make and aim to make. There are other media, too, of course. There is the means of radio broadcasting, and there is the means of tape libraries. But the printed page, in my opinion, is a most effective means. The very name *Standard Bearer* has come to be associated with our Protestant Reformed cause, even though our magazine is not an official publication of the churches, but free from denominational controls. And I can point to many a contact, both at home and abroad, in which initial acquaintance with our churches was

made through our magazine.

This is reason for gratitude and for encouragement.

First of all, it may well serve as an incentive for our staff. Brothers, when you agonize at your typewriters over that hard-to-write article, don't think to yourselves, "I wonder whether anyone will even read this stuff." But say to yourselves, "I wonder in what strange and heretofore unheard of corner of our land or of the world some child of God is going to read this and be attracted to the truth and stirred up to investigate further and become better acquainted with our churches."

In the second place, it may well serve as an incentive for our constituency and for the Board of our Reformed Free Publishing Association. I have always considered it to be one of the chief purposes of our *Standard Bearer* to be a *witness*, a witness to people outside the sphere of our Protestant Reformed Churches concerning the beautiful and comforting heritage of the Reformed faith which the Lord has given us. That was certainly part of its purpose when the *Standard Bearer* was born out of the controversy of 1924. And that is still one of its chief purposes. Yes, it is intended to be a paper for our own people and their generations; but that is not its *only* purpose. Its purpose may be briefly stated as: Let the Word go forth! That implies, too, that we do not purpose to be a profit-making organization; and we do not have as our chief purpose necessarily to have a large list of paying subscribers — however nice it may be to increase the number of subscribers to the point at which the *Standard Bearer* would be self-sustaining, a point, by the way, which is far off. But there should be effort and expenditure for as wide as possible a free distribution to as many people as possible outside our churches. Our Board should strive to make this some of its chief business, not merely engage in the month-to-month management of the publishing of the magazine.

But there have been few times since the origin of our magazine when this has been done or when it was possible. Most of the time Boards have had to struggle for financial survival, and the income of the R.F.P.A. has frequently been barely sufficient to "make ends meet." In recent years, through a combination of circumstances, we have at times had a rather handsome surplus; but lately that, too, has been dwindling, being spent on regular running expenses — not on expansion and not on outside distribution.

What I would like to see is that the Board of the R.F.P.A. put forth a concerted and consistent, on-going effort toward achieving the important goal of employing the *Standard Bearer* as a witness. Your editor and, I'm sure, the entire staff would cooperate.

And this would require, of course, that financial

support by our constituency would have to be increased vastly. At present the gifts and the church collections only go, for the most part, toward making up the difference between subscription-income and publishing costs. Again, with concerted effort and with the cooperation of the churches, this could be changed; and thus the means could be provided with which the Board could work. How about it?

\* \* \* \* \*

While I am writing about writing and publishing, permit me a few words about the book-publishing arm of the R.F.P.A., the Permanent Committee for the Publication of Protestant Reformed Literature.

We held our annual meeting — just a half dozen men — not long ago. At this meeting we had a thorough report concerning our inventory, our sales during the past year and over the years, and our financial status, as well as concerning forthcoming publications.

Again, one of the things that impressed me was the fact that our books have, under the Lord's blessing, been a mighty instrument for witnessing throughout our own country and all over the world. There is not a continent to which our books have not been sent, and the list of countries where they have been purchased is long. They have gone to Europe and to Africa, to Asia and Australasia, to South America and all over North America. While to commercial publishers, I suppose, such sales would be piddling, nevertheless we have sold literally thousands of such works as *Behold, He Cometh*, *Reformed Dogmatics*, *The Triple Knowledge*, *Whosoever Will*, *Believers and Their Seed*, *Marriage*, *Therefore Have I Spoken*. The others have sold well, too; but those mentioned have been among our best sellers. This is tremendously encouraging to those of us who are directly engaged in this work.

The other side of the coin is that we could do much more and could publish much more rapidly IF ONLY WE HAD FUNDS. There are manuscripts waiting to be published, manuscripts which *ought* to be published, but with which we dare not proceed until our bank account shows a better balance.

We have repeatedly suggested a simple and painless way in which YOU could help us on this score. We have pointed out that membership in the RFPA Book Club would help you because you would receive all our books at a discount. Book Club membership helps *us* because it gives us a guaranteed sale and thus a guaranteed income. We also pointed out that a *large* Book Club membership would speed up publication: without difficulty we could have enough book club members among our subscribers that the *publishing cost* of every new book would be guaranteed in advance. We also pointed out (to encourage member-

ship) that a larger Book Club membership would result in an even larger than 20% discount.

Frankly, however, the response has been disappointing. All that was required was a signed post card to the RFP. And yet only a small minority of our subscribers have signed up.

It can't be a matter of money. A book per year at a discount price isn't going to break anyone.

Is it lethargy? Then wake up out of your lethargy.

Will you help?

## Seminary Convocation

Not long ago our Seminary began its fifty-fifth year.

There are not many occasions in the school term when the Seminary has direct contact with the constituency of our churches. But in recent years one of those occasions has been the public convocation, held at one of the area churches. This year that convocation was held at our Southwest Protestant Reformed Church, just down the hill from the Seminary. It was your editor's turn to deliver the Convocation Address, and you will find a transcript of that address in this issue.

At this gathering we usually ask the student body to take a bow, too. And while I can hardly ask them to take a bow in the *Standard Bearer*, I can tell you who they are. In the Seminary Department, we have

three students this year: Deane Wassink (Holland), Jon Smith (Hope), and Thomas Miersma (Faith). In the Pre-seminary Department there are seven students. The Class of 1980 consists of Everett Buiters, Barry Gritters, Kenneth Hanks, and Harold Veldman. The Class of 1982 consists of Brian Dykstra, Steven Key, and Charles Terpstra.

By the time of this writing both faculty and students are busily engaged in the new term's work.

We commend faculty and students and their work to your prayers, both as congregations and as families.

Continue to pray, too, that the Lord will raise up among us more young men to prepare for the work of the ministry.

---

## SEMINARY CONVOCATION ADDRESS

### Pass the Word!

*Prof. H. C. Hoeksema*

Mr. Chairman, Faculty Colleagues, Students, Members of the Theological School Committee, Friends gathered with us:

I wish to call your attention this evening to an instructive example from yesteryear. There are many such examples in Scripture, and they are written for our instruction and warning. The basis of such examples lies in the principle stated in the little

Dutch verse,

"In't verleden ligt het heden,  
In het nu wat worden zal."

Roughly translated, that is:

In the past lies the present,  
In the now the what-shall-be.

The example to which I refer is recorded partly in

Joshua 24:29-33. There you read: "And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-serah, which is in mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash. And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that he had done for Israel." Then follows the account of the burying of the bones of Joseph, verse 32. And verse 33 reads: "And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him in a hill that pertained to Phinehas his son, which was given him in mount Ephraim." Partly, too, this example is recorded in the somewhat parallel passage of Judges 2:7-10: "And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnathheres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash. And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel." Immediately following this passage is the notice that the children of Israel apostatized, forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashteroth.

It is to the positive word of warning and exhortation which is implied in this example that I wish to call your attention under the theme, "Pass the Word!"

### The Passing of a God-fearing Generation

It is a general phenomenon of the history of the world and also of the history of God's people in the world that this history is characterized by the fact that one generation succeeds another. Also among God's people and in God's church there is such a succession of generations, one generation replacing the preceding one. This stands connected, of course, with the fact that God causes His covenant to run in the line of generations. Hence, every twenty-five or thirty years a new generation arises and, so to speak, occupies front and center of the stage of the history of God's church in the world.

In the second place, it is also a general phenomenon of church history that this history is characterized by alternating periods of strength and weakness, of faithfulness and apostasy. This does not necessarily mean that with unflinching regularity a strong and faithful generation is followed by a weak and apostate generation. Nevertheless, generally speaking, the history of God's church is characterized

by such alternating periods of strength and weakness. Certain generations of God's people are God-fearing. In them there is the knowledge of the Lord. By them the truth of God's Word is maintained. Along with this, they are characterized by the fact that they walk in the ways of Jehovah. Other generations, on the contrary, are characterized by ignorance, by indifference toward the truth, by apostasy, by weakness, and by worldlimindedness. Thus it was in the history of Israel. Just compare, if you will, the generation of Joshua's time and the generation immediately following in the period of the Judges. In the latter you can hardly recognize God's people. Or compare the period of David-Solomon with the immediately following period of Rehoboam-Jeroboam. Or compare it with the generation of Elijah's time, during the reign of Ahab, when Elijah complained, "They have broken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword." That was a period when one would be inclined to ask the question, "Hath God cast away His people whom He foreknew?" The same is true of the new dispensation. Compare, if you will, the church of apostolic times with the church during the Dark Ages. Or compare the church of the Reformation with the church during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when there was dead orthodoxy and rationalism. Or even compare one generation with another within the same church denomination. The point is clear.

Now what does it mean that there are such alternating generations? This phenomenon certainly does not imply that in a given period or a given generation all are spiritual seed. It does not even imply that the majority are spiritual seed. This is never the case. It was not true during the time of Joshua either. For Scripture informs us that even at that time there were strange gods among them. Always it is true that there is only a remnant according to the election of grace. And even when reformation is wrought in the church, the fact remains that no reformation is ever wholly pure. But this phenomenon does indeed imply that during a given period of history the spiritual element in the church is dominant. There are various factors which may contribute to this dominance. Partly, the spiritual element may be dominant because they are relatively strong in number. This was true of Israel at Joshua's time: after the forty years of God's judgments in the wilderness, the carnal element was decimated, and the spiritual element was relatively strong in number. Partly, too, the dominance of the spiritual element may be due to historical circumstances, due to the fact, for example, that they are eye witnesses of God's works for His people. And partly, this dominance of the spiritual element may be attributed to the fact that God gives to a certain

generation men of influence. He gives them a Joshua, an Eleazar, and a Caleb. He gives them a Martin Luther and a John Calvin. Or, in the case of our own churches, He gives them a Herman Hoeksema and a George M. Ophoff.

Now in the example under consideration this evening Scripture tells us about the passing of a God-fearing generation. First of all, we are informed that Joshua died. He was one hundred ten years old, certainly one of the two oldest men in Israel at that day. Joshua was the God-appointed leader and ruler of Israel in that generation. Permit me just two remarks in connection with this notice concerning Joshua's death. The first is that Scripture is customarily sober here. It simply informs us that Joshua died and was buried. You find none of the "hullabaloo" which you find so frequently in worldly accounts concerning the death and burial of great men. The second point is this, that Scripture gives to Joshua the best possible epitaph that a man can have: "Joshua, the *servant of Jehovah*, died and was buried." Not only does this statement point us to the fact that he died when his work was finished, and not before. But this is the best testimony that a man can have, and that, too, from God Himself: "the servant of the Lord." I would certainly like to have such a testimony when I die: Homer Hoeksema, the servant of the Lord, died and was buried.

In the second place, Eleazar died. He was the third and God-fearing son of Aaron. When Aaron had died, Eleazar became the high priest. He was a man who feared the Lord and a man of high station and great influence in Israel. He had shared with Joshua the work of dividing the land of Canaan among the tribes of Israel. He died.

Moreover, the Book of Joshua suggests and the Book of Judges confirms that all of that generation and their elders died, and that a new generation arose after them. This does not merely mean that elders in the sense of older people died. But the chief men and the princes and the judges among Israel died. Some of them undoubtedly died before Joshua; and some of them outlived Joshua. But the point is that before long all of that generation and its influence were gone. A new generation occupied front and center on the stage of the history of Israel.

Now the same thing happens and is happening right along in our own churches. It is not so, of course, that you can draw a sharp line between one generation and the next, as though one generation is completely gone before the next generation arises. No, this is a process, a rather gradual process. But for that very reason the passing of one generation and the rise of the next generation tends to go almost unnoticed. It takes place gradually, until one

generation is gone or almost gone and until a new generation has arisen and become influential; and you don't notice it and don't pay attention to it until suddenly for some reason you make an accounting of the situation, or until someone calls your attention to the fact. Then you realize that it has happened. That is true, I say, in our own churches. Do you realize that by this time one would have to be at least sixteen years old in order to have known and seen Herman Hoeksema at all? Do you realize that one would have to be some eighteen years old in order to have known and seen George Martin Ophoff? Let me present a few statistics concerning the clergy in our denomination. Perhaps these do not present the whole picture of the situation, but certainly our ministers represent an important aspect of the leadership of our churches. Are you aware of the fact that the oldest active minister in our churches (Rev. Heys) was ordained in 1941, seventeen years after our denominational origin? Do you know that among our active ministers only two (Rev. Heys and I) were ordained before the split of 1953? Are you aware of the fact that among our ministers (if you count the candidates with them) there are some thirteen or fourteen who are third generation Protestant Reformed? Do you know that there are six or seven of our ministers who are of that same age group? And do you know that there are probably six men among our clergy who may be classified as of the second generation of our churches? I would hazard a guess that most of you are surprised by these statistics, perhaps even a bit frightened. Quickly and almost unnoticed, generations come and go, also among us.

### A Very Real Danger

The Word of God informs us that the effect of the passing of that God-fearing generation was apostasy.

This is not directly stated, but it is suggested in the account in the Book of Joshua. We are informed that Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who overlived Joshua. This means, of course, not that every one, head for head, served the Lord, but that the nation as a whole kept the law of Moses, and that they walked in the way of the Lord, the way of His covenant, under the influence of Joshua and the elders. But the very fact that this is stated suggests to us already that this was the extent of Israel's service of the Lord, and that thereafter a period of apostasy set in.

But the Book of Judges informs us of this directly. In Judges 2 you find the same information concerning the passing of that God-fearing generation. Joshua died and was buried. And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers. And then another generation arose after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which He had

done for Israel. And the very next section informs us that they forsook the Lord and served Baal and Ashteroth.

How are we to conceive of this apostasy?

It certainly did not occur as an absolute disavowal of Jehovah. Israel did not openly say, "Jehovah is not God; Baal and Ashteroth are the only gods." Such is not life. Moreover, the facts recorded in Scripture are against this: for a study will reveal that throughout the period of the judges it is plain that Jehovah was known and served also. But this apostasy involved a mixture. The Israelites became very broad. Surely, according to their conception, Jehovah was God; but the gods of the nations were also gods and were also to be served. The Israelites took the attitude that they must not be so narrowminded, like the fathers. The fathers said, "Jehovah is God alone; other gods are idols." Those fathers of the previous generation lived a rather isolated life. They were out of contact with the world. They were too conservative! And so the new generation assumed the position, "Jehovah is God, but the gods of the nations are gods, too." This, according to them, was the truer point of view.

And one can find much of the same spirit manifest today. Doctrinally, they say, we must not be so narrowminded as to insist upon a set of doctrines, a creed. And that position can be made to sound plausible enough, can it not? We must have just the Bible! But then men begin to go a little farther. Religion, they say, is not limited to the contents of any one book. Next they deny the miracles. Then they deny the virgin birth. Then they corrupt and deny the truth of the atonement, of the resurrection. They take the position that God loves His people, but that He loves the wicked, too. God does not hate anyone. Learned men will claim to believe the authority of Scripture, but reserve to themselves the right to "interpret it" differently. Yes, they say, our fathers warned about this; but they didn't know what we know. They did not have the advantage of the vast increase of knowledge which characterizes our twentieth century! And you can find this same attitude with respect to life as well as with respect to doctrine. Our fathers, they say, frowned at many things. They frowned at the dance, and they frowned at cards, and they frowned at the movie, and at the theater, and at the opera, and they frowned at Sabbath desecration. But we must not be so narrow and so strict. We know better. We can make sanctified use of all those things which they classified as evil.

Such is the character of apostasy.

Moreover, the example before us — as well as other Scriptural examples — teaches us that such apostasy constitutes a very real danger. This is the lesson of

history. It has happened in the past. One generation was faithful. The next was apostate. One generation knew the Lord and His works; the next generation knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which He had done for Israel. They forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashteroth.

But there is an associated danger, the danger of apostasy, the danger of saying, "It can't happen to us." We must never, never assume that attitude! For it is precisely when we assume the attitude that we are safe and that we cannot become apostate, that we are actually in the greatest danger.

Moreover, history is replete with warning examples. Notice what happened in Israel's history; and remember, Israel was the church — in fact, Israel was the only church there was in that era! The same is true of church history in general, ever since the time of the apostles: there are numerous instances of such apostasy. Or consider Reformed church history. Look at what has happened in the Netherlands, in the churches of Kuyper and Bavinck. Or consider what is happening in our mother church, the Christian Reformed denomination. Well may we ask: to what extent is it already true of us? To what extent is it true that another generation is arising, which knows not the Reformed truth. In fact, fail to ask this and fail to confront this possibility and fail to guard against complacency, and you become by that very fact, a prime candidate for precisely the kind of development of which I have been speaking.

### An Urgent Lesson

There is more than one factor which may be mentioned in explanation of this apostasy.

In the first place, at any given period in the history of God's church in the world there is only a remnant according to the election of grace. Thus it was among Israel, even at the time of Joshua. And thus it always is in the church: there is only a remnant. This implies, of course, that there is a large element which is carnal. True, at the time of Joshua the situation was such that Israel had been purged of that carnal element, to a large extent, in the wilderness. But it did not take long before that carnal element began to increase again and to gain dominion. When the new generation arose, that carnal element held the upper hand. And that is one of the facts of life in the history of the church. Not only is the carnal element always present, and not only does the church always bring forth that carnal element among its children, but the carnal element always seems to increase and to gain in power more rapidly than the spiritual seed.

In the second place, there was the factor of Israel's failure to exterminate the nations of the Canaanites in the land. The Canaanites, we must remember,

represented the kingdom of darkness which was ripe for judgment. Israel represented the kingdom of God, which was to be established on the ruins of the various kingdoms in the promised land. Those two, Canaan and Israel, the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of God, could not dwell together. And the express command of God to Israel was to exterminate the Canaanites totally. But they failed. They commenced well, but they never finished the task. And the Canaanites which were allowed to dwell in the land became a snare to Israel. The Israelites made common cause with them; they served their idols; they intermarried with them. And there is a lesson here. The lesson is this: fail to overcome the world, and it will surely overcome you!

The third factor that served to explain the apostasy of that generation is laxity on the part of the remnant.

Negatively, they were lax in that they failed to root out the idolater from among them. In Israel, the false prophet had to be killed! The idolater had to be rooted out! And it was the failure to kill the false prophet and to root out the idolater that ultimately led the whole nation into captivity.

Positively, there was a laxity in transmitting the knowledge of the Lord to future generations. Notice what happened. The passing generation knew the Lord and His work for Israel. They had seen all His great works for Israel. But the next generation *knew not* the Lord, neither the works He had done for Israel. There can be only one explanation of this sharp contrast: failure to transmit! Israel had the express and emphatic command to teach the generations to come the fear of the Lord and to tell of His wondrous works. It is plain that the generation of Joshua's time had failed to do this: otherwise the next generation would have known! The conclusion from all this is plain: grow lax in instruction — in home or school or church — and the next generation will not know Jehovah and will not know all His great works for His people.

That, therefore, is the urgent lesson which I would leave with you this evening.

For the church in general that lesson is, first of all, that she must be faithful in the preaching of the Word. That Word, the Word of the infallible Scriptures, reveals to us the Lord and His works for His people in Christ Jesus our Savior. That Word must be maintained in all its purity by the church in the generation that fears the Lord. And it must be transmitted to the generation to come. Secondly, this implies that the church must watch in the exercise of discipline. Positively, we must watch in exhorting one another, lest we fall asleep! Negatively, the church must watch in the expulsion of evil and of the evil doer from her midst!

Let me apply that for a moment to our own churches in particular.

The Lord has given us a heritage. He has showed us the truth in its clearest glory, the truth that God is GOD! And He has done great work for us!

Pass the Word!

Let us watch and pray, and not grow weary and become lax. Let us understand our calling and accomplish it. Let us pass the Word, the Word of God, in the churches and their pulpits.

That implies that we must pass the Word primarily in our seminary. We must pass the Word of the Lord to the generation to come, so that it may be passed on from our pulpits. My faculty colleagues, that is our calling. My young brethren of the student body, it is your calling to imbibe that Word with all your might and main.

Let us do that! Let us do it not in our own strength, but by faith in Him Who is the better Joshua, Who not only died and was buried, but Who rose again and Who is become the quickening Spirit!

Let us do it, lest it be said of another generation: they know not the Reformed (Protestant Reformed) truth, neither the work which the Lord did for them!

---

Subscribe Now  
to  
THE STANDARD BEARER

---

## FROM HOLY WRIT

# Exposition of Galatians

Rev. G. Lubbers

### ALL DEPENDS ON THE HOLY SPIRIT OF CHRIST, THE SANCTIFIER (Gal. 5:16-25)

The only thing which counts is being a "new creature," reborn by the Spirit of God. (Gal. 6:15) That is Paul's starting-point, first and last! Notice how emphatically, in the verses 16-26, Paul speaks of the Spirit. Here we have echoed the words of Christ: the Spirit is the one who *maketh alive* (*to zooopoion*), the flesh profits nothing. (John 6:63) Hence the battle, the conflict, and the outcome is all of the Holy Spirit, as He dwells in the sinner, whom He has made alive! I call your attention to the prominence which the Holy Spirit has in verses 16, 17, 18, 22, 25. Read these verses from your own Bible. The great conclusion of Paul is in this Gospel-precept: If we live by the Spirit (if that is our profession) let us also walk by the Spirit. The emphasis falls on "*by the Spirit* let us walk," making the *law of the Spirit* the guiding principle of our *orderly* walk. (*stoichew* = walking according to the new "*canon*," the rule of faith and love in the Spirit, fulfilling the law.) This law of the Spirit in Christ makes us free from the law of sin and of death! All depends upon the sanctification of the Spirit in the justified saints, who are righteous before God and who are heirs of eternal life! (Gal. 5:21, 23; Rom. 8:1, 2)

### THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT IN THE CHRISTIAN (Gal. 5:17)

This battle spoken of in Galatians 5:17 is very uniquely one in which only the Spirit-led Christian engages. The natural man knows nothing of this battle at all, for he is not led by the Spirit, neither does he walk by the Spirit. Whereas the natural man does not have the Spirit, he is none of Christ's own elect children, who are heirs of the kingdom. (Rom.

8:9b) This excludes the natural man from this battle between the flesh and the Spirit. Here is a battle between the "old" and the "new" life in the Christian, who is anointed with the Spirit of Christ. This battle between the flesh and the Spirit will continue in the reborn saints, who have the right to be called the children of God, till the day of their death. Until that time the saints fight, as the anointed of God, with a free and good conscience against sin and the devil. Then they shall have the complete victory. The flesh shall be no more!

We should notice, first of all, that the opponents in this battle are the "flesh" and the "Spirit." Now the "flesh" is our old Adamic nature. The manifestation of this onslaught within us against the Spirit are our lusts, our sinful members: an evil eye, an ear that will listen to that which is evil, a hand which works unrighteousness, a mouth which speaks vanity and lies. It all comes forth from the sinful heart, and it proceeds from the mouth, and it is the very thing which defiles a man. (Matt. 15:16-20) Now the Spirit is He who renews us so that we place all these members as "servants of righteousness." (Rom. 6:19) This Spirit works this in our hearts because we are *legally* sons; such is our new status before God, being justified by faith!

And here is the great conflict in the Christian.

In this conflict we must notice that the text says that the flesh "lusts." In this flesh there dwells no good thing. (Rom. 6:18) This flesh "wars" (*antistrateuomenon*) against the Spirit. This is a constant and an incessant assault of this enemy within us. Notice the present tense in Romans 8:23, as well as the present tense in Galatians 5:17. What an incessant lusting of the flesh! That is what makes the Christian cry out, as did Paul, "O wretched man that

I am.” For these are the lusts which “war” against the soul. (I Peter 2:11) Also in this passage from I Peter it is evident that these lusts wage a continuous and never-ceasing onslaught against our sanctified souls. For, according to Peter, our *souls* have been sanctified through the Spirit. (I Pet. 1:22) Lusts cannot war against an unsanctified soul. The unsanctified soul agrees with the lust, is one with it in motive and operation!

It should be borne in mind that in this conflict the initiative is on the part of the flesh in us. The text says that the flesh “lusts” against the Spirit. It is really “down upon” the Spirit, according to the Greek preposition “*kata*” with the genitive case. The flesh is negative; it is merely against all that which is good, keeping the law of God out of pure love and unfeigned faith. Now we must not attribute the activity of “lusting” to the Spirit. The Spirit *does not lust* against the flesh. It is evident from the original Greek, that Paul does not ascribe such counter-lusting to the Spirit in this battle. We must look for another verb. Perhaps we can say: the Spirit *operates* in us both to will and to do of God’s good-pleasure. It is the Divine energy of the Spirit that comes into play, so that we have a holy desire after the inward man in the law of God. (Phil 2:13; Rom. 7:22) Yes, we delight as it were in ourselves, with ourselves inwardly, in the law of God, which is holy just and good. What a conflict: evil lusting of the flesh and holy aspirations of the reborn heart by the Holy Spirit of Christ! What a misery, holy misery where we learn to know more and more how great is the redemption in Christ Jesus!! And such knowledge accrues in a thankfulness, which is joy unspeakable and full of glory. (Rom. 7:25; I Pet. 1:8)

Here we come upon the imperfection of the saints, whereby they confess that the most holy has only a *small beginning* of the new obedience in this life. Yes, but they also have a desire not only to live according to some of God’s commandments, but to live according to *them all*: by love to serve the neighbor! Both of these must be emphasized in their proper relationship!

The text says: in order (so that?) you *do not do* the things ye will to do. The KJV translates: that ye *cannot do* the things ye would. The Dutch “Staten Vertaling” has “thus that ye do not do the very thing that ye willed to do.” We never do a perfectly obedient act of faith, which works by love, in this life. Our best works are all imperfect and polluted with sin! Never can we do any work of merit which is beyond the requirements of the law, nor do we perform a work of gratitude which reaches heaven’s perfection in this life!

At the same time the apostle teaches that those who walk by the Spirit *do not*, in this very battle,

*fulfill* the lusts of the flesh. This battle is not a seesaw battle in which two equally strong foes are struggling for mastery. The mighty God has a mighty Spirit in us which empowers us against every onslaught of Satan, the world, and our own flesh. The *dominion* of sin is broken in us. Romans 5:17 reads, “For if by one man’s offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness *shall reign in life* by one, Jesus Christ.” Do not forget that where sin abounded, grace does much more abound, not only in justification, but also in sanctification of life. (Rom. 5:20) And, therefore, this titanic struggle between the flesh and the Spirit is not uncertain in the daily outcome of those who walk by the Spirit. We shall not *at all* fulfill the lusts of the flesh. There will be progressive sanctification of the Spirit in us, leading us through daily conversion and repentance to the higher ground of God’s perfect law of liberty! We shall not be forgetful hearers of the law, but doers of the law, having not a dead faith, but a living faith, which is verified by good works of the Spirit.

Yes, we do not do what we would do: perfection!

However, we do not fulfill the lusts of the flesh either.

Thanks be to God Who gives us the daily victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! Yes, then I do indeed serve with my sanctified mind, (nous) with my deepest affections the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin! (Rom. 7:25)

#### THE SPIRIT-LED CHRISTIAN – NOT UNDER LAW (Galatians 5:18)

Those who walk by the Spirit are *led* by the Spirit. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (Rom. 8:14) Such are legally sons of God, heirs of everlasting life. The Holy Spirit testifies with their spirit that they are sons of God. (Rom. 8:16) Such have not received again the spirit of bondage to fear, but they have received the spirit of adoption by which they cry, Abba, Father. (Rom. 8:15)

Our text says that we, who are Christians, are “led” by the Spirit. This guidance of the Spirit is not to be conceived as upon the human plane of human guidance and counseling; it is preeminently a Divine, efficacious work of the Holy Spirit of Christ, calling us to faith and hope which works by love. Those who are led by the Spirit have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, constituting them a fruitful branch in the Vine, Christ Jesus. In Him they abide and bear much fruit of the Spirit. (John 15:4, 5) To be led by the Spirit lies back of and is the possibility of walking in and by the Spirit. John calls this “his seed remaining in him”; such a one “cannot sin, because he is born of God.” (I John 3:9) Peter writes, “Being

born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." (I Peter 1:23)

Now such are actively led by the Spirit unto all good works. They have the "right" to walk in good works, because they are sons. (John 1:12) Paul is arguing that we are called to freedom in Christ. We have been called into legal freedom from the curse of the law, and, therefore, also to the spiritual freedom to keep the law. We now may keep the law and are able to keep the law, be it imperfectly. Such, who are led by the Spirit, are not "under law." The law is in our hearts; we are under grace.

Therefore we must, as free-born sons, walk in grace

and not use our liberty to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. God forbid! For the Spirit never leads the saints in the way of sinful lusts. The Spirit works by the Word and the precepts of the Gospel! The Spirit-led Christian is never lawless. He is no antinomian; neither is he a legalist, a nomist. He travels on higher ground; he walks as being holy as God is holy. His is not a balance-act between the two extremes of legalistic work righteousness and careless profanity, but he is a new creature in Christ for whom the end (*to telos*) of the commandment is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and unfeigned faith. (I Tim. 1:5) In him we see the fruit of righteousness, much fruit which is to the glory of God the Father!

## TRANSLATED TREASURES

# Pamphlet on the Reformation of the Church

*Dr. Abraham Kuyper*

(In discussing the question of authority in the church, Kuyper is still talking about the different forms of church government. He has already discussed the Romish form of church government, the Lutheran system of church government, and the Reformed system of church government. He now turns his attention to the Independentistic or Congregational form of church government.)

The Independentists or Congregationalists, originally called Brownists in our land, generally speaking, moved not in a Romish or Lutheran direction, but very decidedly in a Reformed direction. They are, therefore, also pure in most points of doctrine. The *cor ecclesia* is also for them the truth of election. The *norma ecclesia* is the Word of God in almost the same sense in which we speak of it. In the matter of church government, however, they deviate from the Reformed line in the following points. In the first place, the point of departure for their system is not in the local church, but in each group of believers who organize themselves ecclesiastically. Such a group is called a congregation.\* From this comes the name, Congregationalism. E.g., in London at this moment

there are hundreds of congregations, and each of these claims to have for itself the power and the authority of a church of Christ. Over against this, the Reformed always took the position that, although in larger cities a number of parishes could be formed, in each city or town only one church and therefore only one council of the church could exist in which the teaching and ruling elders from all the parishes had the right of authority.

In the second place, the Independentists judge that not only ecclesiastical authority in the general sense, but also administrative authority rests with the believers so that the congregation has the right to judge in every matter. And stronger still, the congregation has the right to decide. Over against this, the Reformed hold that the administrative authority over the church rests not with the members, but properly with the presbyters. This distinction is often made clear by the use of a figure. Although the power of life is distributed through the

\*We use the terms "local congregation" and "congregation" synonymously. Kuyper uses here the word *congregatie* which is different from *gemeente* and has the connotation of a mere gathering with a minimum of organization.

whole of our body, yet our body cannot see except through the eye and cannot be controlled except through the head.

In the third place, the Independentists in fact abolished the distinction between teaching and ruling elders and want every elder to be a teacher. Thus elders are elders all their life. Over against this theory the Reformed allege that the office of the Word is a separate office which demands its own preparation and its own unique gifts. And on the other hand, the introduction of the eldership for life alienates too much the congregation from the church.

In the fourth place, they teach that a number of churches ought indeed to hold conferences, but that the deputies of a number of churches can never exercise classical or synodical authority over the individual churches, even when they are united in a church union. Over against this, the Reformed maintain the principle that the authority of Christ is over the whole of his church; and thus also the discipline of more than one church is necessary to hold the individual churches in the paths of the Word.

The Independentists, finally, deny to the church all right to defend the truth of Scripture against heretical conceptions by means of a confession, catechism, or liturgical formulation. The Scriptures, they say, must be the only symbol. It is an idealistic and untrue statement which our Reformed people opposed with the just observation that the Holy Spirit explains the Word in the church of all ages, and that this historical interpretation ought to have power and authority over against the often arbitrary interpretation of the individual preacher. Actually, Independentism is thus an attempt to reduce the visible form of the church to a shadow, to withdraw itself almost entirely from her spiritual character as the gathering of the elect, and, as a result, to permit church polity in the church of Christ to retreat behind a mere gathering of believers.

Such a system, it is obvious, can continue for a long time, as long as the spiritual life of the believers is maintained to a high degree under the cross of persecution. But it must necessarily result in a loss of its ecclesiastical character as soon as this spiritual life declines and weakens. And just as a part of the Quakers in England and in America deteriorated and are now about to expire into obvious modernism so also the system of Independentists degenerated, already in the course of the 18th Century, in an almost unnoticed way, into the so-called Collegial system — a system which is not of English but of German origin.

This Collegial system is nothing else than the application of the ideas of the French Revolution to the church of Christ. The doctrine of people's

sovereignty as the fountain of all authority in the church of Christ — that is the chief mark of the Collegial system. The name means "society" and is adopted from the law of organization which arose in pagan Rome, and by virtue of which law the churches were recognized for a long time as *collegia licita*, i.e., "permitted organization." The sovereign authority of Christ is thus lost. There is no longer mention of believers. The Word ceases to have authority. That which alone has authority and can delegate authority is simply the individual member with the other members according to the system, in the final analysis, of one-half plus one. If the one-half plus one is for Jesus, then the church keeps her Christian character. But if it should turn out differently, then that same church by morning is perhaps Jewish or Mohammedan. Thus while with the Independentists the members are at least still believers, here even the believers are transformed into simple members without distinct character; and by this, the specific Christian character of the believer is entirely abandoned. This Collegial system, according to which model also the state church in the Netherlands has now to a large extent been organized, is purely revolutionary. It permits, just as the French Revolution, every form of regimentation. With the Collegial system as a basis, I can form a Romish church by means of the fiction that the members have transferred their authority to the Pope. But I can also plead along with this the Caesaro-Papal system of the Lutherans and of our own state church, because, why cannot the members be considered *rebus ipsis et factis*, as having transferred their right to the king? If kneeling before the king again becomes a common practice and if the clergy desires to introduce clericalism; well, then, who can prevent this within the Collegial system? As if the members could not be fooled into transferring their original right to oligarchical consistories in which the preachers are the one and all! This Collegial system is a real chameleon-like system. You can justify any system with it. But the foundation is rickety and pulls away the Godly foundation from under each of these other systems in order to put revolution in their place. Because this is its sin, it allows the authority of God in His Christ to rest on nothing else than on the authority of the free will of man.

20. Into Which Parts The Authority Which Is Exercised in the Church of Christ is Divided.

Whoever speaks of authority in the church understands by this that the church not only advises, admonishes, and attempts to convince, but also possesses power to bind. This power is commonly designated by the symbol of the keys of the kingdom of heaven. "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever

thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” This solemn word of the Lord must not be weakened. There follows from this the idea that a church loses her nobility when it no longer dares to join salvation to her confession; and that, vice versa, a child of God is deprived of his church which he needs if he no longer firmly relies on and trusts in the word of his church as interpreting the will of the Lord. And thus the state of the church is only good in which the rulers of the church, knowing that they are interpreters of the Word of God, mightily lay the truth upon the conscience and speak rightly. On the other hand, the state of the church is good when the church members, for the Lord’s sake, bow before the authority of the rulers of the church as before authority placed over them by King Jesus. And they must do this, not by external compromise for the sake of peace, but as bound in the soul, on peril of their very salvation.

Taking the authority of the church in this high and serious sense, one must also remember that such authority is not born out of agreement through which the church members partly renounce their freedom, but that this authority is imposed by Christ and has its origin in the sovereignty of God. The obligation to be respectful to authority does not originate in our joining the church, but we join the church because we feel that we must be subject to this authority. And

likewise, those who establish a church do not create that authority by establishing a church, but only give to that authority its offices so that the authority may operate. Just as a mother, by giving birth to a baby, does not create breath or light, but only gives birth to a being provided with organs to breathe in air and to receive light, so also no new authority originates with the establishment of a new church, but only a new organism enters life which is provided with officers arranged to allow the existing authorities to work through them.

This authority then, which must be maintained in the strong sense of authority, is exercised through Jesus Christ Who is the King of the whole of the church and is thus also King of each local church. He is King also, e.g., of the church of Amsterdam. This King exercises this authority partly directly and partly by means. He exercises this directly, first of all, because He provides His church with the means of grace: the Word and sacraments. Secondly, He exercises this authority directly because He works in the members of those churches with His Holy Spirit. And thirdly, He exercises this authority because through providential government, He arranges all the circumstances of those churches and of her members. But also by the use of means the King exercises authority through them, and only this mediate authority is relevant here.

---

## FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

# The Westminster Confession of Faith

*Rev. Ron Van Overloop*

At the annual meeting of the editors of *The Standard Bearer* held this past June, it was determined that the subject content of this rubric would be the Westminster Confession.

It might well be asked: why consider the Westminster Confession, when it is not one of the creeds of the Protestant Reformed Churches? There were no specific grounds given for the decision; but

permit me to suggest some possible reasons for our considering of this creed.

First of all, we might consider this creed together because we are finding on the membership rolls of our churches, in ever increasing numbers, those who are of English or Scottish background, whose ancestors adhered to the standards created by the Westminster Assembly. We note, for example, that all

of the members of our congregation in Houston, Texas are of English parentage. And we shall see more of this as we seek to fulfill our God-given mandate of mission work.

But also, generally speaking, it is good that we consider the Westminster Confession. The Westminster Assembly played an important part in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ. Often we find ourselves, rather selfishly, interested only in that which directly affects us. But it is good to know how the Church of the past in other areas of the world contended for the faith once delivered. This is a part of the healthy, spiritual interest the members of the Body of Christ have in and for other members of that beloved Body. Also, because there is nothing new under the sun, it might be helpful for us, in our personal and denominational contending for the faith, to know how other members of the Church of Christ contended for that faith.

Finally, it is good for us to consider the Westminster Confession because of our contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches of New Zealand, which churches have the Westminster Standards as their creedal basis. That we might know their positions of faith it is incumbent upon us to examine carefully this creed.

In this rubric it is our plan to consider this creed article by article in order to learn the contents and orthodoxy of the Westminster Confession of Faith. Since many of our readers probably do not have a copy of the Westminster Confession, I will quote each article at the beginning of our study of it. Please do not overlook these quotations, but pay close attention, especially to the Confession itself.

\* \* \* \* \*

We are compelled to consider first the historical background of this creed. We will do this only briefly. Those desirous of more information will find interesting reading in the following: *The Westminster Assembly And Its Work* by Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield; Philip Schaff's *The Creeds of Christendom*, vol. I; the introduction of *The Reformed Faith* by Rev. Robert Shaw; and the introduction of *A Commentary of the Confession Of Faith* by A. A. Hodge.

As was the case in the early church when emperors called the great ecumenical councils together, so was the progress of the Reformation to a great extent determined by the political maneuvering taking place in each country.

The form which Protestantism took in England was determined by the peculiar course the Reformation movement began in that country. For about nine centuries Britain had been dominated by the Roman Catholic Church, which in turn was dominated by

much idolatry and superstition and worldliness on the part of many of its clergy. The authority of the Word of God was subjected to the authority of the Church and especially to that of the Pope.

Under Henry VIII England separated itself from the bondage of Rome, only to enter an ecclesiastical despotism of the king. "The purpose which Henry VIII set before himself was to free the State from foreign influences exerted by the Pope through the Church; and his efforts were directed, with great singleness of aim, to the establishment of his own authority in ecclesiastical matters to the exclusion of that of the Pope" (p. 4, Warfield). So the same tyranny and basically the same errors remained though under a different name.

But the cause of God would not be stopped by a king who imagined vain things. Increasingly, the influences of the Reformation were felt in England, and that especially among the laity, though definitely not excluding the clergy. There was a renewed interest in the Scriptures which in turn made plain to many the errors existing within the State Church. Louder and louder grew the cries for reform. This reforming movement was viewed by the throne and by the hierarchy of the church as a grave threat.

In the providence of God this caused a shift in the controversy from a contest between the Pope and King to a contest between the King and Parliament. "The authority in ecclesiastical matters," which the King now assumed, "was increasingly employed to establish the general authority of the throne over against the Parliament." "The interests of civil liberty soon rendered it imperative to break the absolutism of the King in ecclesiastical affairs as it had ever been to eliminate the papacy from the control of the English Church" (pp. 4, 5, Warfield).

At the same time that the cause of the King was becoming ever more allied with the Bishops of the church, "the cause of Puritanism, that is of Protestantism, became ever more identical with that of the Parliament" (p. 5, Warfield). For a large part of the 17th century the Parliament was able to hold the upper hand.

As Parliament slowly broke down the walls of prelacy, it sought to provide a positive constitution of the church (1640-1642). "It was recognized from the beginning that for this positive legislation the advice of approved divines would be requisite" (p. 10, Warfield). The result was that the Westminster Assembly was organized as a subcommittee of the political power, not as a gathering of the church by the church. As the Synod of Dort in the Netherlands, the Westminster Assembly was called into session by the State.

B. B. Warfield gives the prime purpose of the

Assembly, partially in the words of Parliament's ordinance, as being "to consult and advice" with Parliament, as it may be required to do, in the Parliament's efforts to substitute for the existing prelatical government of the Church, such a government "as may be most agreeable to God's holy word, and most apt to procure and preserve the peace of the Church at home, and nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland, and other Reformed Churches abroad" (p. 13, Warfield). That the Assembly was conscious of the authority of Parliament is evidenced in the title it gave to its completed work: "The Humble Advice of the Assembly of Divine, now by authority of Parliament sitting at Westminster, concerning a Confession of Faith, presented by them lately to both Houses of Parliament." However, the Assembly was "perfectly free in its deliberations and conclusions. The limitation of its discussions to topics committed to it by Parliament, moreover, proved no grievance, in the face of the very broad commitments which were ultimately made to it." (pp. 16, 17, Warfield).

The Assembly was duly constituted in the Abbey of Westminster on July 1, 1643 and that in defiance to a prohibitive proclamation of the king. It met for 1163 regular sessions until February 22, 1649. Its existence continued thereafter, but on a very irregular basis until March 25, 1652. The actual work of "formulating the Confession of Faith was begun in Committee as early as the midsummer of 1644 (August 20). But it was not until the following spring (April 25, 1645) that any of it came before the Assembly; and not until the next midsummer (July 7, 1645) that the debates upon it in the Assembly began. Time and pains were lavishly expended on it as the work slowly progressed. By the middle of 1646 the whole was substantially finished in first-draft, and the review of it begun." (pp. 59, 60, Warfield).

As far as the composition of the Assembly is concerned, Parliament appointed two ministers from each English county and one from each Welsh county. Present was also a commission from Scotland of six ministers which played a very good and important role in the work of the Assembly. Parliament also sent letters of invitation to the colonial churches in America and directed the Assembly to address letters to the Belgic, French, and other Reformed churches. Favorable replies were received, especially from Holland, Switzerland, and the Huguenot church in Paris. Schaaf also notes that "the framers of the Confession were no doubt quite familiar with Continental theology; Latin was then still the theological language; the Arminian controversy had excited the greatest attention in England, and agitated the pulpit and the press for years; the English Church was well represented at the

Synod of Dort; several divines of the Assembly had spent some time in Holland, where they found a hospitable refuge from persecution under Charles I, and were treated with great respect by the Dutch ministers and divines." (pp. 760, 761, P. Schaaf).

Both Warfield and Schaaf express themselves on the character of the doctrine embodied in the Westminster Confession. Schaaf says that "the Westminster Confession sets forth the Calvinistic system in its scholastic maturity after it had passed through the sharp conflict with Arminianism in Holland, and as it had shaped itself in the minds of Scotch Presbyterians and English Puritans during their conflict with High-Church prelacy" (p. 760). Warfield states that there was fundamental harmony among the delegates doctrinally. "There were indeed differences among them in doctrine, too; but these lay for the most part within the recognized limits of the Reformed system. . . . To the Amyraldians, . . . there was denied, to be sure, the right to . . . make room for their 'hypothetical universalism' in the saving work of Christ (cf. the Confession, iii.6, viii.58). But the wise plan was adopted with respect to the points of difference between the Supralapsarians, who were represented by a number of the ablest thinkers in the Assembly, and the Infralapsarians, to which party the great mass of the members adhered, to set down in the Confession only what was common ground to both, leaving the whole region which was in dispute between them entirely untouched. This procedure gives to the Confession a peculiar comprehensiveness, while yet it permits to its statements of the generic doctrine of the Reformed Churches a directness, a definiteness, a crisp precision, and an unambiguous clarity which are attained by few Confessional documents of any age or creed" (p. 56, Warfield).

For our examination of the Confession we must wait until next time, the Lord willing.



*IN HIS FEAR*

## The Fear of God in the Home

*Rev. Arie den Hartog*

We have been focusing on the great biblical theme of the FEAR OF GOD. We have emphasized that the fear of God lies at the very heart of true religion. The true Christian is the man who in all his life manifests a profound reverential and holy fear of God. Since it has been some time ago that we wrote, let us review some of the main elements of the fear of God. To fear God means first of all that we know God according to who and what He is: that He is the absolutely Sovereign God of heaven and earth, the God of infinite power and greatness. He is the God of perfect holiness and righteousness. He is the God Who blesses the righteous with everlasting favor and Who condemns the wicked unto eternal damnation. To fear God in the proper sense of the word means that we know this God as our God. We know that His name is Jehovah, Who is the gracious and merciful covenant God of His people in Christ Jesus. The fear of God implies a profound consciousness of the fact that this God is everywhere present. Our whole life is lived before Him, and every moment of our days we have to do with Him. He knows our downsitings and our uprising, He understands our thoughts afar off, He is acquainted with all our ways. To fear God is ever to keep Him before our consciousness, it is to know Him, to remember Him, and never to forget Him. The fear of God implies further a deep spiritual understanding of the holy and righteous requirements of such a God Who is our God. It is to know how awesome it is that He Who is the absolutely holy God demands that we also be holy. It is to know that our holy God has chosen us to be a peculiar people and a royal priesthood and an holy nation. To fear God means that we with fear and trembling consider that God commands of us that we love Him with all our heart and all our soul and all our strength and all our

mind. This is the righteous command of the sovereign Lord Who has the right and power to punish the transgressor of the law and bless those who walk in His law. To fear God is to know that for us by nature it is entirely impossible to keep the law of God. To fear God means that we know our God as a God of forgiving mercy. To fear God means that we are conscious of the fact that from moment to moment we are not consumed in the holy anger of the Lord only because of His mercy and His faithfulness. Every moment of our life we are wholly dependent on His grace to sustain us, His Holy Spirit to guide us, and His almighty power to keep us from falling.

We intend now to consider what it means to fear God in some of the specific areas of our life. Fundamental to all of our life is of course the sphere of our home. We would like to consider this sphere of the fear of God in this present article and the next. The fear of God must be the all pervasive and predominant characteristic of our home. When men look at our homes they must above all say concerning us, "Behold how they fear God!" In our homes we must begin each day anew in the fear of God. In our homes our children must learn by our words and our examples what it means to fear God. Our children must grow up with, above all, one deep and profound impression of their father and mother and that is how they feared God.

We could not possibly make mention even of all of the passages of scripture that speak directly of how we must fear God in our homes. We shall be able to pay attention only to a few in the course of this article and the next. One thinks immediately of the very familiar and beautiful Psalm 128. Have you ever paid special attention to the fact that all which this

Psalm says proceeds from the first verse where we read, "Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord, that walketh in His ways." How beautiful is the versification of this Psalm that is found in our Psalters:

Blest the man that fears Jehovah, walking ever in His ways;  
 By thy toil thou shalt be prospered and be happy all thy days.  
 In thy wife thou shalt have gladness, she shall fill thy home with good,  
 Happy in her loving service and the joys of motherhood.  
 Joyful children, sons and daughters, shall about thy table meet,  
 Olive plants, in strength and beauty, full of hope and promise sweet.  
 Lo, on him that fears Jehovah shall this blessedness attend,  
 For Jehovah out of Zion shall to thee His blessing send.  
 Thou shalt see God's kingdom prosper all thy days, till life shall cease,  
 Thou shalt see thy children's children; on thy people, Lord, be peace.

One could easily write a single and lengthy article on just how this Psalm describes the significance of the fear of Jehovah for the home. Above all it emphasizes that only the home where there is the fear of Jehovah is truly happy and blessed. Without the fear of God our homes will have on them only the wrath and displeasure of God. Men, of course, from the time of the fall have tried very hard to establish a home without the fear of God and pursued the objective of having a happy and blessed home without the fear of Jehovah. This, however, is impossible. Only the home that is established in the fear of God and continues in the fear of Jehovah will be blessed. That home will be truly blessed with the blessing of Jehovah God. Notice what the Psalm says of the prosperity of the labors that are done in a home of the God-fearing. Notice what the Psalm says concerning the place and blessedness of the wife and mother in the home of those who fear God. Notice what the psalm says about the blessedness of children in that home. Listen to what the Psalm says about seeing the prosperity of Zion and the kingdom of God and peace upon Israel. All of this proceeds from the home of the God-fearing. Study what the Psalm says concerning the significance of the fear of Jehovah and seeing our children's children, the generations of the covenant. All of this proceeds from the fear of Jehovah mentioned in verse one. How important is the fear of Jehovah for our homes and what blessedness attends it!

Another striking and familiar passage of scripture which speaks directly to our subject is the passage in Deuteronomy 6. In verses 1 and 2 we read, "Now

these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: *that thou mightest fear the Lord thy God*, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged." It is clear that the word of God is speaking particularly here of the fear of God in the home. This becomes even more clear when we read verses 7 through 9: "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." Then we are told how fearful and awesome this whole matter is in verses 12 through 15. We are told of the unspeakably terrible consequences of forsaking the fear of Jehovah in our homes. "Then beware lest thou forget the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God*, and serve Him, and shalt swear by His name. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you; (For the Lord thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the Lord thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth." We know the history of Israel and the fulfillment of this prophecy; we know the terrible consequences which Israel obtained when they forsook the fear of Jehovah. How important is the fear of God in our homes! How awful it would be if the prophecy of this book would be fulfilled in and with us and our children because we forsook the fear of Jehovah.

Let us consider some of the general principles of the fear of the Lord as they apply to our homes. That we fear God in our homes means that God truly lives in our homes. He is known in our homes. He lives in the conscious life of the members of the home, in their heart and in their soul. It is known in the morning that God is there, it is known throughout the whole day that God is there, it is known in the evening that God is there. The Sovereign, Almighty, Holy, Righteous, True, and Faithful God dwells in the midst of the home of the God-fearing. In all that takes place in our homes we have to do with our God. He knows and sees all that goes on in our home. The members of the God-fearing home seek God and His favor as the highest good and blessedness possible for man to attain unto. When decisions are made in the home of the God-fearing, God is consulted. When prosperity comes to the home of the God-fearing, there is an overflowing of thanksgiving to God. When

adversity comes in this home it is recognized as the hand of God, and the mercy and goodness and faithfulness of God is relied upon. When there is sin in the home, then the members of that home fall down on their knees to plead for the forgiving mercy of God. When there is fear or danger, suffering or sorrow in the home of the God-fearing the first thing that is done is that the name of God is called upon.

Concretely all of this means of course that in the God-fearing home the Word of God is ever an open book. It is carefully studied. It is faithfully explained. It is inconceivable that a single day could go by without the opening of the holy scriptures. The Word of God is studied not merely as a book of abstract doctrine, or merely as a history book recounting the history of the people of God of old. The Word of God is studied as it is the wonderful living revelation of God. The Word of God is studied as the book that reveals God and His Son Jesus Christ Whom to know is life eternal. From the precious pages of the scriptures the God-fearing home learns more and more profoundly how wonderful our God is, how holy, how righteous, how true, how faithful, how gracious and merciful. The Word of God is studied as

it reveals to us the wonderful covenant of God and tells of His unfailing mercy. The Word of God in the home of the God-fearing is understood as having direct and immediate significance for the day to day life and experience of God's people in the world. The Word of God is studied as the only absolutely infallible rule for all our faith and life.

The God-fearing home is a house of prayer. God is prayed to in the morning with thanksgiving for His mercies that are new every morning. God is prayed to throughout the day for spiritual guidance and strength against the temptations of the world. It is known in the God-fearing home that father and mother, children and young people, cannot face the trials and temptations of the day without the help of their God. God is prayed to in the evening in recognition that every good and perfect gift of the day has come from Him. Not a day goes by in that home without the sincere humble confession of sin. God is prayed to in the night watches as the God Who never slumbers nor sleeps and Who is the keeper of the souls of His people.

May God grant that our homes are truly God-fearing!

## ***NOW AVAILABLE***

### **SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN, Book Three**

Teachers' Manual, \$5.95

Pupil Workbook, \$2.00

Manual and Workbook, \$6.95

Quantity Discounts to Schools on Workbook

This includes the primary series of manuals and workbooks.  
Book Three covers the New Testament period.

**ORDER FROM:** Reformed Free Publishing Association, P.O.  
Box 2006, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501

## Book Reviews

**MAKER AND CRAFTSMAN, THE STORY OF DOROTHY L. SAYERS**, by Alzina Stone Dale; Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978; 158 pp., \$8.95. (Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko.)

Although this biography of Dorothy Sayers is fairly comprehensive, it was somewhat disappointing. The disappointment arose, I think, from the fact that the author was fairly content to deal with mere factual data concerning Dorothy Sayers' life, and made no effort to evaluate her life, her Christianity, or her place in the literary world. Nevertheless, for fans of Dorothy Sayers' books, essays and other writings, this will be informative. If one is acquainted with Dorothy Sayers only through her writings, this book will hold some surprises.

Dorothy Sayers is known for her writing of detective stories, her excellent translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, her plays on the life of Christ, and her essays on religious subjects. She was a member of a circle of literati in England which included C. S. Lewis, George MacDonald, T. R. R. Tolkien, and others.

**CONCERNING SCANDALS**, by John Calvin, Translated by John W. Fraser; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978; 119 pp., \$6.95. (Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko.)

This is a new translation of a little known work of the great Genevan Reformer which was first published in 1550. It is not readily available elsewhere and is a welcome addition to anyone's library.

In the book Calvin treats of the many obstacles which prevent people from receiving the preaching of the gospel and which move them to speak evil of the gospel and the cause of the Church of Christ. There are, according to Calvin, offenses in the gospel itself. Among these are such things as apparent inaccuracies in Scripture, doctrines of original sin, predestination, etc. To all these Calvin gives answer. There are other offenses which arise when the gospel is publicly preached. These include the wicked lives which people live and the faults of members of the Church

which are obstacles to the faith of some. The third class deals with the evil slanders of enemies of the gospel. Calvin answers all these and urges God's people to overcome all obstacles while remaining faithful to the truth of Scripture.

The writing is pertinent for our day and will benefit all those who read it — as the writings of Calvin always do. The book is an eloquent, polemical defense of the Reformation. By all means get it and read it.

**THEOLOGICAL DICTIONARY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, VOL. III**, Edited by G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, Translated by John T. Willis, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, David E. Green; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., Grand Rapids, Mich.; 463 pages, \$18.50 (cloth). (Reviewed by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema)

This is the third of a projected twelve volumes in this series. It covers the Hebrew words from *gillulim* to *haras*.

This is, of course, not a work for the general public, nor a book which one simply sits down and reads and studies from cover to cover. It is a source book and a tool for the Old Testament student.

Works of this kind, highly technical and detailed, will, I think, hardly serve to *kindle* the interest of students in Old Testament studies. If, however, such an interest is already present — and there is all too little of such interest — a work of this kind will indeed serve to *feed* that interest.

However, I must issue a word of caution: this work is loaded with higher criticism, and it must be used with great discretion.

If you can afford the price of a volume like this, you will do well to purchase it. The purchase of these volumes one by one as they appear will be less painful than paying the price for the entire set when it is complete. This is not intended as criticism of the price of this book: it is obviously expensive to publish highly technical books of this kind for a rather limited market.

*YOU ARE INVITED!*  
to the  
2nd ANNUAL CHICAGOLAND REFORMATION DAY LECTURES  
to be held,  
the Lord willing,  
at  
Illiana Christian High Auditorium, Lansing, Ill.

\* \* \* \* \*

This year's theme is:

*"A SERIOUS CALL TO A REFORMED AND HOLY LIFE"*

Speakers and topics will be:

Wed., Oct. 24 —

Rev. G. Van Baren: *"SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD"*

... setting forth the truth of the antithesis as concerning movie attendance, dancing, unionism and other forms of worldliness.

Wed., Oct. 31 —

Rev. M. Joostens: *"HONORING MARRIAGE"*

... setting forth the biblical teaching on marriage, the idea of faithfulness in marriage even as God in Christ is faithful in love to His church; taking up such matters as divorce and remarriage; warning against the evils of marital unfaithfulness; calling the saints to marital fidelity.

Wed., Nov. 7 —

Rev. D. Engelsma: *"REMEMBERING THE LORD'S DAY"*

... setting forth the Bible's teaching on Sabbath observance, warning against desecration of the Lord's Day, calling the saints to good Sabbath keeping.

All meetings begin at 8:00 P.M.

Question & Answer period after each address

Cassette tapes of each speech will be made available

Sponsored by:

Protestant Reformed Church  
South Holland, Ill. 60473

### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

September 26, 1979 our dear parents, Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Griffioen, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. We give thanks to our heavenly Father for preserving them these years they have had together. Our prayer is that He will continue to bless them in their remaining years.

"Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and Thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds." Psalm 36:5

Their children

Thomas & Ardyth Heyboer

Arie & Ann Griffioen

John & Virginia Huizinga

Dennis & Sharon Gleason

Grandchildren - seventeen

Great-Grandchildren - Six

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Consistory of the Protestant Reformed Church of Hull, Iowa, expresses their sympathy to our fellow office-bearer, Deacon Gerb De Jong, and son Todd, in the passing of their wife and mother, BARB DE JONG. May the God of all mercy comfort them according to His Word.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." (Psalm 23:4).

Bert Van Maanen, Vice Pres.  
Egbert Gritters, Clerk.

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Board of The Reformed Free Publishing Association expresses sincere Christian sympathy to their President, Clare Kuiper, in the loss of his father, HENRY H. KUIPER, who was taken to glory on September 7, 1979, at the age of 95 years.

"For this God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death." (Psalm 48:14).

David Harbach, Sec'y.

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Priscilla Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, MI, mourns the loss of a faithful member, MRS. JENNIE VELTMAN, whom the Lord took from our midst to Eternal Glory on August 28, 1979. We express our sympathy to the bereaved children and pray that our Heavenly Father's love will sustain and comfort them thru every coming day.

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

Miss Jessie Dykstra, Pres.  
Mrs. Roselle Ezinga, Sec'y.

## News From Our Churches

Rev. J. Kortering, pastor of our church in Redlands, California has accepted the call extended to him by the congregation of our church in Loveland, Colorado. This means that he has declined the call he received from the congregation of Hope Church in Walker, Michigan.

Candidate Steven Houck has accepted his call from Hope in Walker, Michigan, to serve as Home Missionary in the Lansing - Charlotte, Michigan, area. Candidates Houck and Carl Haak were examined by Classis East on September 12. Candidate Haak was installed as pastor of Southeast Church in Grand Rapids on the evening of September 13.

Candidate Ronald Camminga was examined by Classis West during their regular fall meeting held on September 5 in Isabel, South Dakota. No doubt candidate Camminga has been installed by now as pastor of our church in Hull, Iowa. Reports on these Classis meetings should be forthcoming soon.

Rev. Arie den Hartog, pastor of our church in New Jersey, has accepted his call from Doon, Iowa, to serve as foreign missionary in Singapore. This means that he has declined the call extended to him by Hudsonville to serve as 'minister-on-loan' to Christchurch, New Zealand.

Just where our Covenant Protestant Reformed Church is in New Jersey is just a little bit complicated. The congregation has been meeting in Prospect Park. The parsonage and official church mailing address and the location of the property on which their new church is to be built is in Wyckoff. Effective on September 9, the congregation has changed their place of worship to the Franklin Lakes United Methodist Church building, 454 Pulis Ave., Franklin Lakes, New Jersey. Services are scheduled at 11:30 AM and 7:00 PM. One of the purposes of this move from the Legion Hall in Prospect Park to a real church building is so that a nursery could be provided during the worship services.

Covenant has extended a call to Candidate Ronald Hanco. Their trio included also Rev. David Engelsma and Candidate Steven Houck. This congregational meeting to call a pastor was scheduled for the evening of September 3, Labor Day.

Covenant has attempted to do quite a bit of advertising in their area. They have advertised their new meeting place in the local paper and have attempted to arouse interest in the two Bible study classes they hold each week by sending out about

5,000 invitations to persons in the local area. The Wednesday class is busy with the study of the miracles of our Lord Jesus Christ. The young couples Bible class held on Friday evenings is using as its study guide the book on marriage by Rev. D. Engelsma.

Rev. C. Hanco commemorates the 50th year of his ordination into the ministry this September. To mark this important event, and to give thanksgiving to God, the consistory of our Hudsonville church has planned a special program for Friday, September 28.

Rev. Robert Harbach is planning to retire in early October. The council of our Hope Church (Walker) is planning a special evening in connection with this on October 5. Rev. M. Schipper will speak and there are special numbers planned. All of this is in order that we may give thanks to God for the many years Rev. Harbach has given to our churches — on the pulpit and on the mission field.

The League of Eastern Men's and Ladies' Societies will hold their Fall League meeting on October 1 at Southeast Church. Professor H. C. Hoeksema is scheduled to speak on "The Declaration of Principles: Its History, Content, and Value for Us." There is a little story connected with the selection of this topic. When the Men's and Ladies' Leagues effected a merger a few years ago, they found that they should have a new constitution. It was proposed that the constitution have as its basis the Word of God as expressed in the three forms of unity and the Declaration of Principles. The inclusion of the Declaration caused a bit of discussion among the League Board — and prompted the suggestion that this would be a good topic for a League meeting speech.

Last winter, you may remember, First Church in Grand Rapids conducted worship services in Bradenton, Florida, as part of their church extension activity. The consistory, through its committee established for that purpose, has been working to re-establish this witness in Florida and have it continue on a year-around basis. Work is now being done to set up a schedule of ministers who can spend a month or more at a time in this area. Services should resume about mid-November in the same location as before — the Manatee Hotel. Rev. Wilbur Bruinsma, pastor of our Faith Church in Jenison, Michigan, is scheduled to be the first minister in Bradenton this fall.

K.G.V.