

The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

. . . We must always insist upon the great importance of doctrine, we must preach doctrine faithfully in our church and we as individual Christians must always be earnest and zealous to learn sound doctrine. . . . But it is equally important that proper and distinctive Christian living flow from our doctrine. . . . Putting this very simply, all men must know that we are Reformed Christians because of the reflection of this in our daily lives.

See "The Practical Implications of

Calvinism" — page 373

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

Department Editors: Rev. Wayne Bekkering, Rev. Wilbur Bruinsma, Rev. Ronald Cammenga, Rev. Arie den Hartog, Prof. Robert D. Decker, Rev. Richard Flikkema, Rev. Cornelius Hanko, Prof. Herman Hanko, Mr. David Harbach, Rev. John A. Heys, Rev. Kenneth Koole, Rev. Jay Kortering, Rev. George C. Lubbers, Rev. Rodney Miersma, Rev. Marinus Schipper, Rev. James Slopesma, Rev. Gise J. Van Baren, Rev. Herman Veldman.

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

Church News Editor: Mr. David Harbach
4930 Ivanrest Ave., Apt. B
Grandville, Michigan 49418

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Business Office: The Standard Bearer
Mr. H. Vander Wal, Bus. Mgr. PH: (616) 243-2953
P.O. Box 6064
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

New Zealand Business Office: The Standard Bearer
c/o Protestant Reformed Fellowship
B. Van Herk, 66 Fraser St.
Wainuiomata, New Zealand

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MEDITATION

Highly Exalted

Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

—Philippians 2:9-11

The ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ on the fortieth day after the resurrection was surely a local ascension. Christ departed from one place in the universe, the earth, never to return in that personal, visible, bodily sense until He comes again to judge the quick and the dead. And He went to

another place in God's universe, the highest heaven, in order to sit at the right hand of God and to rule supreme over all things in His church and in the world. And it is necessary, too, to emphasize this "local" aspect of the ascension over against all who would deny it and reduce it to some kind of

change of condition. Christ indeed ascended into heaven; and if He did not, then there is no such thing as the ascension.

But the ascension is much more than a change of place. It represents in the very real sense of the word an *advance* in the state of exaltation. We are accustomed to refer to Christ's ascension as the second of four steps in the state of exaltation; and indeed it is that. And as such it represents progress, advance. Christ not only was raised and arose from the dead; but He was exalted further in His ascension. The ascension means that our Lord Jesus Christ became very, very, very great!

God highly exalted Him!

We have—no, we *belong* to—an unimaginably great Christ! There are not sufficient superlatives to describe His greatness! He has a name, *the* name, above every name. At His name every knee in all the universe must bow! And every tongue in all the universe must confess the LORD JESUS CHRIST!

Do not overlook the fact that the purpose of the Word of God here is a practical one: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Apparently the text here no longer is speaking of the mind of Christ and of what Christ did in that mind, but rather of the mind of God and of what God did to Christ: He highly exalted Him. Yet, as the word "wherefore" indicates, the two are inseparably connected as cause and effect, as ground and act. Hence, with Christ and His mind the matter stood thus, that He humbled Himself, completely emptying Himself, having taken the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man. He humbled Himself even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. And, though being in the form of God, He never considered the robbery of being equal with God. And in all this, His deepest motive was *obedience*, obedience in the love of God! Yet, through all this there was also in the mind of Christ the perfect trust that God would justify Him, and there was in the mind of Christ the hope of the joy that was set before Him. And in this Christ was not put to shame: God highly exalted Him!

Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus!

In the cause of God's covenant the mind of Christ must be actively in us and be manifest in us. This is possible, of course, only because by grace the mind of Christ is in us principally; otherwise we could never manifest it. And by that mind we must be willing and ready that self, the big capital *I*, should be completely negated and denied and should submerge. But in that humiliation and self-

denial we may have the perfect confidence that God will exalt us. This cannot possibly fail: for God Himself is concerned in it.

And if you would know that this is true, then look to Jesus and to what God has done to Jesus Christ. He has already highly exalted Him, Him Who is our Head, to Whom we belong, Whose mind is in us! And we shall be exalted with Him!

Have this mind in you, the mind of Christ!

What an amazing exaltation!

First of all, consider for a moment from what depth this exaltation took place. The starting-point was the depth of the cross. That was the lowest stage of Christ's self-humiliation: "He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." From that point His exaltation occurred. And understand well what this means. It means that He had no name left, neither divine name nor human name, except a negative name: Cast away!

And then consider to what height Christ was exalted. God hath highly exalted Him, lifted Him up to an amazing height! And that amazing height is indicated by the expression "a name above every name." Actually we should read: "*the* name above every name." For it lies in the nature of the case that Christ's is a unique name: after all, there can be but one name that is above every name. And then remember that a name in the Scriptural sense of the term is not an empty word, involving a meaningless honor. But that name which Christ received denotes His place and position in relation to all creatures. And that name is: LORD! Lord He is, in relation to all creatures in heaven, in relation to angels and principalities and powers. Lord He is, in relation to all creatures on earth, in relation to men and beasts and all things, in relation to land and seas, in relation to storm and tempest, in relation to earthquake and volcano, and in relation to all the plans and activities and aspirations and strivings and movements of them all. Lord He is, even over the spiritual powers of darkness: the devil and his host! Nothing is excluded from that Lordship. Nothing rivals that Lordship. Nothing is next to or equal to or even approaching equality with that Lordship. God hath highly exalted Him. He is absolute Lord!

Amazing exaltation!

God gave Him a name. And the emphasis here is upon the fact that this is altogether different from our giving of a name. When God gives a name, that person is what God calls him. And when God gave to Jesus Christ the name LORD, this means that God made Him actual Lord. God gave to Christ the

authority, the prerogative, to reign. And God gave Him the *power* to maintain and execute and wield that authority of His Lordship. Christ became through this high exaltation exceedingly beautiful and glorious, majestic and strong in all the vast creation!

What an amazing Lord!

Under the overwhelming influence of that name all shall bend the knee and worship. When the apostle writes that "in (not: "at") the name of Jesus every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess," that is not the same as if he had written "in the name Jesus." No, the reference is to the same name as mentioned in the preceding, the name God gave Him, the name LORD. And to bend the knee *in* the name is not the same as to bend the knee *at* the name: it means under the overwhelming influence of that name which God gave Christ. Such is the tremendous impact of that name LORD!

Universally He shall be worshipped. To bend the knee is an act of reverence and fear. It is an act of worship such as belongs to God only. And to confess with the mouth implies praise and adoration. The content of that praise and adoration is: "Jesus Christ is LORD!"

This worship, moreover, shall be universal: *every* knee shall bow, and *every* tongue shall confess. And then the apostle goes on and specifies: of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. There shall be no exception. Universally He shall be acknowledged!

The reference here is to the conscious, rational creature. Some have tried to explain the text as referring to all creation, rational and dumb. Yet the expressions "bend the knee" and "confess with the tongue" are too definite to permit this interpretation: they refer to actions of the conscious, rational creature. Hence, even though it is true that *through* the rational creatures *all* creation shall worship and confess Him as LORD, this is not the reference here. The emphasis is rather on the fact that *universally* the rational creatures shall worship.

But they shall not all worship in the same way. In the expression "under the earth" I find a reference to the creatures in hell, in outer darkness, to devils and damned men. They shall be compelled to worship Him—they who once damned Him and blasphemed His name! But they shall worship not in love and obedience. On the contrary, in overwhelming fear they shall acknowledge: Jesus is LORD! The reference to creatures in heaven and on earth, on the other hand, refers to the angels and the redeemed church. They confess Him now already with bended knee. And they shall confess Him forever and ever, in love and delight, as they

are all united in Him, and shall say: Jesus Christ is LORD!

To the glory of the Father!

What is the glory of God? It is the radiation, the shining forth of all the infinite perfections of His Godhead. And this glory of God the Father is at stake in Jesus' exaltation. The exaltation of Jesus Christ, this means, is *theologically* necessary.

Indeed, you can and must consider His exaltation from a soteriological viewpoint, from the viewpoint of our salvation. Christ had come to save His brethren, the elect, and to remove their guilt and deliver them from the power of sin and death and give them eternal life. And even from that viewpoint Christ's exaltation, by way of His humiliation, was necessary. It was necessary that He should die for our sins. But it was also necessary that He should be raised for our justification. And it was equally necessary that He should be clothed with all authority and power and that He should become the quickening Spirit—all in order to bring about our actual salvation, our actual deliverance from sin and death, our actual participation in all the blessings of salvation.

But in the ultimate sense of the word, Christ's exaltation, His being made LORD, must serve the purpose of the glory of God the Father.

You see, the question is: who is Lord? Who is the Lord and the Heir of all things among God's creatures and in His creation? God's answer is: I am Lord-Sovereign, and My servant is Lord under Me, over all things. Thus it was with Adam in Paradise the First: He was God's King-Servant, to rule over all things in the earthly creation in the name of and in the service of God. The devil's answer is: I am sovereign, and my servant shall be Lord in the world. And the ultimate attempt of the devil to maintain his answer—an attempt, however, that shall be utterly frustrated—shall be Antichrist in his final manifestation. He shall say, "I am Lord, and every knee must bow before me!"

But God's answer must and shall stand! He anointed His King upon His holy hill of Zion, His Servant, His Son, to become obedient in all things, even unto the death of the cross. And even as His Anointed Servant was obedient unto the death of the cross, therefore God hath highly exalted Him.

Jesus is LORD! To the glory of God the Father!

Read and Study
The Standard Bearer

EDITORIAL

The Calling of Our Protestant Reformed Churches to be Specific (2)

Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

What does it mean to be specific?

Rather than spell this out in a formal definition, let me use the method of concrete illustration.

I could say: it is 1 P.M. on my timepiece. In that case you receive no information—unless you happen to know that Grandville, Michigan is in the Eastern Time Zone—whether I mean 1 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time, or 1 P.M. in New Zealand, or 1 P.M. in London. Furthermore, you have no idea whether by "timepiece" I am referring to a sun-dial in my back yard or to a clock in my house or to my wristwatch. I can become more specific and say: "It is 1 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time on my clock." Even then you have no information as to which of nine different clocks in my house I mean. But if I specify by saying, "It is 1 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time on the Seiko International Clock on the shelf in my office," then you receive specific information.

Another example. The term "Christian Church" is very general; under its umbrella may be included Methodists, Lutherans, Baptists, Roman Catholics, and many others. More specific is the name "Reformed." And if I want to be very specific, I will say "Protestant Reformed."

Specific language involves the use of words which express the truth exactly, which define the truth distinctively, which distinguish it and set it off from the lie, which set it forth clearly and unmistakably.

To use another illustration, when one wishes to condemn the sin of unionism, he can speak of the danger of association with the world. That is general and therefore vague. No one actually knows what he means, because his thought is hidden in his words rather than expressed. To be specific means to be clear and to the point.

Further, to be specific means that one expresses himself in language which is not ambiguous. If one is to be specific, his language must not be open to a double interpretation, so that his meaning is left to the hearer. Specific language is language which has a single meaning. Thus, for example, I might say: "All who believe are elect." That statement is per-

fectly true in itself. But it is a statement to which any Arminian could also subscribe. The statement is ambiguous. It is open to a double interpretation. It could mean: all who believe are elect, because faith is the condition of election. If I want to be specific, and therefore unambiguous, I will say: "All who believe are elect, because faith is the sure fruit of sovereign election."

This is what I have in mind with that term *specific* when I content that our Protestant Reformed Churches have a calling to be specific.

We may ask the question: in what sense are we called to be specific?

If our age has been characterized by anything, ecclesiastically speaking, it has been characterized by the ecumenical movement. Whether that ecumenism has taken the form of specific attempts on the part of various churches toward organic unity—and there have been and still are many such attempts—or whether it has taken the form of attempting to associate with one another in organizations such as the World Council of Churches, the striving has been toward unity and toward a united front and united action, the latter especially in the sphere of the social and political. The appeal has been that churches must set aside their differences in creed and doctrine and must present a common front. And this striving has been under the banner of the beautiful ideal, "That they all may be one!"

But the unity which has been the goal of so many is a false unity. In its broadest aspects it would unite moderns and orthodox, would deny the blood of Christ and all the fundamentals of the Christian faith. In its more limited aspect it would bring together into one camp all kinds of creeds—Arminians, Baptists, Calvinists, Premillennials and Amillennials.

But we must remember that the strength of the church is the truth of the Word of God. That strength does not lie in outward unity; it does not lie in large numbers; it does not lie in an outward show of power. But the definite truth of the Word of God is the strength of the church. Only that defi-

nite truth of the Word of God may be the basis of union. For Christ alone is the unity of the church.

Hence, my answer is, in the first place, that we are called to be specific in distinction from all modernism and the modernistic church. And by modernism I mean that entire ecclesiastical movement which still refers to itself as church, but denies all the fundamental truths of the Christian faith. It denies that the Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God. It denies the vicarious atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. It denies Christ's Godhead. It denies His incarnation. It denies His resurrection. It denies His second coming. There are hundreds and thousands of such churches today, churches where it has become impossible to hear the Word of the Gospel proclaimed any longer.

Now it may seem that there is no need of emphasizing that our Protestant Reformed Churches must be specific in distinction from these liberal, modernistic churches. After all, they represent the false church, and that, too, very obviously. And they represent the spirit of Antichrist. After all, we are as divergent from them as east is from west, as black from white. There is no danger that we would ever feel at home with them and their message, nor they with us.

And yet, upon second thought, such emphasis may not prove to be completely unnecessary after all.

For, in the first place, do not overlook the fact that this process of becoming modernistic did not happen overnight. It is indeed a *process*. There was a time in history—relatively speaking, not so very long ago—when these huge modernistic churches were orthodox, even strictly Calvinistic. And they did not simply jump directly out of the camp of Calvinism into the camp of rank modernism. That took place gradually, little by little. And by the way, if you study church history, you will discover that the beginnings of this modernism were in Arminianism and in the fact that these churches began to let go of the distinctives of the Reformed faith. Have you ever been at a large international airport? All the planes of a given airline—let us say United Airlines—have their loading ramps in the same area, from the same corridor. They are together, very

close to one another. Presently several planes will travel down the taxiway toward the same runway. Sometimes nine or ten planes may be lined up, waiting for the opportunity to take off. As their turns come, they all take off, one after the other, down the same runway. And when they are first in the air, they may all initially have the same flight pattern. It might almost seem to an uninitiated observer that it makes no difference which one of those many planes he boards. And yet it makes a world of difference. One plane turns toward Los Angeles, another toward New York City, another toward Montreal, and still another toward Miami. So it is with the church. The divergence in doctrine and confession and preaching may seem almost insignificantly small at first. Someone will surely describe it as theological hairsplitting initially. Yet in the course of history and development, that initially small divergence ends in a radical and fundamental difference. Be warned! Be specific! For very rarely, if ever, has such a divergence turned out to be a small one in the course of history and its concomitant development in doctrine.

In the second place, there is something inherently attractive to the flesh in being big, in being in the news, in having a voice in the affairs of men, in "counting" in this world. Besides, there is something inherently appealing to the flesh especially in programs which these large churches have, programs for political justice, programs for the elimination of various kinds of discrimination, programs for social improvement, for feeding the hungry, etc. It can almost make you feel guilty when your church is not engaged in such a program, especially when it comes to such a matter as world relief and the feeding of the hungry and the medical care of the deprived nations. In fact, more than one so-called evangelical church has tried to enter the competition and to engage in what are commonly referred to as social gospel projects. There is a temptation here to be less than distinctive and to imitate. But again: remember where all these movements have their roots, that is, in an initially small compromise or departure from the truth of the Word of God.

We must take care, therefore, to be specific, even to be specifically specific!

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

ALL AROUND US

Rev. G. Van Baren

Schuller's "Confessions"

Dr. Robert Schuller, well-known minister of the Crystal Cathedral in California and speaker on "Hour of Power" program on television, recently took issue with a critic who wrote in the *Christian News*. This critic pointed out the serious errors of Schuller's new book, *Self-Esteem: the New Reformation*. Of interest in Schuller's answer is not so much his objection to his critic, but what he says concerning his own confessions. In the issue of February 21, 1983, he writes:

"I want you to know that in my denomination, The Reformed Church in America, I subscribe wholeheartedly and without reservation to the Apostle's Creed, Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed." Schuller explained, however, that he did not subscribe to

the Canons of Dort (a doctrinal standard in the RCA) out of which evolved a "federal theology" which Schuller considers "poisonous."

"I do not believe I have rejected hell as a theological concept whatsoever," Schuller continued. "I'm giving an interpretation of it..."

So Schuller rejects the Canons of Dort. He did not even say whether he did the same with the Heidelberg Catechism and the Netherlands Confession. Publicly Schuller states his position. It points out the sad state of affairs that within a denomination one of the official creeds can be openly renounced. Yet Schuller remains an honored man within the Reformed Churches. It is one more clear indication of open apostasy in these last days.

Christian Unity

Church union, not so very long ago, was the desire of denominations relatively "close" in doctrinal views. Then, many advocated union between all Christian churches—and such is the goal still of many today. But more recently, church union is considered necessary between all such who worship "one God." Of this, Dr. Marten H. Woudstra wrote in the *Outlook*, April 10, 1983:

Christian unity, as those who live by the gospels and the Reformed confessions know, is also church unity. Christians are duty bound to "join themselves to the true church" as the Belgic Confession states. John Calvin, though fighting the church of Rome with its claim to being the "mother church," nevertheless kept speaking of the church as our "mother." Calvin also stated in a letter to archbishop Thomas Cranmer of Canterbury that he would gladly cross "ten seas" if such could further the cause of unity between Reformed believers which Cranmer desired. Though, therefore, I am speaking of church union matters..., I nevertheless retain the words "Christian unity" in my title. This serves at least a twofold purpose. It helps us to remember that no church union is of any significance if Christian unity is not thereby furthered. There are, I would like to suggest, church unions which do not further this cause. These are unions arising

from doctrinal indifference, or from the worldly desire to be numerically strong.

A second reason why I prefer to speak of Christian Unity rather than church union only is the fact that theological trends today, geared as they are to the tenets of comparative religion, are beginning to view the ecumenical question increasingly in terms of a union that should rightly also include the Jews, and possibly other "monotheists." A Jewish rabbi in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in an article recently published, quoted the Roman Catholic theologian Hans Kung to the effect that no ecumenical gathering today would be complete without the Jews also being present. This is not an isolated voice. There is a kind of ecumenicity that knows no bounds. It will not rest until all people of good will sing in the mighty chorus of the brotherhood of love, never mind the unique claims of Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life.

In *Christian News*, March 28, 1983, there is a similar shocking proposition set forth by a professor at the Free University:

Professor Dirk Mulder of the Free University of Amsterdam made this statement at a national meeting here of *Interreligion* which seeks to promote mutual understanding among all religions and sects. "Islam, Christianity, Hinduism or Buddhism, every religion

has its own unique answers. But the point is that people learn, however convinced they are of their own faith, not to feel superior. We must not think that others who believe differently will be eternally lost."

"It is our task," said Prof. Mulder, "to realize God's purpose with humanity. In all the differences and problems that occur in dialogue between Islam and Christianity, we need to understand and tolerate each

other in the one God Who binds us together."

To paraphrase a well-known slogan, "You've come a long way, ecumenism!" Obviously, within even Reformed circles, some consider Christ to be irrelevant to salvation. May God give His church the steadfastness to repudiate emphatically all such apostasy.

The Creation Days

It is not often, these days, that we read of those who really believe in the literal Genesis account of creation. Either one believes in evolution, or a "theistic" evolution—but only a fool, it seems, still believes in a literal creation within the framework of six literal days. Still, there are those, and it seems increasingly so, who do teach a literal creation week. An interesting article on the subject is presented in the *Outlook*, April, 1983. It was written by Dr. Gary Parker, formerly a teacher at Dordt College, and presently at San Diego's Institute for Creation Research and head of the Biology Department at Christian Heritage College. Here are some of the things he has to say:

Sadly, ...Exodus 20:11 has become, for too many "twentieth century" Christians, the most embarrassing verse in the Bible. At our own Calvin College, for example, we have Professors Davis Young and George Marsden zealously writing and even testifying in court to discredit Christians who believe—and who put into practice their belief—that God simply said what He meant and meant what He said in both Genesis 1 and Exodus 20.

Nearly all who oppose accepting the Sabbath commandment with child-like (not childish) faith have some reason *outside of the Bible* for wanting to stretch out the length of the creation days. Many members of the American Scientific Affiliation (ASA), for example, believe that God used evolutionary processes to bring into being a succession of life forms, including man's body ("theistic evolution"). But evolution as a process is based on *accidental* changes in heredity called mutations and on the continual *death* of the less fit in the constant struggle for survival. These processes don't create; they corrupt, becoming a part of our world only after the Fall (Gen. 3:14-19; Rom. 8:18-21). Allowing more time for accident and death (the evolutionary processes of mutation and the struggle for survival) would only increase our genetic burden of birth defects and disease. The Nobel prize-winning biochemist, Jaques Monod, himself an outspoken atheist, once expressed his surprise that any Christian would believe that God would use such a "cruel, wasteful, and inefficient process" as evolution as His means of

creation—and more time would only make the problem worse.

Dr. Parker continues by pointing out some of the fallacies of the evolutionary theory:

But what about the fossils and the sedimentary strata that blanket the earth? These are the result of process, but not creative process. Would there be time since the Fall for these monumental fossil-bearing deposits to form?

Thanks to decades of indoctrination in evolution only, most people just assume it takes millions of years to form fossils and rock layers. Just the opposite is true. It is not even possible to form fossils slowly and gradually. Even evolutionary textbooks point out that most fossils are the remains of plants and animals buried rapidly under a heavy load of water-borne sediment (i.e., flood conditions). If Grand Canyon had formed slowly and gradually, it would look nothing like it does today, and the same is true of coal seams and oil deposits.... Great age makes it *difficult*, not easy, to understand many geological features of our earth....

...It is sadly ironic that just as some Christians are beginning a loud and public attack on fellow Christians who take the Biblical account of the Flood as well as the creation days historically, non-Christian geologists are beginning to recognize the overwhelming evidence of continental and global catastrophism...

...In a college textbook written by an evolutionist for evolutionists, (*The Science of Evolution*, Macmillan, 1977, pp. 80-84), William Stansfield reviews about a dozen major indicators of the earth's age. Concerning the amounts of water and lava released from volcanoes, helium in the atmosphere, uranium salts in the ocean, meteoritic dust in the crust, and meteorites in the sedimentary strata, etc., Stansfield says that *creationists submit evidence* of a young earth—and he responds neither by ridicule nor by refutation but by admitting creationists have made several scientifically valid points that pose real problems for the old earth view!

Radioactivity used in age dating? Stansfield—in that college textbook by an evolutionist for evolutionists—first describes the host of assumptions that must be

made before isotope ratios can be used to estimate age, and then he points out gross errors that have resulted in the practice of those methods....

Parker concludes with this remarkable statement: "I've written five science textbooks published by the secular press. But, like every other science textbook, they have all had to be revised; the Scriptures have never had to be revised even once. Why would we want to base our interpreta-

tions of Scripture on the changing milieu of science when we could base our understanding of science on the changeless Word of God? Surely God's Word is the surest guide to understanding God's world." Our prayer would also be that Parker and many like him will continue to write and speak of God's wonderful creation as God Himself has presented it in His infallible Word!

STRENGTH OF YOUTH

Our Approach to the Problem of Alcoholism

Rev. Ron Cammenga

Are you an alcoholic? Do you suspect that a friend or loved one may be an alcoholic? Answer the following questions honestly and forthrightly.

1. Do you lose time from work due to drinking?
2. Is drinking making your home life unhappy?
3. Do you drink because you are shy with other people?
4. Is drinking affecting your reputation?
5. Have you ever felt remorse after drinking?
6. Have you gotten into financial difficulties as a result of drinking?
7. Do you turn to lower companions and an inferior environment when drinking?
8. Does your drinking make you careless of your family's welfare?
9. Has your ambition decreased since drinking?
10. Do you crave a drink at a definite time daily?
11. Do you want a drink the next morning?
12. Does drinking cause you to have difficulty in sleeping?
13. Has your efficiency decreased since drinking?
14. Is drinking jeopardizing your job or business?
15. Do you drink to escape from worries or trouble?
16. Do you drink alone?
17. Have you ever had a complete loss of memory as a result of drinking?
18. Has your physician ever treated you for drinking?
19. Do you drink to build up your self-confidence?
20. Have you ever been to a hospital or institution on account of drinking?

If you have answered YES to any one of these twenty questions, there is a definite warning that you may be an alcoholic. These questions have been drawn up by John Hopkins University Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. They are widely used in determining whether or not a person is alcoholic. If you have answered YES to any two of the questions, it's very likely that you are an alcoholic. If you have answered YES to three or more of the questions, you are definitely an alcoholic and you definitely need help immediately.

Alcohol is a major chemical ingredient in beer, wine, and other distilled beverages. Alcohol is a natural substance formed by the reaction of fermenting sugar with yeast spores. There are many different kinds of alcohols. The kind found in alcoholic beverages is known scientifically as ethyl alcohol, a colorless, flammable liquid which has an intoxicating effect.

The effects of alcohol vary in proportion to the amount consumed and according to personal physical and psychological differences. In small doses alcohol has a tranquilizing effect, causing a person to feel relaxed and free from tension. In larger amounts muscular coordination, memory, and judgment may be temporarily impaired, as brain activity is depressed. More intake over a short period of time can result in loss of control and dulling of the senses. Continued, steady, heavy drinking can completely anesthetize the brain, and result in coma or death.

Several factors contribute to determine alcohol's overall effect on a person. How fast the person drinks and whether his stomach is empty or full

affect how quickly alcohol enters the bloodstream and is carried to the brain. The type of alcoholic beverage a person drinks also contributes to the effects. The person's weight, his mood when he starts drinking, and even the setting in which he drinks, all contribute to the effects his drinking will have on him.

That alcoholism is a problem in the world can hardly be denied. At present, only one out of three adults in the U.S. is a non-drinker; and one out of nine people who do drink is an alcoholic. Recent studies indicate that 63% of boys and 54% of girls in grade 7 have used alcoholic beverages. By grade 12, the figures increase to 93% of boys and 87% of girls. Alcohol is the most popular drug in the U.S. today, besides being one of the most easily available. Last year over ten billion dollars was spent on drink in our country. At present there are over 5 million alcoholics in the U.S. Alcoholism ranks as the fourth most serious health problem. One out of nine casual drinkers will become an alcoholic; that's better than 10%.

And let's not kid ourselves, the problem exists in our own churches and among our own people. We had better not act as the proverbial ostrich and, confronted by this problem, stick our heads in the sand. But we had better face the fact that there is a problem, and we had better deal with the problem. We all know that there is a good deal of "social drinking" among our people. There are also certainly problem drinkers, or alcoholics. Many of our pastors and elders have confronted the problem. It's a problem that shows itself now and again among the younger people. Almost all of us know someone who has had the problem, or has the problem presently.

From a certain point of view, it ought not surprise us that the problem does exist among us. It's not a new problem; it's always been a problem in the church. Genesis 9 tells us of Noah's drunkenness; we know from I Corinthians 11 that there was drunkenness in the congregation of Corinth, drunkenness, mind you, at the Lord's Table. Granted, now, that the problem exists; and granted that we must face the problem; what must be our approach to the problem? How must we deal with it? In this article, and a couple of articles to follow, we want to discuss how the Christian ought to approach the problem of alcoholism.

Basic Symptoms of the Problem

In order for us to discover the problem of alcoholism, either in ourselves or in a friend or loved one, we need to know some of the basic symptoms of the problem. One of the first warnings that one is on the way to alcoholism is an increased tolerance for alcohol. Many states have set a level of .10 blood

alcohol as the level of legal drunkenness. According to this standard a one hundred fifty pound male who drank three to five twelve-ounce beers (not even a six-pack), or three to five six-ounce glasses of wine, or three to five one-ounce glasses of whiskey would be legally drunk.

But the point is that the more one drinks, the greater his tolerance level and the less he shows the outward characteristics of being intoxicated. For someone who has been habitually drinking heavily, he may be able to consume more than the minimum described for legal drunkenness and still behave in a fairly normal way. Increased tolerance is a clear warning that one is on the road to alcoholism.

A second danger signal is what is often called "pattern drinking." This means that the drinker follows a certain pattern in his drinking, a fixed routine. It may begin by his drinking at the same time every week, say every Friday afternoon after work. Then the pattern intensifies so that the person begins drinking or craving a drink at the same time every day. Especially is this seen in the person who drinks the first thing out of bed in the morning, as soon as he gets home from work in the afternoon, or in order to relax before going to bed at night.

A third warning signal is a change in behavior. This may involve a change in mood. A person who was gay and happy becomes brooding and moody. A person who was outgoing becomes withdrawn. A person who was quiet and reserved becomes loud and demanding. Note well, these are changes in behavior, not when the person is drunk, but when he is sober. Particularly is this change of behavior noticed within the immediate family: a husband's treatment of his wife, a wife's attitude toward her husband, a parent's treatment of the children, or a teenager's attitude and behavior toward his parents. A husband may begin to abuse his wife, not necessarily physically, but verbally. A wife may begin to be unsubmitive and contrary. A parent may become harsh or abusive of the children. A teenager may become rebellious and unmanageable. These are definite signs of alcoholism.

A fourth warning signal is "blackouts." Blackouts are not the same as passing out; we mustn't confuse these. A blackout refers to a temporary amnesia, loss of memory, induced by alcohol. A person who doesn't remember where he was, what he was doing, or with whom he was the day or night before.

A fifth warning signal is surreptitious drinking, that is, drinking on the sneak. A housewife may hide her liquor in different places around the

house; it's reported that a favorite place is the toilet tank. A factory worker may have a bottle tucked away in a secret place at the shop. A farmer may have bottles stashed in strategic places on the farm. This also involves drinking secretly and alone.

All of these are warning signals that a person is on the road to alcoholism. If you yourself show these symptoms, you need help. If a loved one or friend shows any of these symptoms, he needs help and you ought to convince him that he does need help.

The Scriptural View of Alcoholism

But what kind of help does the alcoholic need? And, where must we go for help? In order to answer these questions, it's important that we answer the prior question: What is alcoholism? What must be our view of the problem itself? Only if we have a proper understanding of the problem itself, will we go on to seek the right kind of help for the problem, and seek that help in the right place.

It must be emphasized that our view of this problem must be derived from Holy Scripture. Our view is not to be based upon the opinions of worldly counselors and psychiatrists, even though they undoubtedly have the advantage of experience and frequency in dealing with the problem. Our view must not even be based ultimately on the testimony of the alcoholic and recovered alcoholic, as valuable as that testimony may be, especially if he is a Christian. But our view must be based upon Holy Scripture. Holy Scripture speaks on alcoholism and drunkenness. The Scriptures describe the problem, its nature and seriousness. The Scriptures provide all the material the Christian needs to understand the essence of the problem, as well as how to approach the problem. And, thank God, the Scriptures also point out the way of deliverance from alcoholism in the sovereign grace of a merciful God. Here, too, we must show ourselves to be Reformed Christians, whose only rule for faith and for life is the Word of God. And we must bow before that Word of God. ...to be continued.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

Our Sure Salvation

Rev. John A. Heys

Among the sixty-six books of the Bible only two are named after women, namely, the book of Ruth and the book of Esther. Both of these books deal with events that took place during the days of shadows. That only two of these sixty-six books are named after women, however, must not leave the impression that the other sixty-four are named after men. That certainly is not true. Some are named after events, others after their content. Some are named after congregations such as Romans, Corinthians, and the other epistles of Paul addressed to believers in a particular city or region. One, the epistle to the Hebrews, is named after a people. No more than forty of the sixty-four not named after women are named after men. It all depends on whether you speak of Lamentations or Lamentations of Jeremiah, and of Song of Solomon or, as the Netherlands Confession calls it, Song of Songs. And, even though we might be able to list forty of them as named after men, many of them are named after the same man twice or even three and four times. We have First and Second Samuel. And we have the gospel according to John and three epistles of John.

Now these two women, Ruth and Esther, have much in common but also wide differences. What they have in common is that they are both descendants of Shem of whom God said through Noah, "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant." What is more, both of them are descendants of Terah, the father of Abraham, who was of the seed of Shem. Ruth was the descendant of Lot who was the son of Abraham's brother Haran. Esther was a descendant of Abraham and a Jewess, while Ruth was a Moabitess. Neither, therefore, was a Canaanite. Neither descended from Canaan whom Noah in God's name addressed with these words, "cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brethren."

Where they differ greatly is that Ruth, the Moabitess, was born in a land where Jehovah was not worshipped and His covenant with His people was not known, but in God's grace she was brought to faith in Him and to His worship. Esther, the Jewess, was born in the line of a people that did worship God and among whom God's covenant was known, and by some enjoyed and respected. But she herself

was not a believer. She acted in gross unbelief, revealing a far departure from the faith in God manifested in her forebears such as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to say nothing of David and the prophets Elijah and Elisha who lived long before her birth, but also the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah who lived more closely to the days of her life, and of Daniel and Ezekiel who lived in the same land of captivity that she did.

Yes, Esther was an unbeliever in spite of what many have written and said about her. It is my intention, the Lord willing, to consider this period of the day of shadows for a few months. And in doing so it will become very, very plain that all this praise heaped upon Esther as such a saviour of God's people is due to a failure to look carefully at all that God says of her in the book. There is overwhelming evidence that she was an unbeliever, as were all the characters named in the book. Not one shows as much as one work of faith in Jehovah. Reserve your criticisms of this position until we come to the evidence later on in the book.

Such being the case, that is, Esther being an unbeliever, we have here the only book in the Bible named after an unbeliever. That must not make us backtrack and conclude that she must have been a believer or she would not have had this honour. That does not follow; and the sovereign God had a perfect right to decree that the name of an unbeliever should be used as the title of one of the books of our Bible. In fact it is His sovereign grace that did this, as we hope to point out later. It belongs to the purpose of the inclusion of this book in Holy Writ.

Consider that naming the book after an unbeliever does not mean that she is honoured. If that were the case we would have to say that such giants of faith as David, a man after God's own heart, and Elijah were denied an honour. True honour results from having one's name in the Lamb's book of life. And the fact that only two books in Holy Writ are named after women is no reflection on believing women who have their names in the Lamb's book of life. Many are the women whose names are mentioned in Scripture and to whom therein great honours are given by God. Sarah and Rahab are honoured by having their names listed among the giants of faith in Hebrews 11. And let us not forget the words of the angel to Mary, the mother of Jesus, "Hail, thou that are highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." And the use of one's name merely to give a title to a book in no way means that this one is blessed of God. What God says about these individuals after whom the books are named is what counts. What is revealed of them on the pages of the book is God's evaluation. It is not what your name is, but what your deeds are that reveals whether you have

honour before God or shame. Elimelech who took his family to Moab for bread had a name that means My God is King, but he did not live that way. Judas Iscariot had a name that means praise, but he was not to the praise of God's name. And though he has no book named after him—the Jude (and this is a form of the name Judas) who wrote that last but one book in the New Testament is quite another person—his name is listed with the twelve disciples of Jesus. Is that an honour? It is to his shame that he, a disciple of Christ, defected so greatly as to betray Christ. As a paraphrase of Jesus' words in Luke 10:20 we may put it this way, "In this rejoice not that thy name appears above a sermon preached, on the cover of a book on doctrinal or exegetical subjects, nor that a cathedral or library is named after you; but rather rejoice because your name is written in heaven." That is it! To have one's name written in heaven! And an innumerable host of women have that, even though only two books of the Bible are named after women.

Now there is another unique feature about these two books of Ruth and Esther. Strikingly enough these two, *and these two only*, begin the same way with the same eight words, namely, "Now it came to pass in the days...." From there on, a variation appears. Ruth continues with the words, "when the judges ruled." Esther finishes the statement with, "of Ahasuerus." In the Hebrew these eight words are only two words because of the grammatical construction of the Hebrew which makes the "Now it came to pass" one word, and the "in the days" likewise one word. And though this expression appears frequently in Scripture, only in these two books do we find it as the introductory words. And that gives it special meaning here.

These eight words not only pinpoint the time when the events recorded in these books took place, but they also establish the fact that this is history, that what is written in these books is fact and not fiction. It came to pass means that what is written took place. Fables, novels, and fiction so often begin with, "Once upon a time." This is vague and indefinite and must be because the things written in these books never actually happened. Never, and to no degree, must we explain this "Now it came to pass" as "Once upon a time." The events listed in this book of Esther (and of Ruth also for that matter) are not imaginary events that originated in the mind of a man. In fact, so important are the events recorded in these books that God Himself moved men to pen them as undeniable history that has significance for His church. What came to pass and is recorded in these books stands in a vital connection with our salvation, because these events are so important and es-

sential for the coming of the Son of God in our flesh. We may say, therefore, and this we intend, the Lord willing, to bring out in the treatment of this book of Esther, that a crucial event in the realization of our salvation came to pass, is real history and happened as a fact of history.

Serving our churches and the brethren and sisters here in New Zealand at the time these lines are written we are limited as to reference works. But there are books written that question the historicity of this book of Esther. Higher critics—so-called because, though they elevate themselves above God's Word and dare to criticize what the All-wise God has given men to write they give a *low* blow to Scripture—present it here as a story with a moral in it but not to be taken as real history. Others claim that this book also is time-conditioned. And although they do not say it in so many words, they deny that truth of Isaiah 40:8, namely, "But the Word of the Lord abideth forever." Men who speak of "time-conditioned" writings in Holy Writ, we are told in Isaiah 40:6-8, are grass as we all are. *They* are time-conditioned, but God's Word is not any part of it. And just because man cannot find in man's records historical data to substantiate what is written in the book of Esther does not mean that it did not come to pass. We would do better to call man's records faulty rather than God's! All this did come to pass. It all happened. God says so. And therefore you and I must say so as well.

And behind this "Now it came to pass" we must see God's eternal counsel. What came to pass is what God eternally decreed and planned for our salvation. It *came* to pass, and that means first of all that it came from somewhere. And that somewhere is God's counsel. What was eternally in God's mind now happens on this earth and in the lives of men who inhabit this earth. For us it is long passed. But it took place in the days of Ahasuerus as the finger of God wrote it through man.

We do well, before proceeding, to emphasize that this introductory phrase applies to all that is recorded in the book and not simply to what is written in the first chapter. And, as we already pointed out, as

we consider the book we must bear in mind that salvation is coming to pass through the events recorded in this book. Christ is coming. God's promise of salvation in Him is coming to pass. The events in this book are going to serve that purpose, and therefore are recorded for our comfort and instruction.

Even though all the characters in the book are unbelievers, as we shall see, when we examine their works in the light of the rest of Holy Writ, we see that God is at work here using wicked men, as He did at the cross of our Saviour, to realize our salvation. And the book makes it so plain that our salvation is sure. And that is a truth which we and our children will need in the days that lie ahead. We need to know that even when God is denied by those who are in what still calls itself church, God is faithful to His promises.

But let me conclude this installment by urging you to search the Scriptures and not to take for granted what many, or I, have written about this book. To begin with, it is claimed that the name of God appears nowhere in this book. It would seem that way. But if you search carefully and listen to what God Himself says, you will find His name. And I do not mean in a figurative sense. I do not mean as in Psalm 75:1 which declares that His name is near and His wondrous works declare it. The very way in which that name of God appears has significance; but there is no room left to treat that now.

Until we can write more fully about this matter let this truth stand out clearly in your mind: Salvation is sure! All that which was needed for it came to pass on time and exactly as in God's counsel. What must still come to pass *will* become part of the history of this world. The day will come when in the new Jerusalem all the saints will say, "Now it *has* come to pass as God had promised us. Here we are with the full salvation which our faithful God prepared for us. It came to pass in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ that we were glorified to begin to pass an endless life with our God and Father, and to eat again of the tree of life in the new Jerusalem."

IN HIS FEAR

The Practical Implications of Calvinism*

Rev. A. den Hartog

We call ourselves Calvinists. By this we mean not that we are followers of a man who lived many years ago in the 16th century whose name was John

Calvin. But rather we mean that we believe and follow the doctrine of the Word of God as that doctrine was by the grace and Spirit of God reiterated

by the great reformer John Calvin, after that doctrine had been completely denied by the apostate Roman Catholic Church. This doctrine is also commonly known as the Reformed Faith. This doctrine is a glorious and wonderful doctrine. We believe that this doctrine is truly the doctrine of the Word of God.

From our great and glorious doctrine must follow great implications for the practical godliness of the Christian. Correct doctrine is surely very important. It is the very basis of our faith. Without doctrine faith has no substance and it will finally reveal itself to be false. We must always insist upon the great importance of doctrine, we must preach doctrine faithfully in our church and we as individual Christians must always be earnest and zealous to learn sound doctrine. The scriptures are full of doctrine. The scriptures themselves urge us again and again to maintain sound doctrine. But it is equally important that proper and distinctive Christian living flow from our doctrine. Always the church has to be warned against the danger of dead orthodoxy in her midst. Never must we hold to doctrine for mere doctrine's sake. We must have nothing of cold abstract doctrine held to merely by the intellect and not with the heart spiritually. All our doctrine will do us no good if we do not live out our doctrine in our daily lives as Christians. How wonderfully the apostle Paul in his epistles demonstrates the proper relationship between doctrine and life. Consider how many of his epistles begin with a lengthy doctrinal section and then conclude with a section where the apostle by the Spirit of God draws out the practical implications of that doctrine.

When we speak of the practical implications of Calvinism or of the Reformed Faith it is necessary of course to limit ourselves. Our doctrine is rightly the basis of all of our life. We could therefore go on and on into every single area of our life to show how our practical Christian walk is related to our doctrine. But if we were to do that we would need a lot more time than just one message. We shall concentrate especially on the distinctive features of the Calvinistic and Reformed Faith and consider a few of the practical implications especially of these distinctive features. The doctrine of the true Reformed Faith is very definitely distinctive from all others. There are some outstanding features of that doctrine that shine through the whole system of Reformed doctrine. These distinctive features can be immediately heard in every sermon of the truly Reformed preacher and in every sincere confession of the Reformed believer. It must also be the case that these distinctive features shine through our lives as Reformed Christians. When people witness our lives, when they have contact with us and associate

with us they must immediately be struck by the fact that there is something very different about our lives that distinguishes us not only from the natural men of the world who do not have the grace of God in their hearts, but also from many others who go by the name Christian. Putting this very simply, all men must know that we are Reformed Christians because of the reflection of this in our daily lives.

Let us begin by reviewing briefly some of the most distinctive features of the Reformed Faith. We by no means intend by doing this to give a summary of the Reformed Faith. That too would take much more than one speech. The absolutely most distinctive feature of the system of doctrine called the Reformed Faith is the emphasis on the centrality of God. The Reformed Faith like no other faith emphasizes that God is the center of all things. The Reformed Faith begins and ends with God. All that it ever speaks about is God and never about the glory and achievements of men. The Reformed Faith emphasizes the absolute sovereignty of God. The Reformed Faith testifies of the infinite greatness, almighty power, and perfect holiness and righteousness of God. The Reformed Faith recognizes that God's glory is the highest purpose of all things. The motto of the Reformed Faith is "Soli Deo Gloria." As Reformed Christians we believe that God is the sovereign Creator of the universe and all that it contains. God also made man in His own image. God made man for the sole purpose that he might worship, serve, obey, and glorify God his Creator and Lord. We confess that this sovereign God rules all things. He executes His eternal counsel. He sits in the heavens and does whatsoever He pleases and none can resist Him. He gives life and breath and all things to all. Without Him we cannot as much as move. In Him we live and move and have our being. All the thoughts and all the works of the Lord are altogether just and true and perfect. The central truth of the Reformed Faith is beautifully set forth in Romans 11:36: "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to Whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Concerning man the Reformed Faith believes that after the fall he is by nature totally depraved. This means that he is by nature wholly incapable of doing any good and prone to all evil. The natural man therefore does absolutely nothing pleasing in the sight of God. The sin of man is far more dreadful than merely his wicked deeds. The very nature of man is totally corrupt, his heart is desperately wicked so that no man can know it; all his thoughts and imaginations are only evil continually. Man and his world stand under the wrath and judgment of God. The day will come when the Lord will destroy wicked man and all of his achievements in His holy and perfect wrath. There is nothing re-

deemable in man himself or in anything that he does. Daily, sinful man increases his guilt and makes himself more and more worthy of eternal hell and damnation. The Reformed Faith understands the awful depths of man's sin and the dreadful consequences of that sin before the holy and righteous God of heaven and earth.

Concerning salvation the Reformed Faith emphasizes that it is entirely of sovereign grace alone. As Reformed Christians we believe that our salvation has its ground and beginning in God's sovereign, gracious, eternal, and unchangeable purpose of election. The Reformed Faith believes that also reprobation is according to the sovereign purpose of God and serves His glory. From beginning to end salvation is of the Lord alone. The Reformed Faith strongly repudiates all notions that ascribe salvation to the will and decision of man or to any good works that he himself performs. The Reformed Faith emphasizes that even faith itself is not first of all the work of man, as though it is man's work in response to God's work, but that faith too is God's work and God's gift of salvation to those whom He in sovereign grace has chosen as His own. The Reformed Faith believes that man can do no good works of himself. It is only the Spirit and grace of God that enables the Christian to walk in the way of sanctification and good works.

The Reformed Faith believes that salvation is truly of Christ alone. God sent His only beloved Son into the world to be the Savior of His people. Jesus came to die on the cross for those whom the Father had given to Him. The death of Jesus on the cross was a definite and real and perfect atonement for all the sins of His own. The finished work of Jesus on the cross is the only basis for our salvation. The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross has merited righteousness and eternal life for all of His own so that none will be lost.

Concerning the working of salvation spiritually within the Christian, the Reformed Faith is distinctive in what it believes. We believe that regeneration, the new birth, is absolutely essential to salvation. This regeneration we believe to involve the radical change of the whole nature of man. In the new birth the Christian becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus created after God in righteousness and holiness. Through Christ Jesus the old man in the Christian has been crucified and he has become a new man. We believe as Calvinist Reformed Christians that the final and perfect sanctification and salvation of every child of God is absolutely certain. The God Who began a good work in us will surely perfect it in the day of Christ Jesus.

Though the Christian has been principally made a new creature in Christ Jesus, his old nature has not

yet been fully put off. He needs daily to strive to put off the old man and his deeds and to put on the new man. The Reformed Christian finds that there are in him yet many sins and weaknesses. Even the most holy of men have but a small beginning of the new obedience. The Reformed Christian sees the great urgency of fighting against his remaining sins all the days of his life. The Reformed Faith believes that the Christian still often falls in this life, but though he falls the Lord will surely restore him and preserve him for the final salvation that He in His eternal counsel has prepared for all of His elect. The Reformed Christian believes that all the days of His life he is totally dependent upon God and His grace in Christ Jesus to save and keep him. Even as a Christian he knows that he cannot stand even for one moment except by the gracious help of God.

We could say much more about the wonderful and blessed doctrines of the Calvinist and Reformed Faith and about its distinctive features. But our real purpose is especially to speak of the great practical implications of this doctrine so we must move on to this.

What does it imply for the life of the Reformed Christian that God is absolutely central in his doctrine? The Reformed Christian is above all a God-fearing Christian. He knows the infinite greatness of God, His absolute sovereignty and perfect holiness and righteousness. Every thought of this should cause the Christian to fear and tremble before his God. The whole life of the Reformed Christian ought to be controlled by a deep and abiding fear of God. For the Reformed Christian God is His all. God is his hope, his joy, his life, his salvation, and all his glorying. The Reformed Christian knows that the chief end and purpose of his life is to glorify God, his Creator and the sovereign Lord of his salvation. The Reformed Christian must be one who seeks the glory of God in every sphere and department of his life. With fear and trembling he works out his salvation, always fearing lest he should dishonor God in anything and always earnestly striving to obey God, to serve Him completely and to exalt His name and glory in all things.

It follows practically that the Reformed Christian is one who frequents the house of God to worship Him there. His chief purpose in doing this is there to praise and exalt the name of his great and glorious God. The Reformed Christian knows that the Word of God is declared in the house of God. He ever desires to know more of the greatness and glory of God. The Reformed Christian knows also that through the preaching of the Word he is built up in his faith. He knows that the preaching of the Word is God's chief means of grace to him; the grace upon which he is so absolutely dependent for all his strength and salvation.

It follows practically that the Reformed Christian must be one who is constantly magnifying and praising God in his life. A true Reformed Christian is constantly speaking of the greatness and glory of his God. He cannot remain silent about this. Wherever he goes he feels constrained by his love of God to tell of His wonderful works of salvation, of His almighty power and greatness, of His sovereign love and mercy, of His truth and faithfulness, and His perfect righteousness. He speaks of this in his own home to his own family. He speaks of this to all of his neighbors. He speaks of this wherever he goes. A Reformed Christian who does not do this is living wholly inconsistent with his glorious confession of God.

The Reformed Christian is one therefore who ought to be zealous for the work of missions in the

church and for the work of personal evangelism in his own life. It is an awful shame when a Reformed Christian cares not about this. If on the one hand we have a great doctrine of God and on the other hand we refuse to speak of this doctrine to others also outside of our own churches then what profit is all of our great and glorious doctrine of God? As Reformed Christians we must see that the chief way we glorify the name of our God is to tell of His praises in the preaching of the Word and in our own personal witnessing.

(To be continued)

*The substance of this article was given as a speech on a special occasion for the Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore where the author is presently a missionary pastor. The subject was suggested by the members of the church.

FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

Nicene Creed

Rev. James Slopsema

Article 2: And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made.

We have seen before that the first two articles of the Nicene Creed are based on I Corinthians 8:6. There we read, "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of Whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we by Him." Following this pattern the early church confessed in Article 1 of this creed, "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible." And now, following the same pattern, the early church confessed in Article 2, "And in one Lord Jesus Christ...by Whom all things were made."

In this second article the early church first confessed faith in one Lord Jesus Christ.

Quite obviously the church sought to confess here the same truth that Paul was teaching in I Corinthians 8:6. Hence, to explain the meaning and intent of the Nicene Creed at this juncture we turn to this particular passage in Paul's epistle to the church of Corinth. In this section of his epistle Paul

is dealing with the problem of eating meats offered to idols. In verse 4 Paul points out that there is only one God and therefore all the idols of the world are really nothing. The implication is of course that there can be nothing wrong as such with eating meats offered to such idols. In verses 5 and 6 Paul further explains this truth that there is only one God. It is true says Paul that there are many things both in heaven and on earth that the heathen call and recognize as gods. By way of parenthesis he even adds that the heathen have many gods and many lords. But, concludes Paul in verse 8, to us there is only one God, the Father, and one Lord, Jesus Christ.

We ought to notice the contrast here. The heathen have many gods and many lords. To us there is but one God and one Lord. We find here the many over against the one. The many gods and lords of the heathen refer not to two different groups. They are one and the same. The multitude of idol gods that the heathen recognized were also their lords. The term "lord" here refers to one who rules, who exercises absolute power and authority over others. This is how the heathen saw their gods. They recognized them as rulers. Their gods exercised dominion over them. Before these gods they bowed in humble submission, obeying them in all things. In distinction from this Paul teaches the saints at Corinth that they have only one God,

the Father, of Whom are all things, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things.

This truth, that there is only one Lord, Jesus Christ, the early church sought to confess in this second article of the Nicene creed.

There are several elements to this truth.

First, mention is made of Jesus. The name Jesus is the personal name of the son of Mary. It was the name He received when He was circumcised on the eighth day. It was the name He was called as He grew up in Nazareth of Galilee and worked in the carpenter shop of His father Joseph. The name Jesus means Jehovah salvation. These are simply historical facts which no one can challenge and no one has ever felt compelled to challenge either. What follows however has been the source of widespread dispute and controversy among men.

For in the second place we have the name Christ. Christ means Anointed or Anointed One. This is a title rather than a personal name. It is a title which the Scriptures reserve for the One Whom God will send from heaven to save man from his woe and misery. The title itself indicates that one is anointed by God for this work of salvation. This anointing implies two elements. There is first the element of divine appointment. The one to Whom this title belongs has been eternally appointed by God to be the Savior of man. The second element is that of qualification. The Christ has also been qualified by God in every way to carry out the work of salvation.

In this second article of her creed the early church confessed that Jesus is this Christ of God. In harmony with her confession that there is but one God, she acknowledged that there is but one Christ sent from God to man. And this Christ is Jesus of Nazareth.

This confession of the church is based solidly on the Bible. It was the firm conviction of Jesus' own disciples that He was the Christ. Jesus once asked His disciples, "But whom say ye that I am?" And Peter answering for the rest replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:15, 16). Jesus Himself acknowledged before the Sanhedrin at His trial that He is the Christ, the Son of God (Matt. 26:63, 64). And so do all the inspired writers of the New Testament Scriptures recognize Him as the Christ of God. This is evidenced among other things by the simple fact that He is repeatedly referred to in the New Testament as Jesus Christ.

This truth the early church sought to confess first over against the unbelieving Jews. From the very beginning of His ministry here on earth the vast majority of the Jews, who historically were God's covenant people and Jesus' own countrymen, refused to believe that He was the Christ of God. On

the basis of His claim to be the Christ, the Jews condemned Him and crucified Him. The Jews claimed to look for the Christ, but refused to acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. This rejection of Jesus as the Christ by the Jews as a whole continues down to this day. Over against this unbelief of a people who were once God's chosen people, the early church sought to confess that Jesus is the Christ of God. And to the unbelieving Jew who may still be engrafted again into the tree of God's covenant (Romans 11) it is the calling of the church also today to confess that Jesus is Christ.

But the early church also sought to proclaim Jesus as the Christ to the unbelieving Gentile world. Man in general lies under the curse of God. As a result his portion here below is one of trouble and sorrow. These miseries of man are great. And consequently man is looking for deliverance from his woe. He looks for a christ. And many christs have emerged throughout history. But they are all false christs. This is only as Jesus Himself said it would be: "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many" (Matt. 24:4, 5). These false christs come with false claims and promises. They are not able to deliver man from his woe and misery. And this is primarily the case because their salvation is based on the works of man. It was over against these false christs that appeared even at the time of the early church that she sought in her creed to confess Jesus as the Christ of God. And the church that is faithful to God today also makes this her confession.

Finally, we have the name Lord. In this second article of the Nicene Creed the early church also confessed that Jesus Christ is Lord. This certainly is the teaching of the Scriptures. This is especially taught in Philippians 2:9-11, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Implied in this and other passages of Holy Writ is not only the fact of Jesus' Lordship but also the nature of that Lordship. The title of Lord is one which has been conferred upon Jesus Christ by God. This title was given to Jesus upon His ascension into heaven. It is a title He earned through His perfect suffering and death on the cross. Implied in this title is the authority to rule on the behalf of God. Upon Christ's exaltation to heaven God the Father clothed Him with all power and authority so that He rules over all of God's creation. This rule He exercises not for Himself. For He is Lord under

God. Hence, He rules all things for the glory of God and on God's behalf.

In this second article of her creed the early church also confessed that Jesus is the *only* Lord. Notice, she confessed faith in *one* Lord Jesus Christ.

The heathendom that still flourished at the time of the Nicene creed acknowledged many lords. As we saw earlier they recognized all of their idol gods as lords who ruled them. Before these idol lords they bowed. When these idol gods spoke, as they did through their priests, the people trembled in fear. The wishes of these idols were to the people as commands. And to appease these lords the people humbly obeyed.

Over against this the early church confessed that Jesus alone is Lord. All the lords of the heathen are nothing. They do not rule. Neither are they to be feared. There is only one Who rules. He is Jesus Christ Who on the behalf of God rules over all. As Lord He demands obedience to the law of God. And that law He strictly enforces by rewarding the well-doer with His blessing and by punishing the evil-doer with destruction.

Acknowledging Jesus Christ as Lord, the early church also confessed here her allegiance to Him alone. Before His Word alone she bowed. The word of the idol lords of the heathen which contradict the Word of Christ, she did not honor. Jesus Christ

alone is Lord. Him only did she honor, love, and obey.

This confession must also be made by the church of God today. We have seen that idol gods exist even today. They do not appear in the crude form they took years ago. They are not idols of stone and wood and precious metals. Nevertheless, idol gods still exist today. Whatever man places his trust in, other than the living God, is an idol god. From this viewpoint anything can be an idol: money, pleasure, the approval of men, power, influence, insurance, etc. And there are many such gods today. But the striking thing is that these gods are also lords. They tend to rule those who serve them. They make terrible and exacting demands. Take for example one who makes money his god. He will find that his money-god demands that he sacrifice many things before he may have what his god has to offer. He may have to sacrifice his family, his honesty, his reputation, his health, and above all his relationship to God and to Christ. This latter is always the case. No matter what idol god a man will serve, it always requires that he turn from the living God and refuse to bow the knee to Christ. In this context it is the calling of the church today to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord. He *alone* is Lord. Before Him and Him alone we must bow. This the church must confess not only in word but also in actual deed.

TAKING HEED TO THE DOCTRINE

God's Providence and Sin (6)

Rev. H. Veldman

The subject of God's Providence and Sin places us before an unfathomable mystery. This we readily concede and confess. And we have no intention of comprehending and understanding this mystery. On the one hand, man is a free-responsible being. He performs iniquity because he loves it. He is unmolested in his sinning, is never forced or coerced. Besides, he never wills or desires anything else than sin, does not rest until and unless he commits evil, is a slave of iniquity, but always a very willing slave. He is always free, only however in this moral sense of the word. He is never sovereignly free. On the other hand, God is the living God. He alone is God. We cannot afford to lose this truth. If we lose this truth we lose God. And, losing God, we lose all.

This is a mystery. However, we must bear in mind that Pelagianism and Arminianism also confront us with an enigma. If man be essentially good, as the Pelagian would have us believe, if he is able to be what he wills to be, why is it then that sin and iniquity are so general? Why do not more men choose the good? And if the sinner, being essentially good, be able to choose for and accept Christ, why, then, are not more men saved? We must remember that, whatever view one may embrace, God remains the living God. Him we cannot change. We, then, may distort and corrupt His Word, may make a caricature of the living God, change Him to please our own carnal desires, but God remains the same. He remains God. And, al-

though it is true that the Pelagian and Arminian may accuse the Reformed man of being influenced by logic in his thinking, and declare that we must take God at His Word, it is simply a fact that it is pure nonsense to believe that the Lord would have all men be saved, and must be satisfied with the salvation of but a few. And this nonsense is directly in conflict with the scriptures which teach us that the Lord performs all His good pleasure and that no man can resist His will. Indeed, no man can come to Christ except the Father draw him; and when the Father draws, the sinner must come. To have salvation depend upon the free will of a sinner is contrary to Holy Writ and it is a denial of the truth that God alone is the living God.

But, let us return to the mystery. A mystery, we must understand, is not a contradiction, as, for example, that black is white and white is black, and that we must believe both. It is claimed, then, that God loves and hates the same man at the same time, attempts to save him and at the same time causes His gospel to be a savor unto death, thereby making it impossible for him to be saved. This is not a mystery, but it is nonsense. And it is impossible to believe both, because the one is simply a denial of the other. A mystery, however, is something that transcends our human understanding. The question is, therefore, what is here the mystery? Now the mystery involved here is surely not the truth that God is the living God. He performs all His good pleasure. This we confess and must confess without any reservation. He is the sovereign, willing Origin and Cause of all things, also of all the spiritual deeds of man. It is He alone Who turns man's heart whithersoever He wills, Who carries out in minutest details the counsel of His own will, Who is the divine Ruler, carrying out His eternal counsel, through Whom are all things which include every curse word, every evil thought, even into the minutest details. This, I repeat, is not as such the mystery. This does not mean that we are able to fathom the thought that God is the living God. The truth, however, that God is the living God is not in conflict with our natural understanding. Let us, for example, refer here to the resurrection of the dead. We cannot fathom this wonder-work of the Lord. We cannot understand how the dead rise whose bodies have returned to the dust. We cannot understand how each soul will be reunited with its own body. However, although we cannot comprehend this amazing work of God, yet it is not in conflict with my natural understanding that the almighty God is able to raise the dead. He is the almighty God, the living God Who controls life and death. And neither is it in conflict with our natural mind that the living God is in absolute control of all things. This is,

therefore, not the mystery involved here. Neither is this the mystery that man is responsible. This is scriptural. The Word of God teaches very explicitly that we must give account of all we have done in the body whether it be good or bad. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive the things done in our bodies, as we read in II Corinthians 5:10. Besides, this truth is also experienced by every man. He knows that the Lord is the Judge of all the earth. He knows that he is responsible, is held accountable for all his activity. He knows that he must serve and love the living God, and that he must answer for whatever he has done. He knows that he sins willingly and voluntarily. He knows that he is never forced or coerced to perform evil, that he commits evil because he loves that evil. He can, therefore, never charge the Lord with injustice when the Judge of all the earth holds him strictly accountable. Hence, the mystery here does not lie in the sovereignty of the Lord as such and/or in the responsibility of the sinner. Both truths are clearly set forth in the Word of God. And neither of these truths is in conflict with our natural understanding. We can accept and endorse both truths. We have no difficulty with them as such.

Herein, however, lies the mystery: how a holy God causes sin to be and man remains responsible. This is the mystery: how can the holy God work all things and not be the author of sin. The mystery is not that God realizes His counsel, also as far as sin is concerned, but how He realizes this counsel. That Jehovah hates sin and, therefore, can never be the author of evil, Himself in agreement with it, but nevertheless causes sin to occur in such a way that man is morally free, loving iniquity and committing evil unhindered but always as the object of his own choice, without ever being able to choose the good, we acknowledge to be the mystery. This is held before us in a passage we have quoted before in these articles, Acts 2:23: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Indeed, they took Him and by wicked hands slew Him. Thus it is also eternally in the inscrutable counsel of the Lord. Those wicked hands belong to the sinner. That the sinner is responsible for his sins, committing them freely and wilfully, is plain. This is also his personal experience. But how the Lord works this fact, Himself far from all sin, is something we do not understand and cannot explain. And we do not and must not attempt to fathom this mystery. But, and this, too, is according to Scripture: unfathomably deep are all the thoughts of the Lord; His ways are ever higher than our ways; He transcends whatever we will ever know and can know.

This truth must be maintained. The sovereignty

of God and the responsibility of the sinner are not in conflict with each other. And the same applies to the sovereignty of God and the general preaching of the gospel. The one demands the other. Indeed, we are not hyper-Calvinists. Hyper-Calvinism is that presentation of the truth which stresses certain aspects of Calvinism, such as double predestination, election and reprobation, utter and complete depravity of the sinner, the particular character of the cross of Calvary, the irresistible power of the grace of God. However, it ignores and negates the general preaching of the gospel to others besides the elect, the general command of God to the sinner that he must repent and believe. This view is hyper-calvinistic, super-calvinistic, stressing and emphasizing the sovereignty and the work of the Lord while ignoring and negating the activity of man. Our churches have been accused of being hyper-calvinistic. Indeed, also in 1953 this accusation was directed at us. We were accused during the split of 1953 that we are not doing justice to the truth of man's responsibility. Of course, this charge has always been hurled at those who would maintain the Reformed conception of the truth. This simply means that, being accused of this, we find ourselves in good company. However, we are not hyper-calvinistic. Indeed, the gospel is never proclaimed but the wicked are always commanded of God to repent of their sin and turn themselves unto the Lord. It is not the will of God that His gospel must be proclaimed exclusively to the elect—besides, how utterly impossible this would be! That God is the living God and absolutely sovereign surely implies the divine command to repent and believe. That God is the living God means that He loves Himself and is wholly dedicated to Himself. The Lord, we read in Ezekiel 33:11, has no delight in the death of the wicked. He has no delight in this death, the way of death, which is the way of sin. This refers to the Lord's ethical delight, that wherein He delights. The Lord hates sin, does not delight in the way of sin. His wrath abides upon sin and iniquity. Herein is His delight that the sinner confesses his sin, turns from evil, seeks salvation in the

shadow of the cross. Hence, the gospel always comes to the sinner with the divine command to repent and believe. This does not mean that the gospel is a well-meaning offer of salvation, that the Lord desires to save all men, head for head. But it does mean that God, the alone sovereign and living God, demands of man, His creature, to serve and love Him. Because I am a responsible creature, a moral-rational being, conversion, faith, hope and love, although worked by God, are deeds of man. The wicked surely have no right to walk in ways of sin, and it remains their calling, how impossible it may be for him to fulfill it, to love the Lord and to praise His Name. This calling of the sinner is not rooted in his ability to choose the evil and the good, but it is founded in the fact that man is creature, creature created by the living God, and that, therefore, it is his calling to forsake his evil way and to turn unto the Lord. Indeed, we are not hyper-calvinistic. We do not negate or ignore our calling to preach the gospel to elect and reprobate alike. We surely believe in the general proclamation of a particular gospel. Indeed, the gospel is always particular in its content; it is never general. It is surely not true that every sinner who hears the proclamation of the gospel can say that the Lord loves him. Only God's people believe and turn from their evil way unto the Lord. The gospel is, therefore, good news; it is primarily the proclamation of the promise in the light of God's love and faithfulness in the midst of our sin and death. God's providence and sin means that the Lord is absolutely sovereign, hates all sin and evil, and, although having willed sin and always executing His counsel sovereignly, does this in such a way that the sinner is the author of his own sin and evil. But everything is strictly under God's divine and absolute control.

Indeed, what a wonderful and comforting truth this is! How comfortless is any presentation of the gospel which in any way denies or attacks the absolute sovereignty of our God! To this, however, we call your attention in our following and concluding article.

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

II Timothy, Counsel for Pastors

Rev. J. Kortering

This is the second of the three Pastoral Epistles. The order in which they were written is I Timothy, Titus, and II Timothy. Since we considered the historical setting in connection with I Timothy, we

will not repeat these details here.

THE OCCASION

Let us summarize briefly, what influenced the

apostle Paul to write this letter. After Paul was released from his first imprisonment at Rome in A.D. 64, he travelled extensively until A.D. 67, when he was taken captive and returned to Rome. His capture probably took place at Troas where Carpus lived and at whose home he left his cloak (II Tim. 4:13). He was taken to Rome by way of Corinth where Erastus remained (II Tim. 4:20). Upon arrival, he was placed in prison (II Tim. 1:8).

The second imprisonment was more severe than his first. When he appeared for his first hearing before Nero, he was alone, no companion accompanied him (II Tim. 4:7). Later Luke and some others joined him. Alexander the Coppersmith, a Jew in Ephesus, mentioned in Acts 19:33 and II Timothy 4:17, probably took part in his arrest (see II Tim. 4:11, 21). This led Paul to express his conviction that he would not survive the winter (II Tim. 4:21) and that death was imminent (II Tim. 4:6).

While Paul was awaiting death, two reasons prompted him to write this letter to his beloved Timothy. First, he realized that the situation in the church, with its increasing apostasy and opposition, required diligent and dedicated pastors. He saw that Timothy was to fill a critical need in the church, and this letter was his instruction to this young preacher. Along this line, we see this letter is of special significance to pastors of all generations who must carry on this great task of preaching the gospel. The second reason was Paul's desire to have Timothy present with him in Rome. He mentioned this toward the close of the letter (II Tim. 4:9-12). In addition, Timothy could also take along his cloak and the books with the parchments (II Tim. 4:13). This indicates that Paul desired to instruct Timothy in person as well as by letter. Whether Timothy did arrive in Rome prior to Paul's execution cannot be established. Paul was beheaded in A.D. 68, so this letter was written toward the end of A.D. 67.

THE MESSAGE

In view of the increasing amount of opposition and doctrinal error attacking the church, Paul emphasized the need for doctrinal purity. This is true with all these pastoral epistles. According to Tenney, *New Testament Survey* page 342, we quote, "Because of this menace, there is a greater stress on formulated creed in the Pastorals than in the earlier writings. The specific doctrinal formulas in Titus, the injunction to 'hold the pattern of sound words which thou has heard from me' (II Tim. 1:13), and the frequent sentences of creedal form (I Tim. 1:14; 2:3-5; 3:16; 4:10; II Tim. 1:10; 2:8; 3:16) impress the reader that the Pastorals were written to a church that was beginning to put its faith into articulate terms. Such creedal expressions were current, for the formula, 'Faithful is the saying!' is used to intro-

duce a number of them as if they were commonly employed in the oral teaching of the church (I Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; II Tim. 2:1-11; Titus 3:8). The phrase 'sound doctrine' occurs frequently also (I Tim. 1:10; 6:3; II Tim. 1:13; 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1; 2:8). The word 'sound' means literally 'healthful' and is usually connected with good works as well as with correct principles. Creed and life are never divorced in the Bible."

In addition to this, Paul also sets forth the importance of the pastor's labors. In doing this he pointed out to Timothy the following: he was called to preach (II Tim. 1:8, 9); he must be willing to fight as a soldier (II Tim. 2:30); he must be a good example (II Tim. 2:21, 22); he must give himself wholly to the work, especially by thoroughly studying the Word of God (II Tim. 2:15; 3:10; 3:14-17); he summarizes this in the all encompassing command to preach the Word, be instant in season and out of season (II Tim. 4:1-6).

Such exhortations all pastors do well to study and heed.

BRIEF OUTLINE

1. Salutation (1:1, 2). Here Paul, the apostle, addresses his letter to Timothy, "my dearly beloved son," and expresses the apostolic blessing.

2. Paul longs to see Timothy (1:3-5). He prays for him (1:3) and expresses joy in Timothy being a faithful servant, making good use of his spiritual upbringing by his mother and grandmother (1:4, 5).

3. Rather than being ashamed of Paul's imprisonment, Timothy is exhorted to carry on the work of the ministry, even if some forsake him (1:6-18). He must stir up the gift which God gave him by the Spirit of power (1:6, 7). Even though Paul is in prison, the reason that they must not be ashamed of that is that Christ, Who called them to preach, will give them the victory through the resurrection (1:8-12). Timothy must hold fast sound words and by the presence of the Holy Ghost keep the truth (1:13, 14). Those who forsook Paul at Ephesus, Phygellus and Hermogenes, must not deter them in the work, for others like Onesiphorus were a great help to him both in Ephesus and in Rome. He assures Timothy that the Lord will reward him (1:15-18).

4. Timothy must perform the labors of the ministry even though it will be difficult (2:1-26). It is important for him to commit the truth to faithful men who can teach others (2:1, 2). He is to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ, giving all his energy to the work (2:3-7). This will include suffering, as Paul experienced it now in prison in Rome. Even then, he must be encouraged by the glorious victory which is in Christ Jesus (2:8-13). He cautions Timothy not to strive over words or vain babblings (as

Hymenaeus and Philetus) but study to be a good workman who teaches the truth to others. He may be assured that the Lord, Who knows His own, will preserve the faithful (2:14-19). He then gives Timothy guidance in how to deal with people. Timothy must remember that, as in a house there are different kinds of vessels, some of gold, others of earth, so in the church. In dealing with people, he must be sure that he is himself pure and he should avoid unnecessary debate. Also he is to be gentle, apt to teach, and take time to teach his opponents, for it may be God's will to convert them (2:20-26).

5. Paul continues to instruct Timothy, warning him that he must expect difficult days, but God will see him through (3:1-17). He calls the times, "the last days." Men will be lovers of themselves and very wicked, especially in their sinful dealing with each other as human beings, disobedient to parents, without natural affection, traitors. They will also be wicked against God and His people, blasphemers, despisers of them that are good, possessing a form of godliness, but denying the power. Yes, they will appear to be wise, ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Yet, they shall not triumph, their folly shall be known (3:1-9). Paul then directs Timothy's attention to himself. Timothy should consider Paul as an example of a good minister, in doctrine, manner of life, patience, persecution. Yes, even persecution, for evil men will wax worse and worse. The answer: continue in the things learned, that is, in the Scriptures. They are reliable, for they were given by inspiration and profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works (3:10-17).

6. Paul gives details of the pastor's labors (4:1-5). He charges Timothy that he preach the Word. This includes reproving, rebuking, and exhorting (4:1, 2). He must also deal with heresy, for some will go after teachers with itching ears and turn after fables (4:3, 4). He must instead do the work of an evangelist and endure affliction (4:5).

7. Paul's last testimony to Timothy (4:6-8). Paul expresses his confidence that he is about to die and he is ready (4:6). He summarizes his life's ministry as follows: he fought a good fight and he finished the course, hence there is laid up for him the crown of righteousness (4:7, 8).

8. Paul's final requests (4:9-19). He asks Timothy to come to him at Rome, the reason being that most of his friends are gone. Demas forsook him, Crescens went to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia, Tychicus was sent to Ephesus, only Luke remained (4:9-12). He asks Timothy to take Mark along, an indication of a complete reconciliation after their

difference on the first missionary journey (4:9). He specifically mentions the need for his cloak, books, and parchments (4:13). He warns Timothy to be careful of Alexander the Coppersmith (4:14, 15). He refers to his hearing before Nero, how he stood alone, but God was with him (4:16, 17). He is assured that God will soon take him home (4:18).

9. Closing salutations and farewell (4:19-22). He salutes the house of Priscilla and Aquila, and Onesiphorus (4:19). He informs Timothy that Erastus stayed at Corinth, Trophimus at Miletus, sick (4:20). A final request for Timothy, that he come before winter (4:21). He mentions a few of his friends at Rome who send greetings: Eubulus, Prudens, Limus, and Claudia (4:21). The final parting blessing is given (4:22).

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Review the circumstances in the life of Paul that made him ask for Timothy to come to him in Rome.
2. Cite all the instances in this letter in which Paul instructs Timothy concerning his labors as a pastor.
3. Show from this letter that the principal task of every minister is to busy himself in the Word of God. Why is this important?
4. Give examples from this letter that prove that the instruction given to Timothy is just as timely for pastors today.
5. Why does Paul warn Timothy against foolish debate (2:16; 2:23). How do we apply this to our day?
6. Opposition is normal and to be expected. Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses (3:8), Paul experienced it (1:14; 2:9; 2:17, 18; 3:8, 12, 13; 4:4, 5). Explain why this is true and how are we to deal with it?
7. Reflect upon Paul's farewell testimony (4:6-8). Why can a child of God face martyrdom in such serenity?

*The Standard Bearer
makes a thoughtful gift
for many occasions.*

Book Review

THE LANGUAGE OF CANAAN AND THE GRAMMAR OF FEMINISM, by Vernard Eller; Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982; 56 pp., \$2.95 (paper). (Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko)

In this brief book Eller argues with considerable humor and on the basis of an analysis of language that all attempts which are being made to take the "sexist" language out of Scripture and our theolog-

ical vocabulary will ultimately destroy our language and the meaning of Scripture. Because the book involves an analysis of language structure, it is somewhat difficult to read in places; but the point which the author is making is important and needs very much to be made in opposition to these foolish notions of feminists.

NOTICE!!!

Loveland will be celebrating its 25th anniversary as a Protestant Reformed Church, the Lord willing, on June 22 and 23, 1983. All are cordially invited to come and celebrate God's faithfulness with us. We have invited our former ministers to participate in the celebration. Rev. David Engelsma will speak for us the first evening, and the second evening there will be a supper and a slide program. Commemorative booklets at the cost of \$2.00 each. If you would like a copy, please contact Mr. Ray Ezinga, 1518 East 57th St., Loveland, CO 80573. Phone (303) 667-5720.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Martha Society of the Doon Protestant Reformed Church extends its sincere Christian sympathy to one of our members, Mrs. Don Aardema and family, in the recent death of her father, MR. JAKE MANTEL.

May our covenant God comfort them by His Word and Spirit.

"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." (Job 19:25)

Rev. M. Kamps, Pres.
Mrs. Peter Van Den Top, Sec'y.

TEACHER NEEDED!!!

Covenant Christian School of Lynden, WA is in need of a teacher with a background of Language Arts and Social Studies, with assignments in Junior-Senior High School Grades for the '83-'84 School Year.

Contact H.W. Kuiper, Administrator, at his home — Phone (206) 354-2592, or the School — Phone (206) 354-5436, or write to: Covenant Christian School, 9088 Northwoods Road, Lynden, WA 98264.

John Meyer, Sec'y.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The children of MR. AND MRS. JOHN DEN HARTOG are happy to announce the 40th anniversary celebration of their parents on May 13, 1983.

We thank God for His faithfulness through the years and pray that He will continue to bless them in their future years together.

Jack and Chris den Hartog
Janny and Herman Molenkamp
Mary and John Vanden Toorn
Rev. Arie and Sherry den Hartog
Kobi and John Battjes
Orta and Tom Craft
Jim and Jill den Hartog
Bertha and Daryl Rachinski

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On May 24, 1983, the Lord willing, our beloved parents and grandparents, MR. AND MRS. ADRIAN ALPHENAAR, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

We, their children and grandchildren, are thankful to our Heavenly Father for them and for the years of Christian leadership He has given us through them.

"As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even forever." (Psalm 125:2)

Arthur and Laura Alphenaar
Muriel and Henry Kiel
Kenneth and Joyce Alphenaar
Grandchildren and Great-grandchildren

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On May 27, 1983, the Lord willing, our parents, MR. AND MRS. MAYNARD VEENSTRA, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

We, their children, thank our Heavenly Father for giving us God-fearing parents who have brought us up in the fear of the Lord. It is our prayer that they may continue to enjoy the blessings of our covenant God.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28)

Jay Veenstra
Ira and Mary Veenstra
Arie and Ann Griffioen
Helen Veenstra
Gerrit and June Van Den Top
Gerald and Clara Van Den Top
Hazel Besselsen
Merle and Kay Veenstra
30 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On May 27, 1983, the Lord has cared for and blessed our parents, MR. AND MRS. ALBERT KARSEMEYER, with 35 years of marriage. We, their children, are thankful that the Lord has given us parents who have educated and directed us through His Word. We pray that they may continue to receive God's blessing in the years which lie ahead.

Jerry and Pat Schipper
Becky, Jason, Jeremy
Ed and Jeanne Karsemeyer
Shaun, Renae
Greg and Elaine Engelsma
Chad, Shannon, Valerie
Alan and Carol Karsemeyer
Clint, Kirk, Ronda

News From Our Churches

April 30, 1983

Hull Protestant Reformed Church has made a change in the conclusion of their worship service. "After the singing of the last *Psalter* number will follow the pronouncement of the benediction and then the singing of the closing doxology. While the doxology is being sung, the pastor will come to the consistory's bench, shake hands with the consistory members, the elders filing to the back of church, the deacons to the front. The consistory introduces this change for the following reasons: 1) This makes the significance of the hand-shaking ceremony more prominent in the worship service, 2) This will give the pastor and elders more opportunity to greet any visitors, 3) This will better enable the elders to supervise attendance at the worship services."

Covenant Protestant Reformed Church of Wyckoff, New Jersey, has changed its collection schedule. "At the last Consistory meeting the Consistory decided to change the collection schedule adding a second Benevolent Fund collection every month (on the evening of the fourth Sunday of each month), and adding a collection for one of our Protestant Reformed Schools. The grounds for the second matter are (1) Lord's Day XXXVIII which speaks of the support of the schools as part of our Sabbath duties and (2) in light of future responsibilities of our own this will accustom us to support Christian education.

The Council of South Holland Protestant Reformed Church "has granted the request" of "several families on the West side of Chicago...to send the pastor to meet with them on a regular basis to lead them in the study of the Word." Rev. Engelsma will meet with them at least twice a month.

In South Holland's April 24th bulletin, this announcement appeared: "Remember to spread the word about our Spring Lecture. On Monday, May 16, Rev. S. Houck will speak on 'The History of the King James Bible.'"

From Covenant's bulletin of April 24th, there's this: "Rev. Hanko has written that there have been seven people at the worship service last Sunday

and a few more at the Bible Classes that are being conducted. Letters have been sent out to others who might be interested informing them of both the Bible Classes and the worship services (in Ripon, California, D.H.) The group that is now meeting together hoped to begin worshipping in a Congregational Church this Sunday. May God bless these labours."

Rev. C. Hanko's address is 25956 South Austin, Ripon, CA 95366; phone: 209-599-4757.

Southeast Protestant Reformed Church has a good use for back issues of *Standard Bearers*. "The Evangelism Society asks the congregation to save your back issues of the *Standard Bearer* so that they may be distributed to area rest homes. A box will be in the kitchen for your donations." Perhaps other of our people can contribute to this worthwhile endeavor.

Loveland Protestant Reformed Church is planning their Twenty-Fifth Anniversary. If you have old pictures of the church or slides that you would be willing to lend, please give them to Robert Brands. They will be returned. Maybe someone could supply me Mr. Brand's address.

According to Covenant's bulletin of April 24th, "sixteen families from the Byron Center, Michigan area (south of Grand Rapids) are asking Classis East to be organized as a new congregation."

Keep in mind June 15, 16, 17, and 18 for the Protestant Reformed Mission Emphasis Week that will include speeches, panels, discussions, and activities.

The Reformed Witness Hour is broadcasting on a new station in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. The call letters are WCKK. The program is also heard over WKPR in Kalamazoo. The Reformed Witness Hour has also begun printing four sermons per booklet. These changes mentioned, plus the increase in broadcast rates, mean that your support is urgently needed so that the Reformed Witness Hour may continue to broadcast God's Word over the airwaves. Let us continue to remember this cause of God's kingdom in prayer and offerings.

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