

The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

The diversity of Scripture is not that of Divine gold and human dirt, mingled. But it is that of a pure diamond, whose full beauty and worth are seen only by the glittering of all its facets.

See "The Unity and Diversity of Holy
Scripture" — page 462

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

Department Editors: Rev. Ronald Cammenga, Rev. Arie den Hartog, Prof. Robert D. Decker, Rev. Barry Gritters, Rev. Cornelius Hanko, Prof. Herman C. Hanko, Rev. Ronald Hanko, Mr. David Harbach, Rev. John A. Heys, Rev. J. Kortering, Rev. George C. Lubbers, Rev. Thomas C. Miersma, 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 49516

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

Cornelius Hanko

Marriage in the Lord

Ques. 108. What doth the seventh commandment teach us?

Ans. That all uncleanness is accursed of God; and that therefore we must with all our hearts detest the same, and live chastely and temperately, whether in holy wedlock, or in single life.

Ques. 109. Doth God forbid in this commandment, only adultery and such like gross sins?

Ans. Since both our body and soul are temple of the Holy Ghost, he commands us to preserve them pure and holy: therefore he forbids all unchaste actions, gestures, words, thoughts, desires, and whatever can entice men thereto. Heid. Catechism, Lord's Day 41.

Holy is the Lord our God!

He is eternally and perfectly devoted to Himself and His glorious perfections as God above all, blessed forever!

The three persons in the divine trinity are individually filled with all the divine virtues, yet each lives His own life as distinct person within the divine Being. In intimate communion of life and love they are devoted to each other!

Holy is the Name of our God, radiating from Him in the dazzling brightness of His glory, which bedims the light of the sun into a mere glowing matchstick.

Adam and Eve shared that holiness for a little while in paradise. They were created in the image of God in true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, to love their God and to be devoted to Him with their whole being. They were also intimately joined to each other in the holy bond of matrimony, devoted to each other through their devotion to the Most High. Even as God is holy, so they were holy in their sexual relationship to each other. Even as God was faithful to His covenant life, so they knew only faithfulness to one another. Sin was foreign to them. They were naked, and were not ashamed.

But our first parents were fallible. They could be tempted; they were tempted, and they fell into sin. By God's grace they fell into the arms of Christ, so that they along with their spiritual seed, according to the plan and purpose of God, became God's wife, the Bride of Christ, sworn to Him as faithful unto death!

God is now betrothed with an infallible oath and promise, that He will preserve and bless His church, adorning her as a wife for her husband in preparation for the wedding feast of the Lamb!

We have the holy institution of marriage as evidence of God's abiding and unchanging love for His people, and as a reflection of His own blessed communion of life in His own being, a reflection of Christ and His Bride living in the fellowship of the Spirit!

Blessed are they who are married in the Lord!

Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed unspotted!

Not so long ago, even members of the church considered anything that pertained to sex to be sordid. They spoke of sex and marital relationships in a whisper. Teenagers were kept ignorant of the facts of life, lest their minds be contaminated. Women tried to hide their pregnancy from the public eye.

Times have changed. The pendulum has now swung too far in the opposite direction.

Sex is the most popular subject of the day. Advertisers use sex to attract attention to their product. Television programs and novels are saturated with the smut of carnal lusts and corrupt sexual relationships. There is nothing so private that it is withheld from the public.

That which is most holy is shamefully corrupted! It sounds like mockery still to speak of a holy marriage bond! That which was instituted by God as an intimate expression of our union of love and fellowship with the God of our salvation has been degraded into an expression of carnal lust and rebellion against God's commandments.

Boys and girls, men and women live promiscuously, share beds without being married, live together under the same roof, and all that without a semblance of shame, even to the point reached in Romans 1:32, that they "not only do the same, but take delight in them that do them." The ethics of our day require, that if this is what they want, that is their business, and no one should interfere. This is encouraged by the advertisements for contraceptives. And if a girl should become pregnant, she can always have an abortion, with very little expense or shame. It is said that during the last few years already a million and a half babies have been murdered.

Many regard marriage as nothing more than a contract drawn up between the two, with equal rights. Both may determine to work, in order to obtain the desired luxuries, and later to have children upon their discretion. At present more divorces are handed out than marriage licenses extended. All of which is another evidence that God is not in all their thoughts!

Almost unaware, but just as surely, these evils are working their way into the church. We are children of our time, often more than we realize!

Scripture speaks of being married *in the Lord*!

Marriage is the union of two persons of the opposite sex, each with a distinct nature, different from the other, yet drawn together by a common bond that attracts them to each other. When we consider how we bungle in choosing a life mate, often without making this a matter of serious prayer, we can only marvel how God in His mercy brings together a proper husband for a proper wife, who live together in blessed union in Christ! Here again we see how completely our lives are controlled and governed by the determining counsel and hand of God, Who with His own hand brings to each man his own wife, divinely chosen, divinely prepared for each individual, hand made as it were!

Marriage is also a union of love: two hearts joined together to beat as one. By this I do not refer to the sexual appetite that robs a woman of her sense of right and wrong and leads a man like a dumb ox to the slaughter. But I refer to the natural sexual attraction that draws one man to a particular woman as sanctified by the grace of Christ! An exclusive love is awakened that grows into an intimacy known only to husband and wife, a personal sphere, which no third party, not even the children can share.

Scripture also speaks of a love that can best be described as "friendship." Two persons meet, sometimes under peculiar circumstances, and are brought together by the Lord. Those two are meant for each other, for even as they would not be here if it were not for their parents, so their children can be born only from them! Their affection for each other grows, as well as their interest in each other's welfare; there is a growing desire to be together, and an emptiness when not together. As their lives are woven together, they are always in each other's thoughts. They need each other. It only naturally follows, that they are joined in the bond of marriage, and that henceforth they walk life's pathway together, until death breaks the marriage bond. Even after death has taken one or the other, the memories stay, so that it seems as if even then the bond is not entirely broken!

A truly happy and divinely acceptable marriage is at the same time a spiritual union, a marriage *in the Lord*. Basically, they love each other because the love of God permeates their hearts and minds. They agree on sound doctrine, on a godly walk, on their devotion to God and that which is spiritual and eternal. Nothing brings more disharmony and misery in the home than when husband and wife are not of one spiritual mind and will! Similarly, nothing solves daily problems like the spiritual unity between husband and wife, as they meet together before the throne of grace. Our fathers often prayed, "Cut us not off in our generations." They had in mind the fact that they were covenant parents, called to rear children that God gave them in the fear of His name, and thus they would be instrumental in their own small way toward the gathering of the church and the coming of God's kingdom!

Saints in Christ Jesus reflect the mystery of Christ and His Bride!

Young people must be aware of this awesome responsibility long before the marriage vows are spoken! Young men and young women must prayerfully ask that the Lord direct them to the life-mate of His choice. Dating and courtship must be kept pure and wholesome. The best expression of

your love for each other is to maintain your self esteem as well as your respect for each other. Luring one or the other into sin can only create a sense of guilt and an area of distrust. The pathway of sin knows of no return, no stopping, but is a steep decline that leads to untold misery. This is a bad beginning for an anticipated happy marriage. A wholesome marriage is built on trust, deep respect for one another, and a mutual faithfulness! The man who takes upon himself the responsibility of a wife must be worthy of that position. The bride adorned in her white wedding gown must be a worthy expression of the virgin love of Christ for His Bride!

Scripture requires of husbands: Love your wives! There are no ifs and buts appended to this demand. You are the responsible head of your wife, even as Christ is the Head of His church. Assume that responsibility wholeheartedly and prayerfully. You must be willing to lay down your life for your wife, loving her as your own flesh, even as Christ loves His church and gave Himself as a ransom for us. Your deepest concern must be the spiritual welfare of your wife and family, even as Christ sanctifies us through His Word and by His Spirit. You must love that hand-picked, very special wife that God gave you!

Wives, Scripture says that you must submit yourselves to your own husbands, as unto Christ! The dutiful wife gives up her name and her personal ambitions to devote herself to the life of her husband. Even as the husband must be willing to die for his wife, so the wife must be willing to surrender her life in serving her husband. It is difficult to say which is the hardest, to die for someone or to live for someone. In any case, abundant grace is necessary, along with much prayer and devotion to God! There is no higher calling or position in this world for any woman than to bear children and to instruct them in the fear of the Lord by daily word and example! Many children shall call her blessed long after she has gone into glory!

The husband is a tower of strength in the fear of the Lord! The wife's adornment is in her daily devotion to God and to her family! Faithfulness to the marriage vow is faithfulness to God! And holy must that servant be, who dwells in God's House!

God commands His blessing there!

*Take the time to
read and study the
Standard Bearer!*

Editor's Notes

We are pleased to present in this issue an article by the Rev. David J. Engelsma which was originally planned for our August special issue. A combination of slow postal service from me to him and then from him to me resulted in his article being too late for the August issue.

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Several of our regular departments are omitted in this issue in order to make room for some items which were waiting to be published. This also

enabled your Editor to take a vacation from this issue.

* * * * *

Maybe this is jumping the gun a bit, since the beginning of our new volume-year is still a month away. But we will have a new News Editor beginning with the new volume in October. From now on send all news of events and activities in our Protestant Reformed Churches to: Mr. Ben Wigger, 6597 - 40th Ave., Hudsonville, MI 49426. HCH

Correspondence and Reply

From one of our readers, Mr. Harv Nyhof, of Holland, Michigan, we received the following question:

"Prof. Hanko writes in his article in the June 1, '86 *Standard Bearer* that 'to kill a fetus is to commit murder.' Further down he states that picketing abortion clinics is contrary to Christian principles. If a Christian observes a murder being committed on a street, Prof. Hanko would agree, I believe, that force would be in order to save a life. Should not picketing of abortion clinics to save lives also be an acceptable response?"

REPLY (by Prof. Hanko)

The answer to this question lies in the fallacy of the analogy. If I would use force to prevent a murder on the street, I would do this only if no representative of the law could be summoned to stop the murder from being committed. And I would take up the matter myself only as a citizen who, for that moment, is representing the law of the land and taking it upon myself to enforce it, because no law enforcement officer is present.

Abortion has been legalized in this country. Such legalization of abortion does not make abortion right — it remains a monstrous crime which God will not suffer to go unpunished. But such legalization of abortion does mean that our efforts to stop abortion must be limited to efforts to get the laws changed, all the while testifying in whatever way we can that the breaking of God's holy laws leads to moral and spiritual disaster. To do anything else will involve us in rebellion against government.

It is interesting and important to remember that Scripture makes a distinction between submitting to our magistrates and obeying them. All other things being equal, submitting usually includes obeying. But there are times, as Scripture also tells us, when we must obey God rather than men. This may happen also in this country in this whole abortion matter; i.e., the time may come when the government will permit parents to have only two children and will order that any additional children be aborted. In that case, we shall have to obey God rather than men and refuse obedience to the magistrate. But such refusal to obey does not absolve us of the responsibility to submit to our magistrates. The command to do this in Scripture is absolute and without qualification. We must submit to them even when we cannot and will not obey. We have the example of Christ Himself in this respect when He stood before the Sanhedrin and Pontius Pilate.

To refuse to submit to government is a heinous sin. It is deplorable that even conservative churches are advocating open rebellion against the government when the government persists in making laws which are contrary to God's Word. Francis Schaeffer's *A Christian Manifesto* is a case in point. When the church advocates the opposition of force against government and promotes rebellion in any form or fashion, the church has abandoned her calling in this world and will suffer the judgment of the Lord Himself: "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

GUEST ARTICLE

David J. Engelsma

The Unity and Diversity of Holy Scripture

Like its Author, Holy Scripture is one. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," Scripture says of itself in II Timothy 3:16. With reference to the 39 books of the Old Testament, and their countless words, the Bible says of itself that it is a unified whole, a book characterized by oneness. When the Bible views itself, it does not see itself as many, different writings, but as "all Scripture."

Scripture's oneness is, fundamentally, its full inspiration of God, inspiration that extends to Scripture's words. Scripture is inspired, i.e., as the apostle writes literally in II Timothy 3:16, "God-breathed"; and this is true of "all Scripture." Not one word of Scripture is uninspired, breathed out from a man. Therefore, all Scripture is the Word of God, and only the Word of God. Accordingly, all Scripture is holy (II Timothy 3:15), so that it is to be revered; and all Scripture is unbreakable (John 10:35), so that it is not to be criticized.

Faith honors the unity of Scripture by confessing that all Scripture is Divine.

Unbelief denies the unity of Scripture, tearing the sacred unity to shreds, by asserting that Scripture is not only the Word of God, but also the word of man. Inspired in part, it is also, in part, human. This unbelief takes many forms and calls itself by many names; but, whatever the form and regardless of the name, the effect is the same, namely, the introduction of division into Scripture — the radical division between God's Word and man's word. God's Word (which some Scriptures are, or which the Scriptures are in a certain aspect) is holy, authoritative, reliable, powerful, and infallible; man's word (which other Scriptures are, or which the Scriptures are in another aspect) is ordinary, subject to criticism, undependable, weak, and erroneous.

The result is confusion in the teaching, confusion that is alleged to stem from the now-divided Scriptures themselves: one passage contradicts another passage; the theology of one gospel-writer differs from that of another gospel-writer; and the teaching of an apostle in one place overthrows the teaching of the same apostle in another place.

Not surprisingly, the man in the pew is confused. Did God create a man, Adam, out of the dust of the ground by His own hand, or did man evolve over aeons from the animals? Did sin and death originate from the transgression of the law, that Adam not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, or are "sin" and death merely part of the essential human condition? Did the sun and the moon stand still at the behest of Joshua, or was this description of events only the naive notion of the Israelites, who, of course, were ignorant of the scientific impossibilities of such a thing? Was there an earthquake at the moment of Jesus' resurrection, or not? Is the wife called to be in subjection to her husband, her head, or is she the equal of her husband in marriage? Is the Bible understandable by the believer (layman) who has "only" the anointing of the Holy Spirit? If it is understandable, is it to be believed in everything it teaches and obeyed in everything it commands?

God is not the author of this confusion, but the devil. The fatal doctrine is the teaching that Scripture is *human*. This teaching now begins to prevail in evangelical and Reformed churches, under the influence of the German Reformed theologian, Karl Barth, and the Dutch Reformed theologian, G.C. Berkouwer. Scripture is *Divine and human*! It is both the Word of God *and the* - word of man! Those who have ears to hear will recognize this error, when Genesis 1 is explained (away) as a poetic attempt by prescientific Israelites to account for the origin of the world; when the passage regarding the fall of the walls of Jericho is ascribed to the faith of

Israel; when sayings and deeds of Jesus in the gospels are said to have been put in His mouth or attributed to His power by the early church; and when bolder spirits dismiss some doctrine or precept of Scripture with the words, "Paul was mistaken."

Scripture is indivisible. This belongs to its unbreakable character (cf. John 10:35). It is not human. It is not *Divine and human*. It is *Divine*, only *Divine*. It is the Word of God, only the Word of God. The wonder of Scripture is that God moved humans to write the 66 books of the Bible in the human languages of Hebrew and Greek, so that the product, the writing itself, is wholly and exclusively the Word of God: "... holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:20, 21); and this Divine Word is now written down as Scripture, which is not of "any private interpretation."

The assertion of the Bible's humanity flatly contradicts the testimony of the church's creeds. The creeds confess that Scripture is Divine. The Belgic Confession (1561) is typical: "... He (God) makes Himself more clearly and fully known to us by His holy and divine Word" (Art. II); "We confess that this Word of God was not sent, nor delivered by the will of man ... therefore we call such writings holy and divine Scripture" (Art. III); "... those divine Scriptures" (Art. VII). It is immediately plain to all that for anyone to insert into this confession of the doctrine of Scripture the words, "and human," i.e., for anyone to make the creed state that Scripture is a "holy, divine, and human Word," is to change the fundamental confession of the Reformed Faith concerning Scripture, and to change it, fundamentally.

Because Scripture is a unity by inspiration, it is also one as regards its message. The unity of Scripture is material, as well as formal. Scripture speaks one, consistent, harmonious Word; and this Word is Jesus Christ. "Search the Scriptures," our Lord commanded, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39; cf. also Luke 24:44). Scripture proclaims one gospel; one theology; one salvation; one covenant; one church; one way of salvation; and one rule of life (law).

Faith honors the unity of the Bible by knowing one God — the Father of Jesus Christ, Who is Creator and Redeemer; by trusting in one Savior, Who is the eternal Son of God in human flesh, promised in the Old Testament and come in the New Testament; by confessing and obeying one gospel, that began to be revealed in Genesis 3:15 and that was fulfilled in the revelation given to the apostles of Jesus — the gospel of free, sovereign grace; by receiving one, spiritual salvation consisting of the

forgiveness of sins; by acknowledging the one covenant of grace, in both Testaments; by regarding Israel as the Old Testament church and the church as the New Testament Israel; and by heeding the 10 Commandments as the will of God for His people in all ages.

Unbelief, blind to the full inspiration of Scripture, sees many, contradictory messages in the Bible. There is the God of harsh justice, and even hatred, of the Old Testament; and there is the God of love, and the rejection of justice, of the New Testament. There is the salvation of earthly land and material prosperity in the Old Testament; and there is the spiritual salvation of the New Testament. There is a "gospel" of salvation by the keeping of the law and the free will of the sinner; and there is the gospel of salvation by grace. There is the message of predestination; and there is the message of free will. There is the demand to obey the commandments; and there is the "freedom" to disregard the commandments. There is the teaching of the subjection of women to men in marriage and in church; and there is the teaching of the equality of women with men in marriage and in church. Scripture is a bewildering hodge-podge of conflicting ideas, viewpoints, gospels, theologies, laws, and gods. Bible-study and knowledge of the teaching of the Bible become impossible. At best, the man in the pew, or the preacher for that matter, can learn what Israel thought about creation, or what Job thought about the suffering of the just, or what John thought about the Christ, or what James' theology was. There is no single *Truth* revealed in the entire Scripture, to which every passage makes its contribution and which is internally consistent. Comparing Scripture with Scripture does not serve to fill out our knowledge of the Truth as set forth in a particular passage, nor to correct a misunderstanding we have of a certain passage, for one passage contradicts the other, teaching something altogether different from the other.

Am I trying to grasp Paul's teaching in Galatians 3:28 that there is in Christ Jesus neither male nor female? It is no good to compare Ephesians 5 and I Timothy 2, for the passages are not in harmony, do not complement each other, do not shed light on each other, but rather conflict with each other. The best one can do, in relating the passages, is to conclude that in Galatians 3:28 the apostle overcame the defective views he espoused, as a child of his times, in Ephesians and I Timothy.

Am I trying to understand the cross of the Savior? It is senseless to turn to the laws and practices of animal sacrifice in the Old Testament, for those laws and practices reflect a grossly deficient conception of God on the part of Israel, namely, the

conception of Him as a hard-hearted, if not cruel and bloodthirsty, Judge, needing to be placated by blood. At best, the Old Testament laws and practices of sacrifice indicate a stage in Israel's development towards the mature conception of God as the God of mercy, dispensing with justice.

Such a book ought to be thrown away — it is useless, profitable for nothing, except to occupy the time of the theologians as they play their wicked games with it.

But Holy Scripture is profitable. For it has a unified message: one Word from God about Himself as He is revealed in Jesus.

Scripture's "diversity," i.e., its variety and differences, does not threaten its unity. Diversity does not consist of human parts alongside the Divine parts, or of conflicting theologies, or of contradictions between any of its teachings. Diversity, therefore, does not destroy the clarity of Scripture. Rather, the diversity of Scripture refers to the riches of the Bible, to the many aspects of Truth, to the manifoldness of the written Word of God.

God's Word in creation is rich. There are many different creatures — stars; mountains; streams; trees; birds; flowers; and people. Among the creatures themselves, there is breathtaking variety. Nature is not monotonous and boring. It is not characterized by dull sameness. No one tires of viewing and investigating creation. By this marvelously rich diversity, creation tells the one, grand Truth of the glory of the Creator-God.

So it is with the Word of God written, Holy Scripture. There is history (Genesis 1-11); and there is poetry (the Psalms). There is the compelling logic of Paul; and there is the intuitive knowledge of John. There is the just judgment of a holy God; and there is the mercy of this God Who is love. There is the sovereignty of God; and there is the full responsibility of man. There is the gospel that salvation is entirely the work of God, excluding all work of the sinner; and there is the law that requires the saved sinner to do the will of God in all good works.

There is the teaching that the Final Judgment of the elect believer will be based on Christ's work in his stead; and there is the teaching that in this Judgment the elect sinner will be judged according to his works. There is the extolling of marriage; and there is the counsel that single life is better, if one has the gift and will devote his life to the Lord.

The diversity of Scripture is not that of Divine gold and human dirt, mingled. But it is that of a pure diamond, whose full beauty and worth are seen only by the glittering of all its facets.

Those with a name for orthodoxy can sin against the diversity of Holy Scripture. They preach and confess the holiness of God, and never His love; the sovereignty of God, and seldom, if ever, the responsibility of man; Divine predestination, with a hesitancy urgently to call sinners to repentance and faith; justification, without sanctification; the need to contend earnestly for the faith, while remaining silent about the blessedness of peacemakers in the church, even when the church is threatened by the biting and devouring of her members; the authority of husbands, but not the duty of husbands to exercise their authority in a selfless, sacrificial love of the wives; the demand of children to obey, but not the danger that fathers provoke their children to wrath by their undue severity; the New Testament, but not the Old Testament.

The study of Scripture is not only necessary, but also fascinating. No believer tires of daily reading and study of the Bible, or of weekly preaching of the Bible, though he lives to be 80 years. No believing preacher wearies of preaching and teaching "the manifold wisdom of God" in Scripture (Ephesians 3:10), though God gives him 40 years in the ministry. For "Thy commandment is exceeding broad" (Psalm 119:96).

This too is due to Scripture's Author. A narrow writer harps always on one string. The best of human writers is limited. But in the sacred Scriptures, we stand in awe before the "depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" (Romans 11:33).

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gift for a friend or relative.
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ALL AROUND US

Robert D. Decker

General Synods and Assemblies

Summer is the time when most of the General Synods and Assemblies of various Reformed and Presbyterian denominations meet. In this issue and the next we shall report on some of the more significant decisions of these gatherings.

The Christian Reformed Church in North America: In response to conflict and tension between its Board of Foreign Missions and World Relief Committee over the past several years the CRC instituted a new agency to coordinate the work of these two. Both Foreign Missions and World Relief are now under the control of the board of World Ministries. Appointed director of this Board was Dr. Roger S. Greenway, professor of missiology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.

The CRC synod again was faced with the "women in office" issue. The synod rejected the overture of Classis Zeeland to reverse the 1984 synodical decision which opened the office of deacon to women. By an overwhelming majority (130-24) the synod voted to appoint a Grand Rapids pastor, the Rev. Wilbert M. Van Dyk (Plymouth Heights CRC), to the post of academic dean of Calvin Theological Seminary. Van Dyk will also teach Homiletics (the art of preaching) part-time. When interviewed by the Synod Van Dyk said he finds two different biblical messages about the role of women in the church. "Scripture 'clearly says that women ought to keep silent.' But Scripture just as clearly directs all God's people to use the gifts they are given, he maintained. Because the whole of Scripture shows a movement toward 'inclusiveness, toward openness — beyond the Jews to the Gentiles, beyond the master to the slave, beyond men to the women,' said Van Dyk, he personally has decided that it is not a sin 'for a woman to preach or exhort.' But Van Dyk said he only

makes this judgment privately; in his teaching and preaching, he accepts the Christian Reformed Church's stand. 'My commitment is to the church — you simply don't run with your own notions.'" (*The Banner*, June 30, 1986)

In the light of the synod's rejection of the Zeeland overture and its appointment of Van Dyk there seems little doubt as to the final outcome of the "women in office" issue in the CRC.

The same issue of *The Banner* also reports that, "A joint committee of six persons from the Reformed Church in America (RCA) and five persons from the Christian Reformed Church is discussing the relationship between the two denominations. In 1989 the synods of both churches intend to meet concurrently on the campus of Calvin College and Seminary.

"One consistory wanted the CRC-RCA committee to pay special attention to the RCA's attitude toward Christian schooling and membership in ecumenical organizations. But our (CRC's, R.D.) Interchurch Relations Committee had already identified 18 areas of potential difficulty in our relationship to the RCA. Synod did not wish to interfere by giving special instruction on these two topics. It also withdrew a mandate given by Synod 1985 to discuss 'the specific theological and Christian practice issues which pose a barrier to us' because it was unclear and redundant. Synod 1985 had ordered the discussion in the context of cooperation between the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee and RCA World Missions."

The General Synod of the RCA took "specific steps toward the CRC, steps which the Rev. David Cooper of Wynantskill, New York, described as 'progress toward possible merger.' Cooper chaired the synod's advisory committee on Christian Unity.

"At the advisory committee's recommendation, the synod voted the permanent Commission on

Christian Unity to continue study of the relationship between the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) and the RCA, and to make a progress report to the 1987 General Synod on the following issues that may need to be resolved:

1. Christian Schools
2. Lodge membership
3. Requirement for Sunday evening worship
4. Ecumenical relationships
5. Women in the office of minister, elder, and deacon
6. Clarification on intercommunion
7. Barriers to increased cooperative work

"As study on these items proceeds by the Commission on Christian Unity, other cooperative efforts between the two denominations will continue." (*The Church Herald*, July 5, 1986)

"Issues" 1 through 5 above are the significant ones. RCA people in general do not support the Christian schools. The RCA tolerates lodge members; many RCA congregations do not have Sunday evening worship; the RCA is a member of both the World and National Councils of Churches; and the RCA has opened the offices of minister, elder, and deacon to women. It seems highly unlikely that the RCA will change on these issues. The question is, will the CRC change its stand on these issues and thus, in effect, repudiate the stand it took when it seceded from the RCA in 1857? Another question: should the CRC merge with the RCA, what effect will this have on the conservative clergy and membership of the CRC?

In other actions the CRC adopted a revision of the *Psalter Hymnal*, approved a new translation of the Canons, updated some of the language of the liturgical forms, appointed a study committee to investigate the possibility of a completely new translation of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, and adopted a "testimony of faith for our times, subordinate to our creeds and confessions," called, *Our World Belongs To God*. The synod also "referred the report (on children at the Lord's table, R.D.) to the churches for careful consideration, augmented the committee with two additional members, and gave them two more years to study thoroughly this important matter." (*The Banner*, June 30, 1986)

The Reformed Church In America: Ecumenical matters occupied a good deal of attention from the delegates to the 180th General Synod of the RCA which met at the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California.

This year's General Synod broadened the front of specific ecumenical actions for the denomination. Concrete moves were made toward a group of Lutheran churches and toward the Christian Reformed Church. Simultaneously, the synod voted to

continue its present levels of participation in the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) and in the World and National Councils of Churches (WCC, NCC) and to facilitate memberships in the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE).

Lutheran and Reformed theologians have discussed their churches' contrasting doctrines for a number of years. Together, the theologians have concluded that fundamentally these two streams of Protestantism affirm the same faith. They have recommended that Lutheran and Reformed churches specifically recognize that both of them are Christian communions with legitimately-ordained clergy and faithfully-served sacraments.

As a specific step in Lutheran-Reformed relations, the synod voted to affirm that the chief Lutheran statement of faith, the Augsburg Confession, contains no unacceptable doctrinal position for Reformed people. Dr. M. Eugene Osterhaven, analyzing the Augsburg Confession for synod's Advisory Committee on Theology said, "I just can't imagine that a Calvinist would find any difficulty with this." Five denominations, including the RCA, are in the process of enacting their mutual recognition of, and commitment to, each other. The American Lutheran Church, the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, the Lutheran Church in America, and the Presbyterian Church (USA), together with the RCA are considering a ten-item list of mutual commitments. Included are such items as studying each other's histories, praying for each other's ministries, holding occasional joint communion services, sharing pastors between Lutheran and Reformed traditions, and the linking of one church in each RCA classis to a Lutheran congregation for joint study, mission planning, and common worship. The general synod approved the RCA's participation in the plan. (*The Church Herald*, July 25, 1986)

It is striking that the more conservative churches of the Lutheran, Reformed, and Presbyterian traditions are not participating in this plan. Churches such as the Missouri Synod and Wisconsin Synod Lutherans, The Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in America are not participants.

What is more striking is the almost incredible statement of Dr. M. Eugene Osterhaven concerning the Augsburg Confession: "I just can't imagine that a Calvinist would find any difficulty with this." It is true that the Augsburg Confession is brief and perhaps even ambiguous in its statements concerning the Lord's Supper and the Lutheran error of consubstantiation. (Cf. Augsburg Confession 1530, Part I, Arts. X, XIII and Part II, Art. I.) Does Osterhaven not know that the Formula of Concord of 1576 (the *apologia* and further explanation of the points of doctrine set forth in the Augsburg Confession and part of the confessional basis of all major Lutheran denominations) is especially harsh in its

condemnation of the Calvinist and confessionally Reformed view of the Lord's Supper? (Cf. The Belgic Confession, Art. XXXV.) After condemning the Zwinglian view of the Holy Supper the Formula of Concord has this to say concerning the Calvinists: "But others are astute and crafty, and thereby the most harmful of all the sacramentarians; these, when talking of the Lord's Supper, make in part an exceedingly high-sounding use of our mode of speaking, declaring that they too believe in a *true* presence of the *true*, substantial, and living body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper, which presence and manducation [act of eating or chewing, R.D.], nevertheless, they say to

be spiritual, such as takes place by faith. And yet these latter sacramentarians, under these high-sounding phrases, hide and hold fast the same gross opinion which the former [Zwinglians, R.D.D.] have, to wit: that, besides the bread and wine, there is nothing more present or taken with the mouth in the Lord's Supper . . ." (Art. VII). Either Osterhaven does not know what a Calvinist believes or he does not know the Lutheran error of consubstantiation, or he knows neither.

Finally, we wonder what effect the RCA's participation in this venture will have on its talks with the Christian Reformed Church?

TAKING HEED TO THE DOCTRINE

Ronald J. Hanko

God Is Faithful (2)

Because the Seventh Commandment is a revelation of God's covenant faithfulness to us, our obedience to this Commandment becomes our living confession of that great faithfulness of God, our Saviour. And if we love the faithfulness of God and are comforted by it, then surely we will want to know all that the Seventh Commandment implies in its prohibition against adultery.

We must understand, of course, that obedience to the Seventh Commandment involves much more than just avoiding the sin of adultery, more even than avoiding adulterous thoughts and desires. Adultery, because it is such a clear picture of spiritual adultery, and because it is itself a form of spiritual adultery, is the great sin against the Seventh Commandment. But in forbidding this great evil, God forbids every kind of sexual impurity and uncleanness. Adultery violates the God-ordained bond of marriage, but so does every other form of sexual activity outside of and apart from the marriage relationship. Many of the perversions that violate the Seventh Commandment are a shame even to speak of and ought not be so much

as named among the people of God. There are, however, certain things which we as people of God must speak of and be warned against.

Both with regard to those things that cannot be mentioned, and to those things that ought to be, we must not forget that the lusts and vile wickedness of men are the inevitable fruit of their turning from God. Paul makes it very clear in Romans 1 that God gives them over to these lusts, to be deceived and dishonoured by them, because they know God and do not glorify or thank Him, but have gone out of the way (Rom. 1:21-32, 3:11, 12). God forbid that we should turn away from Him to do these things or to enjoy them.

That is perhaps the chief sin against which we must be warned as far as the Commandment is concerned, that though we do not openly practice these signs we nevertheless delight in them and enjoy them in other ways. It is possible to take the same perverse delight in these sins that the most vile of prostitutes, homosexuals, and fornicators do through books, television programs, dancing, and music. These are the means that Satan uses to teach his children to enjoy these sinful lusts in their most unspeakable forms, and we must be careful.

We must remember, for example, that not only what is commonly called "pornography" excites and titillates these lusts, but also most modern novels and even much of what is called "modern literature." It is popular exactly to the degree that it excites sin in us, and especially these sins. Even the so-called Romances that so many read are read for no other purpose than the vicarious enjoyment of that which God forbids. The same is true of rock music in all its different forms, but not only of rock. We are often appalled at the music to which our children listen, while we ourselves enjoy the same things that rock music sings of in so-called mood music or country-western music.

The truth is that it is all but impossible for the Christian to avoid face-to-face contacts with these things. Even the newspapers, news magazines, and advertising are full of them. The world cannot even sell a pair of shoes, so it seems, without exciting these lusts by displaying the half-naked bodies of men and women. In these last times the world has so multiplied its perversions and uncovered its lusts that they are displayed on every street corner. We must learn to turn our eyes and our hearts resolutely away when faced with these things. We must learn to heed the admonition of Solomon, "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil" (Prov. 4:25-27). Certainly we must not carelessly enjoy these lusts or deliberately seek them out. Solomon, who had much sad experience in these things, warns that those who follow these sins go like oxen to the slaughter or like fools to the correction of the stocks (Prov. 5:22), and that they shall mourn at the last when flesh and body are consumed and say, "How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof" (Prov. 5:11 ff.).

In forsaking and avoiding these sins we must also avoid that which gives occasion to fall into sin. Idleness is one of these things — a great cause of sin against this Commandment. Not without reason does God command us to labor six days and spend the seventh in His presence. The example of David is clear. His sin with Bathsheba came about because he was lolling about on the roof of his palace rather than doing his work as Israel's King in fighting the battles of the Lord with the armies of Israel.

Perhaps it is not amiss, in remembering the story of David, to point out that the picture of David idling in his palace and ogling his neighbor while she bathed, is not so much different from that offered by many of us as we laze around our swimming pools or on the beaches eyeing the naked charms of others. And again, the point is not that we are for-

bidden all recreation, but that we must be very careful, and for God's sake.

Scripture also warns about dress in this connection and enjoins modesty and sobriety upon the people of God. Isaiah's description of the daughters of Zion, of their haughtiness, stretched out necks, and wanton and mincing walk is not only a commentary on his times but on ours. As much as it revealed the faithlessness of Israel in Isaiah's day, so much does it also reveal today.

The company of wicked men can also be an occasion to these sins. Peter says that their eyes are full of adultery (II Pet. 2:14). They care to speak of little else and boast and glory in their lusts. Thus they can be a stumbling block to us and our obedience to the Seventh Commandment.

Proverbs tells us that excess of wine or liquor destroys sound judgment and overcomes the scruples of a godly heart and thus becomes a temptation to sexual sin (Prov. 23:31-33). So we could go on. But the point is always that these things are not small matters, but a matter of faithfulness to our faithful covenant God. Just as we in marriage must cleave to one wife to the exclusion of all others, so in faithfulness to God, we must cleave to Him and give up many things which please our flesh and lusts. Jesus says that "he that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much" (Luke 16:10).

Nevertheless, our obedience is much more than just forsaking all forms of sexual uncleanness and impurity. We have also a positive calling to fulfill in the Seventh Commandment. It is the calling to honor marriage. Notice, it is not the calling to be married, though that is the way in which God leads most of His children, but the calling to *honor* marriage. That is the calling not only of those who are married, but also of the unmarried. For them it simply means that they live as eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake (Matt. 19:12), and that they do not despise those who are married or think of them as lesser brethren, as the Roman Catholic Church teaches.

For those who seek a wife or a husband this same calling holds. They must honor marriage by following without wavering the command of Christ to "marry in the Lord" (I Cor. 7:39). Only in this way can they be faithful to God and truly obey the Seventh Commandment from the heart.

For the married, honoring marriage means not only that they are faithful to husband and wife, rejecting even adulterous thoughts and desires, but means also that they give themselves to one another freely and faithfully. Paul warns that they must not defraud or "cheat" one another in marriage (I Cor. 7:3-5). That is as much "cheating" in

marriage as outright adultery. But more than anything else it means for them that they too must be married "in the Lord." Marriage is not obedience to the Seventh Commandment until it is transformed by the power of God's grace through prayer into a relationship that is truly spiritual as well as physical. All marital unfaithfulness and the various problems that plague our marriages have their beginning and root in the spiritual unfaithfulness of husband and wife to God, that is, in their failure to live diligently and blessedly in the fellowship of God. The solution to all marital "problems" is that of Peter, "Let not your prayers be hindered" (1 Pet. 3:7).

To all of this it must be added, that true obedience to the Seventh Commandment, that is, faithfulness to God in marriage and in the honoring of marriage implies the strong Biblical prohibition against divorce and remarriage. That in the sight of God is not and cannot be faithfulness, but wickedness. God's faithfulness to us means exactly that He does not divorce His bride or remarry even though His bride is a faithless, whorish woman. The same grace by which God saves His marriage, must be the grace that saves ours. Only if God Himself is not a faithful God can marriage which

pictures His relation to us be anything but a permanent and unbreakable bond of man and woman. All the drivel one hears about an innocent party, about the many problems of marriage, and about forgiveness for those who continue in an adulterous relationship as remarried persons, only obscures the one thing that really matters, that a faithful God (Mal. 3:6) hates putting away and counts it treachery (Mal. 2:14-16).

It is in the fellowship of our covenant God, therefore, that we find the grace of obedience to the Seventh Commandment. Nowhere else. In exorcising the demons of sexual impurity by the grace of the Spirit we must be careful that we diligently seek Him to be filled with His Spirit, lest seven other demons worse than the first enter in and trouble us. Also in His fellowship we find forgiveness for the swelling of our fleshly lusts, for our uncleanness (how we must look in the sight of God!), and for our failure to find in marriage and in faithfulness to marriage the great response of the believing heart that knows God's eternal, unchangeable faithfulness to us. Faithful in His fellowship in these things we learn that it is the faithful whom the Lord preserves (Ps. 31:23).

GUEST ARTICLE

Richard G. Moore

Filled with the Fruits of Righteousness

In this day in which we are called to live as the children of God, it is very important that we walk with a spiritual sensitivity towards all things. The apostle Paul expresses this in the verses nine through eleven in the first chapter of Philippians. "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteous-

ness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."

When the Scripture speaks of righteousness, it calls our attention to that which is right before God. And the apostle in the above text would have God's children have their lives characterized by a being filled with that which is right before God. And this simply is that we stand before God in righteousness, and bring forth the works of righteousness, through which God is glorified. And this for us as God's true children is our joy, that is, that God receives all glory.

Richard G. Moore is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Hull, Iowa.

Of course, the only criterion for righteousness is God Himself and is expressed in His law and word. He is the only standard to measure against, whether something is right or not.

To be filled with the fruits of righteousness is to have our conversation, our whole life, with its source, in righteousness. This means that our lives then are grounded in the righteousness of Christ, for all righteousness on our part is possible only through the grace of God in Christ Jesus.

There is no sense in which we can be filled with the fruits of righteousness of ourselves. This is true, in the first place, because there is no righteousness in us which could bring forth fruit. We are in ourselves wholly without righteousness, for the wages of sin is death. Thus we are debtors before the judgment of God as we stand by nature. In the second place, we are so dead in trespasses that we cannot even will the fruits of righteousness, as by nature we live as slaves of darkness, and unrighteousness.

So then it is only as we are ingrafted into Christ that there shall ever be fruits of righteousness in our lives. Christ must rule our lives by His Spirit and Word, if we shall ever bring forth these fruits. The Scripture says, except we be born again, we cannot see the things of the kingdom of heaven. And again, in John 15:5, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

But in His church, eternally given Him of the Father, Christ works righteousness in our hearts and gives us the desire to walk in the fruits of that righteousness, by the operation of His Spirit through the preaching of the word of righteousness. The God of our salvation does not treat us as stocks and blocks, but powerfully, efficaciously calls us by His Word to a walk of righteousness. And in the text we quoted at the outset of this article, the apostle exhorts us unto a spiritual sensitivity unto this end, that we might manifest the life of Christ in all that we do, and so be blessed, and so be to the praise of God.

The apostle therefore desires for the church an increase in knowledge and in all judgment. When the apostle speaks of knowledge, the reference is not to natural knowledge of natural things, but to the spiritual knowledge of all things in Christ Jesus. The Lord instructs us that we be increased in the knowledge of the grace of God and of salvation, of the manifold riches of God's mercy, of His will and purpose with all things, of His laws and His ways, and of the purpose for which we have been called out of darkness into the marvelous light of His fellowship. In the knowledge of these spiritual things of the kingdom of God and of His covenant,

believers must grow.

And this knowledge may not be just a head knowledge, whereby we are only intellectually founded in the things of God's Word, and yet have our hearts far from the Lord. But the apostle would have us grow in the knowledge of the reborn heart, into which the love of God in Jesus Christ has been poured forth and shed abroad. It is the knowledge of the heart that knows no greater delight than to keep the commandments of God as it responds by the grace of God to the marvelous love that God has for us. What a wonderful blessing it is for the Christian pilgrim to possess this gracious knowledge and to grow therein.

Along with this knowledge there goes hand in hand spiritual judgment; as we grow in true knowledge so shall we grow in judgment. This judgment is not the discernment of reason, but a true spiritual discernment or judgment of true love rooted in God. It is a spiritual power to recognize and to know at all times what is pleasing to the God of our salvation.

SPECIAL TRIBUTE

The Board of the Reformed Free Publishing Association takes this opportunity publicly to call attention to an event that occurred at our May 22, 1986 meeting. A letter came from our and your Business Manager, Mr. Henry Vander Wal, in which he submitted his resignation. Mr. Vander Wal began as business manager in September of 1968. Article 11 of the September 23, 1968, minutes reads partially as follows: "Mr. H. Vander Wal states that he deemed it a privilege, and that he would accept this position on a three month probation period to determine whether he was able and could do this work satisfactorily."

Well, Mr. Vander Wal was certainly able and also did the work very satisfactorily. The R.F.P.A. Board, on behalf of all, would like to thank Mr. Vander Wal for his untold hours, his innumerable attempts to subscribers, his many trips to the Post Office and to the printer, his tireless labor for the *Standard Bearer* in the 18 years. It should be noted that he also mailed books for the Permanent Book Committee.

No one but his wife knows how often and how long he has labored in a labor of love. In his letter of resignation he states: "It has been a distinctive privilege for me to serve in this capacity. I have enjoyed it! . . . May God continue to bless the publishing of the *Standard Bearer* in the years to come."

It is our prayer that God will continue to bless him and his wife. God has blessed us with his many labors for 18 years. We thank God that He was pleased to give us the labors of Mr. Vander Wal.

Thank-you once again.

Board of the R.F.P.A.
Jim Van Overloop, Sec.

The apostle in the instruction from the text in Philippians would have us to be acutely sensitive to the horror of sin, and to the temptations of the world and of Satan. And on the other hand he would have us to know and experience the joys of walking in those ways that are pleasing to God, that we might walk in the constant light of His Word as our guide and joy.

It is so very important that we be inspired by this word of Christ to seek grace to grow in this knowledge and judgment. Especially is this true in the days in which we live. For with increasing intensity is there a growing disdain for the true spiritual things of God's kingdom and its righteousness. The Scriptures and the preaching of them is being cast to the winds, and the doctrines of God's Word are being swept under the carpet of the modernism of the new hermeneutics. If the Bible is time and culture conditioned, as so often is stated, then all true knowledge and spiritual discernment is doomed. But the Bible is still the infallible Word of the sovereign God and always shall be. Oh, how necessary it is for us to hear the word of the apostle in this text.

According to Paul, this growth in knowledge and spiritual judgment is the only way that we will be able to "approve the things that are excellent," and to disapprove of the things that are corrupt. Then only will we recognize as genuine the things that differ from all else, because of their true goodness. These things are recognized as distinct because of their truth, of their righteousness, their holiness, their purity, and mercy. And we shall see the blessedness of the meekness, lowliness, and kindness of true faith.

As by the grace of God we grow in the knowledge of God, and hence grow in our trust of His way, and are given true spiritual judgment of those things round about us, we shall also be given the ability to distinguish and approve the things that are excellent from the things that are of darkness. We shall recognize sin, those things that are of Satan, of this ungodly world, of deceit, of pride, of hatred, malice, or envy, etc.

The things that are excellent are excellent because they are of the Spirit of God in Christ. And that Spirit is the Spirit of light, in whom is no darkness at all. These things we must approve. That is, we must desire them, relish them, and long for them alone; and on the other hand we must grow in our abhorring all vile things of darkness and corruption.

By nature we would not, for we love darkness. But by grace we receive a new principle of life, so that according to that new principle of life sin becomes repulsive to us, and the things of right-

eousness and holiness become the objects of our desire and activity. Unto this spiritual sensitivity Paul encourages us and instructs us through the Word of God.

The apostle in Philippians 1:9-11 urges us to grow in love, in knowledge, and in judgment, in order that we may be sincere and without offence until the day of Christ. Understand that our being spiritually sensitive with true knowledge will become manifest in a walk of sanctification. If we are so spiritually discerning, we will walk as children of the light in the midst of the world. And this is the fruit of God's grace in His children, and is for His children their greatest desire. For if we are spiritually dull and undiscerning, then we shall not be sincere and without offence. But we shall be the cause for the stumbling of unbelief. May God forbid! Besides, it will lead us to enter folly's temple, to run with the priesthood of darkness. Again, may God forbid! But the keener we grow in spiritual sensitivity the better armed we shall be to battle the enemies of the living God.

That we might so grow in spiritual knowledge and judgment is the apostle's desire for us, that God shall be glorified by all that we undertake. And this motivates his prayer for the church that love may abound in us. For all of this is impossible without the principle of the love of God in our hearts. That love is the deepest spiritual source, from which all the above may spring as from a fountain. The apostle's prayer and mine is that that love manifest in Christ may become the abiding principle in our lives. May God's richest grace and love be granted us that we may so know Him, and that we may so serve Him with all spiritual knowledge and judgment, abhorring all that dishonors God's precious name. God hears this our prayer, of this His children may be assured.

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makes a thoughtful
gift for the
sick and shut-in.*

Loveland's Dedication

The following is the text of an address given by Rev. Ron Cammenga at the special dedication service of the new church building of our congregation in Loveland, Colorado. The building has been in construction for about a year, most of the labor being done on a volunteer basis by the members of the congregation. The new church is 54 x 100 feet, with a full basement, and seats approximately 350 people. The dedication service was held on Friday, July 11, 1986.

Tonight we give thanks to God for the spacious and beautiful new church building that is ours for the public worship of His Name. It has not always been the case that God's people have had these kinds of facilities for worship. Until the second century, Christians were forbidden even to erect churches, and were compelled to worship in private homes, in the open fields, or, to escape persecution, in caves or even in the Catacombs, the underground burial places beneath Rome and other ancient cities.

When the Roman persecution was temporarily suspended, we find from the year A.D. 202 and forward, that the early Christians began for the first time really to construct church buildings for the public worship of God. However, in the year A.D. 305 the emperor Diocletian, proving himself to be the anti-Christian beast that he was, issued an edict ordering all Christian churches to be razed. Under Constantine some 20 years later these churches were rebuilt, and many new ones erected over the whole Roman empire.

Not only has it been the case in the past that God's people have not had facilities like ours for the worship of God, but this is the case at present with many of God's people. We are mindful of God's people in lands stricken by poverty where there are simply not the means to erect the kind of facility that we have. We are mindful of our brothers and sisters in our sister church in Singapore who at present are having great difficulty securing an adequate church building. We are mindful of fellow believers in communist countries tonight who are prevented by the government from even gathering in public assembly, not to speak of erecting a building for this purpose.

And we are not unmindful either tonight of the future. We know that there comes a day, perhaps even for us or our children, when we will be again denied the public worship of God. There comes a day when we will be evicted from our church buildings, the doors boarded up or perhaps even the building broken down. That will be the day of the Antichrist and the awful persecution of God's church that he will inaugurate.

So tonight we are thankful, very thankful for what we have, what God in His goodness has given us.

I want to call your attention this evening briefly to the opening words of Psalm 127: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it" (Ps. 127:1a).

The Lord has built this house. From several points of view it is the Lord who has built this new



house of worship. He has built this house because He has so prospered us numerically that it has become necessary for us to build a new church. Over the last several years, we've experienced internal growth. The Lord has blessed us as families, giving us children. Many of these children have grown up, married, and are now raising families of their own. The Lord has also added to our number from without, for which we are very grateful.

The Lord has built this house also because it is He Who has given us the means to build it. The resources that were needed to erect our new church building were resources that He graciously provided for us. The materials themselves out of which the building is constructed are from Him.

And the Lord has built this house because He has provided men, women, and young people alike with the strength and the desire to do the work necessary in the building of His house. Liberal contributions of money, time, and talents have been made by the members of the congregation. It is the Lord Who has made this possible. In truth, it is the Lord Who has built the house.

Several things follow from the fact that it is the Lord Who has built this house.

First of all, if the Lord has built this house, it is the Lord's house. It belongs to Him; it is His possession and property. And that implies that it must be used to His glory. This isn't our house, to do with as we please. But it is His house, and must therefore be used for His glory. The Apostle Paul writes in Ephesians 3:21, "Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

This has to be our motivation in building our new church and this must govern the use we make of our new church: The glory of God. It has happened that churches have been built for the glory of man, so that in the building of them man, man's architectural achievements, man's skilled accomplishments, man's sense of beauty and art were glorified. During the Middle Ages, for example, the zeal for church-building became perverted by a spirit of pride, ambition, and competition. This, in fact, became a leading cause in bringing about the great Reformation. You will remember that it was especially the selling of indulgences that provoked the reformatory work of Martin Luther. The specific indulgence that aroused Luther's ire was the indulgence introduced by Pope Leo X to raise money to defray the cost of building the gorgeous St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, Italy. Leo was determined to go down in history as the builder of the largest, most beautiful, most costly cathedral ever erected.

This same carnal, competitive spirit is alive today. Men build their crystal cathedrals and their luxurious church buildings, each seeking to outdo the other. Then man and not God is glorified in the church. And then it were better that the church worshiped in the fields or in the caves.

In the second place, if the Lord has built this house and if it is the Lord's house, it follows that the Lord dwells here. A house is to be lived in. You live in your house. Since this is the Lord's house, He lives here. As much as the Lord inhabited the temple of the Old Testament in the Shekinah of glory, He inhabits our new church building.

That means that we must have reverence and respect for this house — God lives here. This reverence must characterize our worship in this building. But this ought also to characterize all our use of the building. Even the children ought to be aware of this, and parents ought to impress this upon their children: Reverence for the house of God.

The Lord dwells here in the gospel of His grace and salvation in His Son, Jesus Christ. The presence of the Lord here isn't a personal, visible sort of presence, but is His presence through the gospel and the preaching of the gospel. Through the gospel He reveals Himself to us in the greatness of His glory and works. Through the gospel He reveals Himself to us as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. Through the gospel He has fellowship with us and brings us into the fellowship of His covenant house. Through the gospel He bestows all the blessings of His house and family upon us.

The very structure of our church building expresses our fundamental conviction concerning the centrality of the preaching of the gospel in the worship of God. The inside of our building is plain, beautiful but plain. You don't find all kinds of religious clutter to detract from the preaching of the gospel. You don't see pictures hanging from the walls, banners streaming from the ceiling, relics and statues erected in appropriate places. We have a very plain building. And up front and center, as the focus of our attention and worship, we have a pulpit for the preaching of the gospel. This is as it should be.

This, now, is what must bring us to this building week after week, Sunday after Sunday. Not the beautiful new building itself. Not the nice-sounding new organ. Not the people. But God and God's fellowship which through the gospel is to be enjoyed in this house.

What this really comes down to is that tonight we do not so much dedicate this building, as we dedicate ourselves to the true worship of God in this building.

If the Lord has built this house, it follows that He is the One Who deserves thanks tonight. Our dedication service is necessarily a service of thanksgiving. This is not to say that we are not grateful to those who have had a special hand in the building of our new church. We're grateful to the members of the Building Committee. We're grateful to those who have given many hours and donated much labor and given up many evenings and Saturdays for the building of the church. But our thanks is especially directed to our covenant God, the One Who has built the house and Whose house it is.

Having built this house in conscious dependence upon Him and to His glory, we trust that our efforts will not have been in vain. That's the text: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

If we have not built in dependence upon the Lord God and to His glory, our labor will have been in vain. Oh, the building probably is completed. And it's a beautiful and useful facility. But it's all in vain. There's no blessing of God in it. And the worship of God in the building is empty and of no saving benefit.

But we have built in dependence upon the Lord, and in our building we aim at His glory. Our confidence, therefore, is that our labor is not in vain but will prove fruitful. Our confidence is that in this place, by us and by our children after us, He will continue to be worshiped in the great truth of the gospel. Our confidence is that just in this way, we and our children will be saved. Then all the hard work, the sacrificing, the time expended, certainly will not have been in vain.

DAY OF SHADOWS

John A. Heys

Salvation Revealed

It would be good for us to see ourselves in Jonah's plight, and to realize that in him we have a picture of ourselves. Indeed, that is why God includes books such as this book of Jonah in Holy Writ. We too are sinners, and we disobey God and trample under foot His commands in so many different ways. We err greatly if we with pride look down on Jonah, as though we would never do a thing like that, or never did anything as bad as what he did. In fact we do ourselves a great deal of good when we take into consideration the fact that many of our sinful deeds are worse than his, because we have so much richer a manifestation of the truth, one that far exceeds what Jonah had. We have the whole Bible for our guide. We have the mystery revealed to us that was hid through the whole Old Testament dispensation (Ephesians 1:9-12). We do not live in the day of shadows, but we live in the day when the Spirit has been poured out; and we understand God's covenant promises in a way that

Jonah could not. When we sin today, we often make Jonah's sin look tame.

You never fled from God's presence? You never failed to do what He called you to do? In Jonah's day God's presence was in the promised land of Canaan. There He revealed Himself and dwelt symbolically in the tabernacle, and later in the temple. Today His presence is in His house on the Sabbath. There He speaks to us through the preaching of the Word. And you never fled from that preaching? Even when physically sitting in the audience, you never went to sleep, or fled in your thoughts from the preaching? You never arranged a vacation, a trip, a pleasure for your flesh that took you away from His presence? And during the week, how close do you live to God's Word? You open the Scripture every day, and consider listening to what God has to say as *more* important than eating that meal, making that dollar, keeping an engagement that will please your flesh? You come before His presence in prayer, when you are about to eat in a public place where the eyes of unbelievers will see

John A. Heys is a minister emeritus in the Protestant Reformed Churches.

you? You do not necessarily need to take a ship to flee from God's presence. We ought to hang our heads in shame, rather than proudly look down on Jonah as such an exceptional sinner.

Do we really have as much zeal for God's cause, for His covenant people, and the kingdom of Christ, as Jonah did? Do not minimize his sin. But appreciate the fact that he was concerned about God's covenant promises as given to Abraham, and fulfilled almost exclusively among Abraham's seed, and in the promised land. We are privileged to see a broader, richer picture of God's covenant, and that we also are His covenant people. But does it bother us as much as it did Jonah, when it looks as though the church is in danger of being swept away by the world, and taken over by the false church?

Consider yourself once, sinking down to death and the grave in the awareness that you have not been faithful in many ways, as one of God's covenant people. Let your whole life flash before you, and you see that you have but a minute or two before you come to stand before the God from Whose presence you have fled so often. Yes, it will do you good to stand in Jonah's shoes. The jaws of death were about to open, so that he would be swallowed up by his watery grave.

God saved him from that grave the last fraction of the minute, before those jaws of death would have opened and swallowed him. In His mercy, as that God of great kindness, God kept Jonah from physical death, and worked in him repentance. His soul had fainted. He saw no hope of escaping death in whose presence he now stood, rather than in God's presence, from which he fled. He did not know that God would send a fish and spare his life. But in the last fearful moment before death would swallow him up, God caused him to remember Jehovah; and from out the depths he cried to God. That prayer came in to God in His holy temple; and a great fish swallowed him up, instead of death, and Jonah had continued life. He was saved, and out of the belly of that fish he now utters his prayer of thanksgiving and praise to God.

This was possible because of that of which Jonah was only a type. Because God's Son, with our sins upon Him, by God's sovereign grace, was buffeted by the billows and waves of God's wrath against our sins, was *not* saved from death and the grave, and through His obedience and suffering all of our everlasting punishment, Jonah and we have salvation. He was in His grave three days and three nights, but went through these to everlasting glory, paving the way for us. Now we need have no fear as we face death, for through it we will be ushered into God's presence in a way more wonderful than any such experience in this life.

But we must not stop there. We are so prone to think of salvation only in terms of from what our flesh will escape, and in terms of what our bodies are going to enjoy. And, sad to say, much of what today is called gospel preaching and evangelism tries to get men to accept Christ for such joys and wonders. They preach a "gospel" that even the devil, and the fallen angels, together with the worst sinners, can want and eagerly accept.

But wait a minute. All this is surely part of our salvation. Our sins are blotted out. Our guilt is gone. And then the punishment we deserve is something that we will never have to suffer. But God does far more, as He did to Jonah. He saves us from the power and the love of sin. Our souls need salvation as well as our bodies. And was not the first promise God gave us, the first preaching of the gospel in paradise, that God would make us hate *sin*, and that the head of Satan would be crushed, so that we escape completely from his power?

That is oh so necessary; and the escape from the curse and suffering pain and torment in hell can never be ours without that salvation from the love and power of sin. The author in Hebrews 12:14 tells us that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Jonah was walking in unholiness. He was clearly under the power of Satan. And he must not simply be delivered from that watery grave, and from God's wrath in hell. No, he must be brought to remember the Lord, as he himself states it in his prayer to God. Jonah, as well as we, must be saved not simply from the guilt of sin, together with its punishment. We must be saved from the power and love of sin. We are not saved, in the first place, for our own good. We are saved for the glory of God, are saved so that we may serve, praise, and glorify God, as is our calling. So much preaching today wants to tell us to smile because God loves us. It does not teach that we must love God. It tries to get man to accept Christ for fleshly advantages, for his own good. Salvation from the punishment of sin is the whole story. Salvation from the power and love of sin, to be freed completely from Satan's power, to be able to serve God with heart, soul, mind, and strength is but a fringe benefit. Escape the fire of hell, and you have it made!

All this is putting the cart before the horse. Had Jonah died in his sin, he would have cried everlastingly in hell, the place of torment and of God's holy wrath. But in His grace God made him remember Him, and to cry for mercy. That was not a work for which Jonah could pat himself on the back. God made him remember. Does Jonah not clearly say, "Salvation is of the Lord"? Did it not flash before his mind that his only hope was that this God of great kindness could and does save?

Yes, this God is the Lord, as the KJV has it. But the Hebrew is much more powerful. For it states, "Salvation is of Jehovah." He is the I am, the Sovereign One, the Unchangeable One, the Almighty One, the Self-sufficient One, the Independent One. Who could save you more assuredly than He? Where is there salvation outside of Him? Jehovah is His covenant name. It is the name which He gave Moses, when he asked Whom he should tell the covenant people had sent him to come and deliver them from Pharaoh (Exodus 3:13, 14). In that name God reveals Himself as our Savior in Christ. Do not forget that the name Jesus is a contraction of Jehovah is Salvation. He was not yet come in our flesh. When He came, He received that name, "For He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). But He was foreshadowed in the Old Testament in that name of God, namely Jehovah. That was His name in the day of shadows. Jonah who saw himself ready to enter into the belly of the grave, to face the Almighty God of heaven and earth, remembered that He is Jehovah, the covenant God of His people. When his soul fainted, God Who saves made him remember that He is the God of grace with wonderful covenant promises. And He made Jonah cry from the belly of hell to his covenant God.

Sad to say, the tendency in most preaching today is to deny Jonah's words. In most of the preaching, salvation is not of the Lord, that is, all of our salvation is not from Him. In most of the so-called evangelism there is a condition that man must fulfill. Man must save himself to a "small" degree. And if he does, then God will do the rest. Man must first save himself from his unbelief, fulfill the condition of believing. He must take the first step of sanctification, and then God will do the rest of that sanctification and grant the justification that Christ realized on the cross. Even worse, you heard it, you can be a born again Christian, if you will only ask for it. The rebirth is yours for the asking. But you

must ask. You are not alive yet spiritually, but you can do what no child ever did or could do: you can ask for a birth. Salvation is of the Lord, if you will let Him. He is Jehovah, the I Am. But you are too, and it depends upon you as to whether He is going to save you or not.

No! No! A thousand times NO! Salvation is of the Lord. All of it. The fact that you desire it also came from him. Paul told the Philippian jailer that if he believed, he would be saved. That was not a condition that the jailor had to fulfill. From his desire for salvation it was evident that he already had the beginning of salvation worked in him; and therefore he could be sure that his sins were blotted out, and that he would be saved from the lake of fire when he died.

You see, salvation reveals itself in the act of believing. In fact, it reveals itself in the desire for salvation. Salvation is one hundred percent, completely, entirely from the Lord. That includes the desire for it, and the faith that His Son took away our guilt by His cross, and by His Spirit makes us want to be saved from the power and love of sin.

We must not put our work before God's. We must see that our faith, our desire for salvation, our sorrow over sin reveals that salvation has already been begun in us by God. The desire for salvation and the prayer to God for salvation are the fruit of a salvation already begun in us. We must see that also as God's work. Scripture in Ephesians 2:1 teaches us that we are dead in trespasses and sins. Paul tells us in Romans 8:8 that we cannot please God. Now surely dead men do not ask for salvation, nor do they know what it is. And believing in God's Son pleases Him. But if, or better, *since* before being born again we cannot please Him, we cannot believe or ask Him for salvation until He has already begun it in us. Salvation reveals itself as already being ours in our desire and request for it. Let us say it with Jonah: "Salvation is of the Lord." All of it is.

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QUESTION BOX

Cornelius Hanko

Christ in Adam

The following question has been submitted to the question box:

"Was Adam in the state of rectitude in need of Christ?"

Our first reaction might well be that we answer, "No." We know that Adam was created good and after the image of God, in true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, to know and to serve his God in love with his whole being. He was God's friend-servant, serving God in the capacity of prophet, priest, and king over the earthly creation. He was fully capable of fulfilling God's mandate, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth," at least as far as his mandate applied to the earthly paradise. (See Gen. 1:28.)

Adam possessed a certain freedom, that is, a freedom not to sin. He loved God, knew that God loved him, and was devoted to God in love. He walked and talked with God and dwelled in God's house in the first paradise. He stood at the pinnacle of the entire earthly creation as God's friend-servant, uniting the entire creation in covenant fellowship with God. In Adam's heart the whole creation was united to the heart of God. (See *Reformed Dogmatics*, Rev. H. Hoeksema, page 222.)

Yet it was exactly because of Adam's unique relationship to his God and his peculiar position over against the entire creation that also Adam's life would never be complete without the Christ.

First, Adam was created fallible. Although he was created free in the sense that he was able not to sin, he still was capable of sinning. He was perfect, yet not in the sense that he could not lose that perfection. God had placed in paradise the tree of

the knowledge of good and evil, with the demand that Adam should not eat thereof, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17).

Rev. H. Hoeksema writes in his *Reformed Dogmatics*, page 213, "His (Adam's) freedom did not consist of this, that he could either sin or not sin, but exactly in the fact that he stood in perfect righteousness, in harmony with the will of God, so that he loved the Lord his God with his whole heart. But he was created lapsible. He had not attained to the highest freedom. He indeed was capable of performing the will of God; but he could nevertheless by an act of his own will turn about and subject himself to the slavery of sin. The highest freedom is the state in which it will be forever impossible for man to choose contrary to the will of God. But this is attainable only in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God united with our nature. Adam, therefore, could lose the image of God . . . And it is only through the grace of Christ that this image is restored and raised to a higher, to a heavenly level and glory that can be lost nevermore."

Second, Adam was of the earth earthy. "He lives an earthly life. He cannot reach to heaven. He is dependent upon the earth for his very subsistence. From the earth his life must be constantly sustained and replenished. He has earthly sensations and perceptions; an earthly eye, with which he perceives earthly things; an earthly ear, that can hear earthly sounds; an earthly sense of taste and touch and smell, that can bring him into contact with earthly objects. He is bound by ties of earthly love and friendship. Even his thinking and willing assume earthly forms. There are things that eye cannot see, and ear cannot hear, and which cannot arise in the heart of man, which only the Spirit of God can reveal to him" (*Reformed Dogmatics*, page 200).

Third, Adam was mortal. Although death had no dominion over him, he was dependent upon the tree of life to perpetuate his earthly existence (Gen. 3:22). After the fall Adam learned to seek his life in Him Who is the Resurrection and the Life, to live from Him forever in the new creation.

Fourth, the first Adam was a type of the last Adam. "And so it is written, the first Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man was of the earth earthy: the second man is the Lord of heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (I Cor. 15:45-48). Christ was in Adam's loins, for Adam was our first father, and organically root of the entire human race. To serve his purpose as our first father he had to bring forth the Christ, through Whom alone he could have eternal life.

This is most beautifully expressed in Colossians 1:13-19: "Who (God) hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness

of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, *and for him: and he was before all things, and by him all things consist.* And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead: that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the father that in him should all fulness dwell."

From this follows that when Adam fell, he fell into the arms of Christ. It was never God's intention to attain heavenly perfection and glory through Adam, as is evident from the Scripture passages referred to above. The riches of God's glorious perfections and the blessedness of His intimate covenant life could never be fully revealed and shared through Adam. The first paradise must fade away to make room for the second, the eternal heavenly Paradise (Rev. 22:1, 2). The first Adam must step aside to open the way for the last Adam. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Cor. 15:21, 22). See also Romans 5:12-19.

Book Reviews

AQUINAS, CALVIN, & CONTEMPORARY PROTESTANT THOUGHT; A CRITIQUE OF PROTESTANT VIEWS ON THE THOUGHT OF THOMAS AQUINAS, by Arvin Vos; Christian University Press and Eerdmans Publishing, 1985; 178 pp., \$13.95 (paper). (Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko)

Vos is convinced that Aquinas has been misunderstood and often unjustly condemned by Protestants, especially on the meaning of faith. He disagrees with Calvin's analysis of the schoolmen's (particularly Aquinas) view of faith, and claims this was due to some ambiguity in what constitutes the idea of the knowledge of faith. Particularly, he says that Aquinas never taught, as Protestantism has long maintained, that faith is implicit trust in the church. He insists Aquinas never taught this, is not

sure whether Calvin was referring to Aquinas when Calvin attacked this idea, but concluded that if Calvin indeed did refer to Aquinas, Calvin was all wrong.

This is not the only subject with which Vos deals, but his intent is to prove that Aquinas has been unjustly maligned and misunderstood by Protestants, and it is his hope that through a re-evaluation of Aquinas' theology a greater appreciation of Aquinas will emerge.

One sometimes wonders whether Vos does not in fact have in mind an attempt to bridge the chasm between classical Roman Catholic thought and Protestant truth. It is more than passing strange, however, that Vos understands Aquinas better than the Reformers, and better than Calvin himself.

LET THE BIBLE SPEAK . . . ABOUT TONGUES, by Richard C. Schwab; Kregel Publications, 1985; 130 pp., (paper) \$5.95. (Reviewed by Prof. R.D. Decker)

Here is an excellent refutation of Pentecostalism. The heart of the book is chapters four through eleven. In these chapters one finds an extensive and clearly written exposition of I Corinthians 12, 13, and 14. In chapter eight, the first of two chapters dealing with I Corinthians 13, Schwab points to an oft ignored truth when he writes: "One of the greatest chapters in the Bible is I Corinthians 13, often called the Love Chapter. Thousands of messages have been based on this outstanding, lofty passage. It is right that this is so. What is often forgotten, however, is this chapter's immediate context. Never forget that chapter 13 is between

chapter 12 and chapter 14! It does not stand alone. It is the very heart of Paul's teaching about the spiritual life and is absolutely essential to the truth of chapters 12 and 14."

Particularly helpful for anyone who needs to know something about Pentecostalism will be the historical sketch of this movement in chapter one. Also helpful are the summaries at the end of each chapter as well as the summary of the entire book given in the last chapter.

The author's dispensational views are apparent at various points. This is the major weakness of the book from a Reformed perspective. However, if the reader is inclined towards Pentecostalism, let him or her read this book prayerfully and with open Bible in hand.

News From Our Churches

David Harbach

August 14, 1986

Pastor den Hartog writes that "Pastor Lau is teaching from the Heidelberg Catechism a group of about 14 young Christians who are preparing themselves for baptism and membership in our church. This class will be completed by the end of September The class meets in the large meeting room at Blair Road.

"We continue to have many couples aspiring to marriage and to establishing a Christian home. Presently I am giving premarriage counselling to ten young couples. There will be at least four or five marriages yet this year Usually the majority of our members attend the weddings

"During the month of June I had the privilege of teaching two Bible study groups at the Presbyterian High School A number of the members of these Bible studies attend our youth fellowship at the church

"I continue to hold a class of instruction in New Testament Greek. Three students are now attending this class.

". . . Pastor Lau and one of our elders attended the Synod of our churches in Grand Rapids We were much encouraged by this. We are all hoping

and praying that through these kinds of meetings the bond of sisterly relationships between our churches will be strengthened.

". . . In the past months our mail box has been pretty empty. We do thank those who have written to us. It is always a source of encouragement to us to receive letters from home so keep them coming"

The Evangelism Society of Southeast Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan, will sponsor a lecture to be given by Rev. R. Van Overloop, missionary in our Protestant Reformed Churches, on "The Rapture in Light of Scripture." This speech will be held Thursday, September 25, 8 P.M., at Calvin Seminary Chapel. A question and answer period will follow the speech.

For those of you who have ordered the *Standard Bearer Index*, covering volumes 1-58, your bill will be sent with the index and prompt payment will be greatly appreciated. The cost of the index will be between \$25-30 or even lower depending on how many people have sent in their orders. This index consists of Title, Subject, Text, Book Reviews, and is 584 pages. For those of you who did not order an index and would like yet to do so, wait no longer — order now by calling (616) 878-3417, or by mailing a post card to: Henry Kamps, 8288 Harlow, Byron Center, MI 49315.

David Harbach is a teacher at Adams St. Prot. Ref. Christian School, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Kalamazoo Church, Michigan, planned to hold a "Deficit Reduction Drive" at the end of September. They actually plan to hold a "Mortgage Reduction Drive" since they are well ahead of their payments; and the drive is simply so that they may liquidate their mortgage sooner.

Loveland Church, Colorado, is making seating changes in their new sanctuary for the office bearers. From now on the reserved bench for the elders will be the second from the front on the East side, and the three benches behind them will be reserved for the deacons and their families.

In Hudsonville Church, Michigan, they have an interesting way of congratulating those who make confession of faith. After the service, those who have made confession of faith follow the deacons out of the auditorium and receive congratulations from the congregation in the narthex.

The Grand Valley Advance newspaper of Jenison, Michigan printed an article by Jaikishin Mahtani in which he gave a unique personal perspective on his early life and his stay in the U.S. as the guest of our Protestant Reformed Churches.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On September 12, 1986, our beloved parents, MR. AND MRS. RICHARD BLOEM hope to celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary.

We, their children give thanks to our Heavenly Father for the love and Christian guidance they have given us. Our prayer is that our Covenant God will continue to bless and keep them in their remaining years.

"For the Lord is good, His mercy is everlasting and His truth endureth to all generations." (Psalm 100)

James David
Janice Kay

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On September 8, 1986, our parents, MR. AND MRS. GORDON ONDERSMA, will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary. We are grateful to God for their loving care and covenant instruction and guidance. We pray that the Lord will continue to bless them in the years to come.

"The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel." (Psalm 128:5, 6)

Curt and Lori Veldman
Jeffrey and Emily

Tim	Diane	Jodie
Craig	Mark	Amanda

The next week the same newspaper printed a letter to the editor in which the writer commented, "... I have known many people who have visited India or who were born there, and they have said that idol worship is in no way connected with their religion today, except by the very ignorant." Now aside from the fact that Jaiki never mentioned that he came from India, do those people who are not ignorant in India worship idols? And are these idols they worship the same ones worshiped in Singapore? Only our close friend Jaiki can answer these, so look for an answer to these questions in the near future.

The latest Young People's Convention had almost 300 conventioners. Part of the reason for an increase in the number attending can be attributed to the fact that the older young people had their own meetings and some special activities together. We can thank the Convention Planning Committee of South Holland Church, Illinois, for setting this precedent.

NOTICE!!!

I am interested in obtaining a complete set of the Bound Volumes of THE STANDARD BEARER. Anyone wishing to sell a set or partial sets please contact me. PAUL VAN KOVERING, 8341 TYLER ST., ZEELAND, MI. My phone number is (616) 875-7476.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Consistory of the Loveland Protestant Reformed Church, on behalf of the congregation, expresses its sympathy to the family of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Schwarz in the death of her brother, MR. DEAN HEINZ. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job 1:21)

Rev. Ron Cammenga, Pres.
Mr. Frank Van Baren, Clerk

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On September 14, our parents, JOHN AND JEANETTE DE VRIES will celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary. We thank God for blessing them with these years together and also for the covenant instruction which they have given us. We pray for God's continued blessing on them in the years to come.

Psalm 102:12 "But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations."

Herm and Lorraine De Vries	Bryant and Ruth Cox
John, Sarah, Amy, and Laura	Eric
Don and Shelly De Vries	Tom and Brenda De Vries
Kari	Mike De Vries