

The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

A Thought For The New Year

*But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting
to everlasting upon them that fear him.*

—Psalm 103:17

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MEDITATION

James D. Slopsema

The Salt of the Earth

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

—Matthew 5:13

It is good at the beginning of each year to be reminded of the place we occupy in God's creation as well as the responsibilities that fall to us before God.

Ye are the salt of the earth.

This remarkable statement of Jesus appears in His Sermon on the Mount. To the multitudes of

simple folks that had followed Him, Jesus proclaimed, "Ye are the salt of the earth."

So is it with all in every age who follow Jesus as true disciples. They are the salt of the earth.

At the beginning of another year it is good to be reminded that in Christ we too are the salt of the earth.

In harmony with this reality we must also be encouraged to act as salt.

THE IDEA

Ye are the salt of the earth.

Salt had several uses in Bible times. To determine how God's people are the salt of the earth it is necessary to discover which use of salt Jesus had in mind when He compared His people to salt.

In Bible times salt was used, first, for seasoning food. Salt makes food tasty and agreeable to the palate. Said Job, "Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? or is there any taste in the white of an egg?" (Job 6:6)

Salt was also used for medicinal purposes. Salt is an antiseptic. In Bible times new born babies were bathed and then rubbed in salt.

Salt is also a preservative, retarding spoilage in meat. Most likely salt was also used for that purpose in Bible times.

Finally, we are told that the salt used in Bible times was mined from the marshes, lagoons and rocks in the Dead Sea area. This salt was mixed with various minerals, among which was magnesium. Consequently, this salt was also used in Bible times to make a saline solution to fertilize the land.

* * * * *

In determining how God's people are the salt of the earth many latch hold of the idea that salt is a preservative. The people of God are salt, we are told, in that they act as a preservative in the midst of the world. As they enter into every sphere of life they are able to exert a restraining influence in the world of men so that the development of sin is held in check. And some go even further, speaking in glowing terms of God's people being a reforming influence in the world. As a result of the presence of God's people in this world we can expect social evils eventually to be eradicated so that the kingdom of God will somehow be attained here on earth.

Yet this can not be how the children of God serve as the salt of the earth.

For this explanation is completely at odds with

the basic use of salt. The world in which we live is not basically sound and wholesome. It is spiritually rotten. There is in the world of ungodly men absolutely nothing that is good to be preserved. Men don't put salt on rotten meat to preserve it, much less to restore its original freshness. No more do the children of God serve as the salt of the earth by preserving or restoring that which is already spiritually decayed.

Besides, the rest of what Jesus says in this connection points us in another direction. Jesus spoke of salt losing its savour or flavor. This points us in the direction of salt as a flavoring.

* * * * *

The great emphasis in the Bible is that salt is added to food to flavor it and make it tasty.

The Old Testament speaks frequently of the covenant of salt between God and His people Israel. It was the custom for those entering into a covenant to ratify their covenant by eating bread with salt. This symbolized that the covenant just made was agreeable to both parties, pleasant to their taste. In light of this, God's covenant with Israel was called the covenant of salt, thus indicating that it was very pleasing to both God and Israel.

Quite in harmony with all this, God also required that all the meat offerings brought by Israel to the house of God be seasoned with salt. This salt represented the faith and repentance of Israel which made their offerings very pleasing to God.

With this use of salt in mind Christ called God's people the salt of the earth.

When Christ spoke of the earth He had reference to the whole earth in all its fulness. He had in mind the earth with all its powers and resources, the earth as it is literally teeming with life and activity. Of that earth God's people are the salt.

They are the salt of the earth exactly because the earth in all its fulness is made pleasing to God through their presence.

THE REALIZATION

God's people are the salt of the earth in that they are kings and priests of God who use the earth in the service of God's name.

God created man as king to rule His creation. As king man has received the ability to discover the various powers of nature and to bring them under his control. As king of God's creation man has indeed accomplished many great feats. He has discovered the healing powers in creation and conquered many dreadful diseases. He has discovered the principles of art, literature, math, and music established by God in the creation and developed

them to a very high degree. He has harnessed the various forces and powers of nature to provide many conveniences in life, to travel at very high speeds, to fly through the air, to land on the moon. Man is king in God's creation.

And God's people are an integral part of the human race that rules the creation. In fact, they form the heart of the human race. They indeed are kings of God's creation.

But God's people are also priests of God.

A priest is one who consecrates himself and all that he has to the service of another.

As priests of the living God, God's people press the creation which they have been given to control into the service of their God. All the resources God has given to them — their money, their lands, their food and drink, their clothing and shelter — they use in the service of God. In like manner do they also use the wonderful inventions God has placed at their disposal — their cars, their radios and televisions, the conveniences in their home. All that they are and all that they have they present as an offering to God.

Because of this work of His people as kings and priests, the earth is pleasing to God. His people are as salt that makes the earth palatable to God's taste.

* * * * *

God's people are the salt of the earth only in Christ.

By nature man is not king and priest of God but king and priest of God's arch-enemy, the devil.

Originally man was created as king and priest of God. And for a time man served God in that capacity so that he was the salt of the earth.

But at the fall that was drastically changed. For even though man retained his position of king and priest in God's creation, the fall changed man spiritually. He became corrupt and depraved. And so he became king and priest in the service of devil. Man continues to rule the creation as king. But in his fallen state he uses the whole of the creation for his own pleasure and glory and thus ultimately in the service of the devil himself.

But in Christ the elect of God are transformed once more into kings and priests of God. In Christ the elect of God no longer serve themselves but the God that made them. And so in Christ they become the salt of the earth that renders the earth pleasing to God.

THE CALLING

But if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Jesus describes here something that quite frequently happened to the salt the people used. The salt taken from the Dead Sea area was mixed with various other minerals and substances. After a while these foreign substances could deteriorate and give the salt a most terrible taste. When that happened nothing could be done to restore it. It was good for nothing but to be thrown out into the street to be trodden under foot of men.

Jesus points this out to suggest that also God's people, the salt of the earth, are able to be spoiled for a time so that they no longer act as salt. This happens when they allow their sinful natures to control their lives for a time so that they use God's creation in the service of sin rather than in the service of God. When this happens the earth is no longer pleasing to God, but very distasteful.

* * * * *

This implies a calling.

We must guard against our sinful flesh lest it render us useless as salt. Thankfully, when we allow ourselves to be rendered ineffective as salt through our sinful nature, God does not just cast us aside. Instead He does what can not be done to salt; He purifies us and restores us to usefulness. But that is often the hard way of discipline and chastisement. Let us guard against our sinful nature!

And in the power of Jesus Christ let us act as salt.

Let us work as salt in the year that lies before us.

Let us work as salt all the years of our earthly existence.

Then we will also be able to look forward to the privilege of working as salt in the new creation, which we with all the redeemed will be able to control completely and render as a perfect sacrifice pleasing to God throughout the endless ages of eternity.

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EDITORIAL

Anniversary Books — OPC

Perhaps some of our readers will be aware of the fact that this year marks the 50th Anniversary of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the denomination which was born on June 11, 1936, in Philadelphia, especially under the leadership of J. Gresham Machen, out of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy in the Presbyterian Church (USA). At first the new denomination had the name Presbyterian Church of America, a name which ultimately was denied them in a court case in 1939. Thereafter it took the name Orthodox Presbyterian Church. This is the denomination which has been closely associated with Westminster Seminary, although that institution has always been officially independent of the church and although in recent years its connection with the OPC has deteriorated and is not nearly so strong.

In earlier years the *Standard Bearer* always had an exchange arrangement with the *Presbyterian Guardian* (now defunct), which, though never an official magazine of the OPC, nevertheless was generally recognized as its "voice." And on more than one occasion the *Standard Bearer* editorialized on things OPC. Some of our older readers will recall especially the *Standard Bearer's* extensive and thorough treatment of the doctrinal issues in the "Clark Case" under the title, "The Text of a Complaint," a critique to which attention was paid even by the committee of the General Assembly which was appointed to study the doctrinal issues in that case. Personally, my interest in the OPC was stimulated in the days of my youth through the fact that when our family vacationed in Maine, we frequently attended Second Parish Church in Portland and became acquainted with two of that church's pastors, John H. Skilton (later a professor at Westminster Seminary) and Arthur O. Olson. Second Parish, by the way, was the church where my late father was invited to preach during one of his vacation visits.

Hence, I was delighted when I recently received complimentary copies of three books which were published to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, along with a request for a review. With that request I gladly comply. And rather than have these books get in line in our Book Review department, I will give them immediate attention in our editorial columns.

The first book is undoubtedly the commemorative volume proper. It is a large volume (8½ x 11 inches) of 357 pages, printed on glossy paper to accommodate the numerous pictures (both colored and black-and-white). It is entitled *The Orthodox Presbyterian Church 1936-1986* and edited by Charles G. Dennison, Historian for the OPC. This is the historical volume. An "Introduction" briefly traces the origin and the history of the OPC. This is followed by a section on denominational life and activities, with chapters on the Committee on Foreign Missions, the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension, the Committee on Christian Education, the Committee on Diaconal Ministries, and the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations, as well as one entitled "Here and There in the OPC." Though brief, these chapters furnish a well-rounded picture of denominational activities. Then follows a lengthy section containing the history of every individual congregation in the twelve presbyteries (classes) of the Orthodox Presbyterian denomination. This section (pages 61 to 312) also contains many pictures — of church buildings, pastors, and former pastors of the churches. Included in this section is a tremendous amount of historical detail. Next follow sections on Orthodox Presbyterian Women, on the Total Membership of the OPC, and on the Center for Urban Theological Studies. There is an interesting section on Westminster Theological Seminary, along with pictures, written by Arthur W. Kuschke, Jr. With this there is a special section, very brief, on

the only living member of the original Westminster faculty, the well-known Dr. Cornelius Van Til. At the conclusion of this book there is a complete Ministerial Register, with brief biographical sketches, of every minister who has ever been ordained and served in the OPC. No one who reads this book can fail to be impressed by the tremendous amount of work which has gone into the preparation of this volume.

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is a relatively small denomination; its membership is a little over 18,000. Humanly speaking, it does not "count" in the ecclesiastical world. Besides, its future, in view of repeated attempts to accomplish a merger with the PCA, may be in doubt, although this year the "Joining and Receiving" proposal was defeated. However, anyone who is interested in American Church History should add this volume to his library. As far as I know, it is the only complete and detailed history of the OPC.

The second book sent to me is *Pressing Toward The Mark (Essays Commemorating Fifty Years of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church)*. It is edited by Charles G. Dennison and Richard C. Gamble. As the title indicates, this is a book of essays — thirty of them, in a hard-cover book of 489 pages. These essays are on a very broad range of subjects, somewhat loosely gathered into four main divisions: 1. Foundations for Historic Presbyterianism. 2. The American Presbyterian Experience. 3. Perspectives on the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. 4. The Mission of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. A brief fifth section offers a bibliography of the writings of J. Gresham Machen. Most, though not all, of the writers are OPC men. As one might expect in a volume of this kind, there is wide variety. I have not yet read all of the essays, but chose a few which appeared interesting to me. The editor himself wrote a chapter entitled, "Thoughts on the Covenant." Peter A. Lillback is the author of another chapter in the first section, "The Reformers' Rediscovery of Presbyterian Polity." I found especially interesting three essays in the third section, namely, "Perspective on the Division of 1937" [This is the division in which Carl McIntire, J. Oliver Buswell, Allan A. MacRae, and others left the infant denomination in the struggle about pre-millennialism and Christian liberty and formed the Bible Presbyterian Church.], "The Battle over the Ordination of Gordon H. Clark" [a discussion which goes beyond the complaint against Clark's doctrine at the time of his ordination], and "The Life and Death of a Dakota Church." In the fourth section I found interesting Lawrence Eyre's essay, "Reflections on Professor John Murray." But there is a wealth of information and perspectives in this volume. Get it, and read it for yourself. It will be a

worthwhile addition to your library.

The third book was not begun with the intention of serving as an anniversary publication. It is a 135 page paperback from the pen of Robert K. Churchill, an OPC minister who was ordained in 1936 by the first General Assembly. The Rev. Churchill died in 1980 with his book not completed; the book in its present form was completed by George E. Haney, in time to be added to the publications in observance of the OPC's fiftieth anniversary. The title is *Lest We Forget (A Personal Reflection on the Formation of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church)*. It is autobiographical, and offers a very personal account of Mr. Churchill's life from his conversion to his ordination and early ministry. The significant aspect of the book is its account of the struggle which led to the formation of the OPC. The book is interesting, but not the best of these three commemorative volumes.

This rather detailed summary of these three commemorative volumes is not to be construed as meaning that the *Standard Bearer* is promoting the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and that it has no criticism of that denomination. Over the years, as the pages of our magazine will witness, the contrary has been true. Nevertheless, for those who wish to be well-informed about the American church scene, we recommend these volumes.

HCH

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Note: Apparently these books are not being commercially distributed. If you wish to obtain them, write to: Committee for the Historian of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Box 48, Coraopolis, PA 15108. The prices are as follows:

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church 1936-1986,
\$21.00

Pressing Toward The Mark, \$19.95

Lest We Forget, \$4.95

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WALKING IN THE LIGHT

Herman C. Hanko

Moral Aspects of Medical Technology (11)

In our last article in which we discussed *in vitro* fertilization (IVF) we made passing reference to the fact that it was possible that many children conceived in a test tube were being used for experimental purposes. We did not want to say too much about this because little is known concerning this; those who engage in such practices do so in great secrecy, and instances are hard to document.

Recently, however, I received an article from a *Standard Bearer* reader in England which speaks of this very practice. Because governments are thinking of passing legislation which would control IVF, some doctors and scientists in England are concerned that such legislation will be passed before they have an opportunity to express their opinions. The result was that a questionnaire was sent to Europe's practitioners of IVF inquiring concerning their views on various aspects of the problem. The results, as published in the *New Scientist* of July 3, 1986, were startling.

All were agreed that experiments on animals were not enough, and that research on human embryos was necessary. The disagreements were over such matters as whether to form embryos specifically for purposes of experimentation or to use "spare" embryos; whether embryos ought to be frozen for future use or not; and, if frozen, how long they should be kept; whether parental consent was necessary for freezing embryos and using them for experimentation; and whether it was acceptable to take sperm and ova donated specifically for experimental purposes — something already practiced rather widely. Some envisaged a day in the future when "most people will reproduce using egg or sperm from genetically screened individuals. The gametes themselves will be stored in freezers

deep underground to protect them from nuclear disasters."

These are some of the results of IVF, frightening in prospect and wholly contrary to every principle of Scripture, especially when we remember that these "embryos" are children.

* * * * *

We turn now to other avenues of medical technology which are becoming increasingly common to aid people in having children. The *U.S. News & World Report* of November 11, 1985 introduces an article on this subject in this way:

"Where do babies come from?"

That age-old question is provoking some startling new answers as doctors begin manipulating life.

Today, some children are created in test tubes. Others are carried in the wombs of surrogate mothers. And with sound-wave scans, prospective parents can know if their baby will be a boy or a girl months before birth. Soon, they will even be able to choose the sex.

In Australia and the Netherlands, five children have been born from frozen embryos. It is not beyond the imagination of doctors that parents some day may freeze their fertilized embryos for 100 years or more, leaving instructions for their children's births in another era.

Various techniques have been developed to solve the problem of infertility, and we shall discuss them together in this article.

One such technique is artificial insemination. Two types of artificial insemination are practiced: artificial insemination using the semen of husbands (AIH) and artificial insemination using the semen of donors (AID). It is estimated that around 250,000 people are living in this country alone who have been conceived in this way, while 15,000 to 20,000 are added each year. In many cases, both semen

and ova are frozen and stored (especially when donors are used) and banks can be found in many parts of the country. Sperm banks are located in 12 cities throughout the land, and ova are stored in various universities.

So common has this become that some scientists predict that the day is not so far off when sperm and ova will be sold commercially "off the shelf" and that home insemination kits will be made available for "do-it-yourself" conception.

The freezing and storage of sperm and ova (and even embryos) have made possible conception under different circumstances. Men sometimes store their sperm, not because they want it to be used promiscuously, but because they want to have a vasectomy performed, but consider the possibility that they (and their wives) might change their minds about children in the future. Others store their semen in the case of death of one of the parents. E.g. a wife who loses her husband can then have a child by him even after he dies.

But other possibilities result. People make use of artificial insemination for various reasons. Some do so because of infertility in one of the marriage partners. But sometimes single women who do not wish to marry, or lesbians wish to have children, and they can obtain sperm from donor banks. The news media have carried stories repeatedly of sperm banks set up to preserve the sperm of very intelligent people so that donor sperm can be used to "guarantee" (if that is possible, something not yet proved) the superior intelligence of offspring. Nobel prize winners, e.g., have in some instances donated sperm for future use. Some parents carry genetically transmitted diseases which they do not wish to pass on to their children; the use of donor sperm or eggs will bypass these dangers and tragedies.

Another method which has been recently developed to aid parents who cannot have children of their own is "surrogate motherhood." In introducing his discussion of this technique, John Jefferson Davis in his book, *Evangelical Ethics* quotes the following ad which appeared in the *Boston Globe* in December of 1980:

Childless couple — wife unable to conceive looking for white female who would volunteer to be artificially inseminated with semen of husband and then give child to couple. All responses confidential. All expenses paid. Kindly direct responses to Noel P. Keane, attorney, 1129 Parkland Towers East, Dearborn, Michigan 48126. (313) 336-9290.

It is estimated that there are about 60 children living in this country as of 1983 who were born in this way.

There are, of course, variations of this method.

Sometimes a child is conceived in a test tube from sperm and eggs of a married couple, and implanted in a surrogate mother who carries the child to term and then gives it to the natural parents. Sometimes the egg of the mother is implanted in a surrogate mother and fertilized by artificial fertilization by sperm either from the father or from a donor bank. Sometimes the surrogate mother is simply impregnated with sperm either from the husband of a couple wanting a child or from a donor bank, but the offspring is promised to the couple making use of the surrogate when the child is born. All these variations are at present being used, although the method is not yet as common as IVF because of various legal problems.

Yet another method is called embryo transfer. The issue of *U.S. News & World Report* referred to above says of this:

This technique is employed for women who cannot produce eggs but can carry a fetus.

Doctors first match up the infertile wife with an egg donor who ovulates at about the same time — a key step since hormone levels must be the same in both women for successful transfer.

The donor then is artificially inseminated with the husband's sperm. Five days after fertilization, the egg is inserted into the wife's uterus.

A Chicago firm called Fertility & Genetics Research, Inc., has devised a procedure using a special catheter for embryo transfers. It forecasts a market of up to 50,000 candidates.

All these techniques are becoming increasingly common and will undoubtedly become more so in the future. In fact, there is little doubt but that these techniques will not only be refined and be made more successful, but that new techniques will yet be discovered and new ideas will be put into practice. Many of these things were unheard of fifty years ago; what will another fifty years (if the Lord tarries) bring?

It is understandable in a way that the world of unbelief should, having developed the necessary scientific and medical technology, make use of these procedures. After all, from an evolutionary viewpoint, there is nothing sacred or holy about the conception and birth of a child; and in fact an embryo is nothing but a blob of tissue until it is born. Manipulating the birth process and experimenting on embryos is no different than cutting up guinea pigs and subjecting rats to laboratory experiments. Evolutionism is reaping a harvest unforeseen when Darwin first suggested this theory of the origin of the species.

Yet some theologians, some even found in the evangelical camp, also support these techniques — although often with various limitations; and they

do so on the basis of Scripture. They appeal most often to levirate marriages (Deut. 25:5) and the example of Abraham and Hagar when Abraham and Sarah's desire for a child led them to make use of Hagar as a means to obtain offspring.

It seems to me that almost spontaneously the child of God, aware of what Scripture teaches concerning morality in general and marriage and procreation in particular, reacts against all this. Perhaps he, if pressed, is not able to give specific reasons why these practices are wrong, and he may even find himself the loser in a debate with someone glib of speech and more knowledgeable than he in these rather strange areas of Christian life. But he senses immediately that these things are wrong, contrary to the will of God, and involve those who practice them in disobedience. There is, I think, a natural repugnance, a sharp distaste, a moral horror even, at the thought of doing these things. His moral senses are attacked and his moral sensibilities are abused.

We might be inclined to shrug these feelings off

rather carelessly with the remark that people who react so vehemently against these practices are only reflecting their own narrow and legalistic background; that the very fact that they cannot give coherent and intelligent reasons why these things are wrong is proof that such reactions are only gut feelings which have no basis in the Word of God.

Nevertheless, we must not so easily shrug aside these feelings. It is true that we ought to give intelligent and understandable reasons from the Word of God why these things are wrong; but the fact is nevertheless, that when the moral sensibilities of God's people are shocked, we ought to sit up and take notice. The moral sense which has developed in them over the years is a moral sense which has been sharpened and honed by a study of Scripture and many years of seeking in Scripture the answers to life's problems. The people of God often have a moral sensibility which theologians lack.

But we must look more closely at this and at the pertinent Biblical data in a later article.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

John A. Heys

An Appropriate Approach

The first time that God called Jonah to go to Nineveh (Jonah 1:2), but also the second time that He called him to preach there (Jonah 3:2), God called Nineveh "that great city". In fact in the Hebrew we read "a great city to God". The idea undoubtedly is that it was exceedingly great in comparison with other cities in that day. We cannot be sure of the exact measurements, but it may have had a million or more citizens. Jonah 4:11 reveals that there were in it 120,000 little children too young to discern yet between their right and their left hands. It is claimed that the city was 60 miles in circumference, had walls that were 100 feet high and wide enough for three chariots to ride side by

side upon them. It is credited with having 1500 towers which were 200 feet high. But we can take the Word of God for it that it was a great city in size. Great it also was in the judgment and evaluation of men in that day. It was THE city of that day and age.

We must not, however, get the impression that this caused Jonah to fear going there and preaching what God had bidden him to preach. He did not flee to Tarshish because he was afraid of the Ninevites. We are expressly told in Jonah 1:3 that he rose up to flee "from the presence of the Lord". It was not because of what he feared the Ninevites might do to him, but rather because he feared what God would do through his preaching. It is certainly true that it was a dangerous undertaking for Jonah to go there and preach the message given him. But

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he needed no visa to get into the city. We may be sure that he did not need to go through immigration and custom inspection and state his reason for coming and how long he intended to stay in that city. But to "cry against it; for their wickedness" (Jonah 1:2) and to publish throughout the city "yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4) was something its citizens would not like to hear. Could he expect the authorities through their police or soldiers to silence him by capture, by expelling him, or even by death? That was not Jonah's concern when he was called the first time. It certainly was not now after the second call. His experiences as to what God could do to him, after that terrible storm, and being cast into the belly of hell, revealed clearly to him that there was far more to fear, as far as God is concerned, than men of flesh and blood.

Now that it was a great city, and was labelled as such by God Himself, does bring out a point we must not overlook. Man may reach amazing heights, as far as earthly standards are concerned; and he may become very great in the judgment of men and in their estimation; but, if he walks in sin, he can expect God to overthrow him. Earthly wealth and grandure, becoming very numerous and affluent, mean nothing before the holy wrath of the holy God Who by sin is defied and denied.

Let the truth of the day of shadows speak to us today. Man has today attained to much more than Nineveh had in Jonah's day. In the field of science and technology; in man's conquest of space, that moves him to boast of having walked on the moon and of coming back home safely; in the innumerable multitude of labor-saving devices, which seem to have removed from mankind the curse to a very great extent, and God's word that in the sweat of our brows we would have to toil for food and drink, living in cities that have skyscrapers Nineveh could never have built; in the midst of all the comforts and conveniences we know today; does it not seem as though man will some day escape the holy wrath of God and nullify the curse?

Do not for one split second think that! Modern Nineveh is going to be overthrown. The Nineveh of the Antichrist will bring pleasure to mankind unheard of yet today. And although that Antichrist's kingdom will make Nineveh look sick and weak and tiny, the day is ahead of us when it will be overthrown. Though it is not widely published, cancer is on the increase. The recent story of what happened in the Russian nuclear power plant, sending cancer-producing gases around the whole world, reveals that God is not mocked. Acid rain, which man does not seem able to stop or control, likewise brings cancer to mankind and death to God's plant world. And we are the Jonahs of today who must cry out that the present Nineveh's are go-

ing to be overthrown; and that only those therein who repent and flee from their sins are going to escape the awful wrath of God. Not only was Nineveh a great city, but also a city of great wickedness. Not only is this present world far greater than Nineveh; it is also a world of greater wickedness.

Now the book of Jonah does not in very much detail list or describe the wickedness that came up before God out of Nineveh. We do read in Jonah 3:8 that the king passed a decree that all must turn from their "evil ways, and from the violence that is in their hands". But if we go to the book of Nahum, we get a clearer picture of Nineveh. In Nahum 3:1-4 we read, "Woe to the bloody city! It is all full of lies and robbery; the prey departeth not Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcraft." From all this it is plain that Nineveh broke the first and second tables of God's law left and right.

And when you consider all the crime in the world today, all the sabbath desecrations, false doctrines which also are witchcraft, the defense and protection of homosexuals — repeating the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah that called for fire and brimstone — and millions of abortion murders, one wonders whether the modern Nineveh of this world has forty years yet before it is overthrown!

Bearing all these things in mind we ought to see that it is an appropriate approach when God gives Jonah these words to preach to the Ninevites: "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown". That was not a message Jonah concocted because he did not want the city to be spared. We may believe, and must believe, that God gave Jonah that message. Yes, God gave him more to preach. He surely did not preach only eight words. In fact in the Hebrew it is only four words. No, we need to know much more. The sinner must know that it is God Who is coming with punishment, and that He comes with this overthrow because of sin. The Ninevites must know that the earthquake, or fire and brimstone — as was the case in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah — the pestilence or invading army is God's tool and comes because of His holy wrath. They must know that the overthrow is because "their wickedness is come up before" Him.

It is quite possible that they recognized Jonah by his clothes, facial features, and speech, to be a Jew, and thus one from the nation that worshipped Jehovah. They may have seen him as a representative of this God Who had done such wondrous works for Abraham's seed in the past. Nevertheless they have to know their sinfulness in His sight and that this woe is coming because of their guilt. As

sinners they were not living in the consciousness of their evil, and considered themselves blest by their idols. And because Jonah is sent to warn the elect and to bring them to repentance, God would see to it that they in the preaching have Him presented, and their sin against Him condemned in no uncertain terms.

That this also happened is evident from the decree of the king. He not only mentions God as the one — He uses the name Elohim — Who will overthrow Nineveh, but he also points to the sin of these Ninevites as not only the reason for that punishment, but as that which deserves such an overthrow.

And the tragedy is that so little is said today about sin in the preaching. The approach of those who call themselves evangelists is that God loves everybody. On bumper stickers too there is the incorrect statement: "Smile, God loves you." It would be well if we would instead read wherever we go, "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," Romans 6:23. And do you note that Paul's approach is sin and its worthiness of punishment? Then, too, did God come to fallen Adam and Eve shouting, "I love you! I love you! Come and get salvation?" Not at all. He first made them painfully aware of their guilt. In fact before there was any sin in the world yet, He warned righteous man and spelled out clearly what sin would bring. And even as God's approach to fallen Adam and Eve was appropriate — very fitting and served their appreciation of the promise of The Seed of the woman, Who would deliver us from the power and dominion of Satan — so He gave Jonah a message to preach that fit the situation perfectly and served to bring the elect to repentance. He sent Jonah with a warning in order to work a turning away from sin and unto Himself. That is why all that is pointed out to us and preserved here in Holy Writ about Jonah's preaching are those words, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed". But we may believe that he said more, and that he was even questioned for further knowledge by some of the elect in the city. After all, although Jonah wanted Nineveh destroyed, and was even angry when the city was spared because of a goodly number of converts, God sent him there to work repentance and gave him the preaching that he must preach in order that this repentance would be realized.

Take Jesus Himself in His preaching as an example. Was He forever shouting how much God loves everyone? Was He trying to get through to the Scribes and Pharisees how much God loved them and invited them to come and get salvation? Do we not find Him constantly in every contact with these self-righteous Jews pointing out their sins? What a

contrast He makes in His Parable of The Pharisee and the Publican! The Pharisee saw no sin, and therefore no need of Christ and of God's mercy. The publican saw nothing but sin. Our King James Version does not bring this out as clearly as the Greek. But, whereas the Greek uses the definite article *the* very seldom, it is used by Jesus here, and the publican smites his breast, hangs his head in shame, and cries out, "God be merciful to me the sinner." He saw the need of mercy. He realized that he deserved the torments of hell. Repentance, sorrow for sin, seeking salvation where it may be found, demands a clear and unquestionable awareness of guilt before God. And without that misery of knowing how sinful we are, the cross has no meaning. Yea, not seeing their sin, the chief priests committed the further sin of crucifying the Son of God.

When God, before man sinned, said that sin would bring forth death, Satan said, "No, it will improve man's lot, for he will become like God." And even as God still says that the wages of sin is death, Satan assures man that sin will benefit him. And the sad truth is that today we hardly ever hear of hell and damnation. Instead, many churches deny it and call it a sin to believe that the God Who is love would maintain a place like that!

Churches there are also who would not think of reading God's law to the congregation during the worship services. That is inappropriate, since we are under grace and not under the law. But they will place throughout their buildings signs reading, "No Smoking"; and they will mark off parking places for the handicapped. Yes, man may have laws and insist that they be kept. But the unchangeable God Who wrote the law in stone with His finger can change and drop that law; and it is so inappropriate to speak words about displeasing Him. Speak only of His love.

Yet God's approach through Jonah is as appropriate today as it was in Jonah's day. *It worked then* and brought repentance and the enjoyment of salvation. And if we do not know God's law, we cannot know His Son as our Saviour. Nor can we see any reason for and need for His cross. And we will not know the love which He reveals in Scripture.

*The Standard Bearer
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"Good Morning, Alice"

Gise J. Van Baren

Communication can sometimes approach the absurd. One notices this especially when part of this communication is carried on with a spelling-card. Alice often insisted on spelling out something which, subsequently to us, seemed utterly unimportant — especially for a person in her position. On one occasion, she expressively kept looking across the room. Obviously, she wanted to tell us something. All kinds of questions could not arrive at the problem. So we took out the spelling-card. Slowly she spelled out: d-r-a-p-e. A glance across the room quickly showed that the drape was not hanging quite right. A little adjustment was made, and Alice was happy again.

Good Morning Alice:

Like David in many of his Psalms, Paul here tells of how he has lived in faith. I really can't understand how they can talk that way, can you? It just seems I wouldn't dare say I have fought a good fight when I know how many times I've failed. My sin is in me and with me until I die — how can I say, I have kept the faith?

I don't know if I'm right or not, but I think Paul is speaking here of the new man in him, like in I John 3:9 where John says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin — because he is born of God. Anyway, the verse does give us something to think about and strive for.

Verse 8 is a most beautiful and comforting verse. That crown of righteousness is laid up for all those who love His appearing.

The question I have to ask myself is: "Do I love His appearing?"

It is easy to say I do, but if I really do, I would love the way He "appears" now too! Do I love to hear Him in the preaching? Do I love to hear Him in His Word? Do I read it often or only now and then?

If I long for that wonderful day, then I must be preparing for it in this day.

With love, Your friend

Please read Deut. 33:27

At times, communication by spelling could prove almost too slow. Once, Alice indicated a need to use the toilet. The canvas of the lift was adjusted carefully under her. Slowly she was raised to a sitting position and then lifted from the bed. As she was swinging in the air, Alice tried to say something which we couldn't understand. So we stopped half-way between the bed and her destination. Was her arm pinched? "No", she shook her head. Was her leg pinched? Frantically she signalled "NO!" Was she seated properly in the lift? More frantically: "Yes!" Should we get the spelling card? Desperately, she shook her head, "NO!" Finally, it dawned on us: "You have to 'go' very badly!" With relief she emphatically nodded, "YES!" We hurried!

Good Morning Alice:

Did I ever talk to you about understanding who our enemies are? It doesn't really matter to the beauty of this text, but I often wonder when we take an O.T. verse and apply it to ourselves — who is the enemy?

For David or Isaiah it was real nations — wicked people; but who is it for us? Is it our own sin, or wickedness around us or what? Do you know what I mean?

Anyway the first part of this text (Deut. 33:27) is wonderfully clear.

The eternal God is Thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.

The eternal God, my God, is my refuge, the place of safety to which I can always flee for safety from sin, safety from hurt, from depression, from fear. And then the text says, "and underneath are the everlasting arms." We not only may flee to Him, but we may always know that He is holding us up with everlasting arms. His comfort is there forevermore to hold us up to keep us from whatever that enemy may be.

In His love, Your friend

Please read: Ruth 1:16-17

Alice paid close attention to details. Nothing seemed to escape her attention. One day she was clearly very upset. She had many knick-knacks collected over many years from many places — too many things, we kept telling her. Now she looked insistently in the direction of one of the shelves on

which these were placed. We noticed nothing wrong. Finally, on her card she spelled: m-i-s-s-i-n-g! Someone had moved one of the objects. But who? Several days later, and after many accusing glances by Alice at various members of the family in turn, the object was discovered. Someone had packed it up while dusting, thinking it would be better off from the shelf. The object was replaced, to Alice's great relief. Alice wanted things to remain unchanged. It was almost as though she had convinced herself that life could continue unchanged if everything about one remained the same.

Good Morning Alice:

Did it ever strike you how Ruth could leave everything behind her as she did?

Naomi actually tried to convince her to go back to her own people and her own gods. But God was moving so graciously in her heart that all desire for those old wicked ways was replaced by a desire to be with the people of God.

No matter how strong her natural desire for her own family was, her new desire for God and His people was now stronger.

It's often that way with people God regenerates and converts as adults. They have so much more zeal for God's Kingdom than we who have been blessed with a childhood under a Christian parent.

Ruth's confession should really make us stop and think — how much do I desire God's Kingdom? Enough to willfully give over my sinful desires and press on with the spiritually sensitive children of God around me, or am I remaining in the Moab of my willful sin?

With love, Your friend

Please read Rev. 1:5-6

Alice had enjoyed attending evening church services as long as she could get out in her wheelchair. She enjoyed meeting the people at church even when she could no longer speak. But the time now came when it was no longer possible for her to be out and to sit that long. But a direct phone hook-up to church with an amplifier enabled her to hear the services in bed. She enjoyed that and could hear clearly everything that was said and sung.

Good Morning Alice:

These verses are so beautiful! You know, I find that more and more. When you read a longer passage (which you have to first to get the right meaning) you just get a light idea of the beauty of it. It's only when you spend time with a couple of verses and read them over and over, that it really speaks to you of the beauty and comfort that is there in them.

These verses tell us, just reading over them, that Jesus loved us and died for us, and makes us kings and priests unto God. That's what the verses speak about,

but what they say to us if we really read them and seek to understand the full meaning for our life is much more than that.

I really should have started with verse 4 because that's where the sentence begins.

Grace and peace come to us from our eternal God and from Jesus Who is of God the Father, raised first from the dead, now ruling over all the nations of this world. Unto Him Who loved us, died on the cross to wash us clean from every sin we commit, and by Whose sacrifice we are also made kings unto God, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. And we know that He will reign forever. Amen. So will it be.

If only we had time to spend really meditating on all verses in Scripture and be able to know what beautiful message they bring us, we would truly be closer to God.

With love, Your friend

Please read Heb. 12:1

Little things, the routine things, meant much to Alice. She had always taken great pride in the appearance of her hair. It was a lovely silvery-white. Always, she had had it washed and set weekly. She continued to have this done during her illness. One of the last times she went out to have this done was a week before Christmas. It didn't matter that she couldn't get out much anymore, her hair had to look "nice". And since she had always done it this way, she insisted on doing it still.

Good Morning Alice:

This verse will always mean something special to me. I think it's always that way when you share a verse with someone else, or someone else shares it with you.

Maybe that's why writing to you has meant so much to me.

One time I stopped at the home of a couple who had gone through a tragedy and I knew were having a difficult time. I had no idea what I was going to do or say, but I just felt I wanted to go.

Well, I got there and they were at the table together sharing the comfort of this verse. I will never forget it because as so often happens, I was spiritually uplifted instead of helping them.

This is what the verse says to me: because God has surrounded us with the wonderful examples of the tremendous faith of so many of His children, we can and must in faith, set aside any burden we have, and push away that sin of not trusting in God's promises, and with patience day by day live our lives true to Him.

In His love, Your friend

Please read Ps. 46:10a

Read the Standard Bearer!

TAKING HEED TO THE DOCTRINE

Herman Veldman

The Apostles' Creed (10)

The truth of the providence of God is not mentioned in our Apostles' Creed. This, however, does not mean that this conception must therefore not be maintained by the church of God and by us. There are also other truths that are not mentioned in this creed, truths such as the Trinity, divine predestination (election and reprobation), the depravity of the sinner, the preaching of the gospel and the sacraments as the means of grace, etc. This truth, although not mentioned in this creed, is surely implied in it. Our Heidelberg Catechism, mentioning this truth in Lord's Day 9 and devoting an entire Lord's Day to it (Lord's Day 10) is surely not in error when treating this subject as it does. That God created all things surely implies that He also upholds all things.

In this connection we wish to make a few preliminary observations. First, the word or term *providence* is not scriptural. The only place where the word occurs is Acts 24:2, and there the word is used as applied to Felix, the Roman governor of Judea. This fact itself, however, need not discredit the word as far as its being used by us is concerned. Fact is, other terms we use, such as Trinity and attributes, are not scriptural either. What is more serious is that we may well question the correctness, propriety of the term itself. The word providence means literally, "foresight, to see before hand." We use the word provide, provision, in that sense. Looking into the future, considering the future, we then make the necessary provisions. God, however, is not simply characterized by foresight in the sense that He knows and sees the things beforehand. It is true that Scripture speaks of God's foresight. In Scripture God's foresight is creative.

Things are as and because the Lord knows them. In the Arminian sense the Lord simply knows and sees beforehand, things are not as and because the Lord knows them, but the Lord knows them as and because they are. God, of course, is the sovereign, unconditional Cause and Worker of all things. All things are not only made but also upheld and governed by His eternal will and counsel. This truth a truly Reformed man will always maintain with all that is in him.

Secondly, what a tremendous difference one word can make. We read at the conclusion of Answer 27: "yea, and all things come not by chance but by His fatherly hand." What a difference it is, at the end of this answer, when we read the word "divine" instead of "fatherly." That the Lord causes all things to come into being by His divine hand applies to the ungodly as well as to the godly. However, there is nothing particularly comforting about this. The thought that God, the living God, the Wholly-Other, is God alone, Who always seeks and maintains Himself, rules over all things, such as herbs, grass, rain and drought, etc. . . . , is for the wicked a most frightening thought because this means that in all things God is against them. Then nothing is for them. But if we change the word "divine" into "fatherly" and read this answer as we have it in Lord's Day 10, then this answer becomes most wonderful, because it is then my heavenly Father Who is always caring and providing for me, in rain and in drought, in health and in sickness, in prosperity and in adversity, in and through all things. This is the comfort of the providence of God.

It is because of the providence of God that we, according to the beginning of Answer 28 are patient in adversity and thankful in prosperity. Our Heidelberg Catechism defines the providence of

God as the almighty and everywhere present power of God whereby, as it were by His hand, He upholds and governs heaven and earth and all creatures. And then, after asking in Question 28: "What advantage is it to us to know that God has created, and by His providence doth still uphold all things?" we read that we may be patient in adversity and thankful in prosperity.

How far short we fall of this! Indeed, we know the truth so well. How well we know that God's power is almighty and everywhere present. How well we know, in times of heat and cold, that both are of the Lord. How well we know in times of storm and tornado that we are in God's hand. How well we know in times of sickness and death that the Lord has given and that He takes away. How well we know that all crop failures, wars and rumours of wars are controlled and directed by the Lord Who does all things according to His sovereign will and purpose. Should the Lord take from us our dear one and we are asked whether the Lord has done this, there would be none among us who would answer in the negative. Indeed, we know all this so well. And yet, how little we experience this truth! Of course, the doctrine of creation demands the doctrine of God's providence. This doctrine, we have observed, is not mentioned in this Apostles' Creed. However, the fact that God made all things means that all things are dependent upon Him and can therefore continue to exist only by God's continuous providence. God's creation means that all things are called into existence by the irresistible word of God's power. God's providence also implies this mighty word of God's power. It means that the same divine power causes all things to continue to exist. But why do we experience this so little? It is because of our carnality, because all afflictions, etc., are contrary to our carnal pleasure and desires.

What is the basic purpose of the providence of God? First of all, this purpose is certainly not to realize the kingdom of God in the postmillenarian sense. According to this theory history, then, finds its meaning in the gradual development of all things in the direction of the kingdom of God upon the earth. In the development of the present world and of human culture and civilization the kingdom of God is gradually coming and being realized until the kingdom of this world shall have become the kingdom of God and of His Christ. God's government of this world is such that it leads to the goal of the perfected kingdom of God. Think of all the emphasis today upon a social gospel, also as advocated in Reformed churches, to make this world a better place in which to live. What an impossible view! It is completely contrary to what Scripture everywhere holds before us in regard to the development

we must expect of this world as well as its end. Iniquity will abound, the means and forces of this world will be pressed into the service of ungodliness, and the faithful will be few and will have no standing room in the midst of the world. All creation is under the curse of God, and the creature is in the bondage of corruption and subject to vanity. There simply is no material in this world for a perfected kingdom of God. This view denies the antithesis, according to which everything is being worked out by God in this world along the lines of election and reprobation. Instead of all things developing toward the kingdom of God and of His Christ, all the forces and institutions of this world are especially being used by the forces of evil for the realization of the kingdom of the antichrist, and the danger is great that the latter may be viewed as the kingdom of God. And instead of improving with all its boasted culture and civilization, the world is characterized by corruption, apostasy, hatred, war, and destruction more than ever before. Instead of improving, things are ever becoming worse.

Secondly, God's providence (and we must also reject this) is viewed as maintaining a sort of interval period. This view presents God's providence as a matter of common grace. According to this conception the Lord maintains His original creative ordinance. The Lord had commanded Adam to dress and to keep the garden, as His covenant friend and co-worker. It was man's calling to cultivate the earth and all its fulness, to employ all its powers and gifts and talents as the servant of God, to explore and develop and bring to light the hidden wonders of the universe, and thus to bring the world to its highest possible perfection. This was the original creation ordinance of God. And now the Lord maintains this original creation ordinance by His common grace. Satan attempts to destroy this present world, deprive God of the glory of His Name, would frustrate this plan of God (when, I ask you, does the devil attempt to destroy this world? It is this world which he would exactly preserve and maintain.) But now the Lord intervenes with His common grace, checks the power of sin in man, exerts a good influence upon man, enables him to do much good in the world, and thus continues to maintain His original creation ordinance or idea. Man continues to function as a cultural being, busies himself in culture, develops himself and all things, all the powers of the earth, strives to make this world a better place in which to live. And this is also the social gospel which is making increasing headway also in the church world today.

This view, too, is impossible. First of all, as we have already remarked, the devil certainly never at-

tempts to destroy this world, to plunge it into ruin and chaos. What he did attempt was to gain this world for himself and make it his kingdom with Adam as its head, ruling it as his representative, even as the Antichrist will presently represent the devil. Secondly, it surely was never God's intention to maintain an original creation ordinance or idea. The Lord never retraces His steps, does not simply maintain what once was. We refer the reader to that passage which we have quoted several times in the past, namely Ephesians 1:9-10. Here we read that it was the mystery of God's will to gather together all things in Christ, and therefore not simply to maintain an original creation ordinance or idea. And potent is surely what we read in Colossians 1:15-19: "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 is 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." What a potent, wonderful passage this is! We should note the following. Christ is before all things. The apostle here is speaking of the eternal Son of God but as according to His human nature, inasmuch as He is the Head of the Church. That He is before all things is true as in God's counsel, inasmuch as, historically, He is not before all things but was born in the fulness of time. And it pleased the Father that in Him should all the fulness dwell, and that all things were created by Him and for Him. The Lord does not simply preserve an original creation ordinance or idea, but all things occur, including sin, to serve the Christ. God would glorify Himself in the highest possible way, in the way of sin and grace. This is supralapsarianism? It is and it is surely in harmony with the Word of God.

The Lord willing, we will continue with this wonderful truth of the scriptures in our following article.

GUEST ARTICLE

Ronald J. Van Overloop

Why Missions and Evangelism

(The thought patterns of this article are unashamedly based on an excellent book, which I would highly recommend all readers to obtain and read. It is *A Vision For Missions*, by Tom Wells, The Banner Of Truth Trust, 1985.)

Evangelism and mission work are conducted and performed for a variety of reasons. Evangelism is performed because God and Jesus command that it be done. Also there is the need for the gospel on the part of those who are the object of the work. And, thirdly, this work is performed so that one's church or mission station can grow.

None of the above given reasons are really sufficient or completely adequate as to why evangelism and mission work should be a constant activity on the part of any church. The shame for not obeying

the command does not move us as we ought to be moved. Even the spiritual poverty of the pagan will not so inspire as we ought to be inspired, though it might move us for a while. And the growth of our own church or mission is often selfishly motivated.

We need a grander reason and motivation. The Scriptures give us the grander perspective we need, to perform evangelism and mission work as constantly and consistently as we ought, and in the manner that we ought. That perspective is that we do this work especially because God is worthy to be known and praised and proclaimed for who and what He is.

Psalms 67:1-3 is a clear proof. This is a prayer that

God reveal Himself to His church, with the result that they will know Him better. The reason for this request: that God's way may be known upon the earth, and His saving health be known among all nations (vs. 2). Believers make the request to know God better, so that they might proclaim Him. The third verse gives the result, namely, that all the people praise God.

That God is worthy of being known and then proclaimed for who and what He is in Himself, is the central theme of the whole Bible. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power" (Rev. 4:11). The Westminster Shorter Catechism catches and expresses this well in its first question and answer: "What is the chief end of man? Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever." Every page of the Bible shows God's worthiness to be known and praised and proclaimed.

This being the case, the basic responsibility any church, missionary, or individual Christian has toward the need to proclaim God is the increasing of our knowledge of God Himself. The more we know God the more we will not only see the need to proclaim Him, but also the way in which we should proclaim Him. Our knowledge of the God we proclaim is going to have a profound effect on our motivation for, attitude about, approach to, and methods for this work.

In order to see this point, consider some of God's attributes.

God's Self-sufficiency means that there is nothing that God needs. He is never frustrated. He does not need us to carry out His plans. Knowing this fact determines what kind of Christians we are and the kind of witness we leave. The salvation of men is not to benefit Him, but ourselves. He does not NEED us. That He saves men and uses them to proclaim the gospel is not necessity on His part, but grace. Also he is not a helpless God, but Sovereign.

Consider the sovereignty of God's power. He has the right and power to assert His pleasure. Joseph saw God's sovereign control of unwitting servants, so that they carried out His purposes. The fact that David knew God was in control even of his enemy (II Samuel 16:10) made God worthy of being known and proclaimed for what He does. The missionary knows that nothing can stand in the way of God's gospel. And he knows that even that which seems detrimental will be used by God for the spiritual benefit of His Church.

Consider the sovereignty of God's grace. That He saves any, and that I am a Christian and my neigh-

bor is not, is because of something in God, not in me; He sought me. If the minister or missionary or believer would look to God, Who has chosen a multitude, the number of which is more than the sand upon the seashore, then he can take courage. This God is worthy to be known and proclaimed for Who He is.

Consider God's perfect knowledge and wisdom. He knows everything about the physical world, including Satan and his host. He knows everything in the spiritual realm. And all His knowledge is accompanied with perfect wisdom. He is ever at work in His world, seeking His own glory and the good of His people in the best possible way. Only this all-wise God is worthy to be known and proclaimed.

God is worthy to be known and proclaimed in His righteousness. He is the perfect standard of right, there being no measure that stands over or next to Him with which we can compare Him. Even His acts of judgment are glorious because they reveal His justice and righteousness. His righteous acts give us a glimpse of His glory. He is worthy to be known and proclaimed.

Consider, finally, God's covenant faithfulness. This attribute means that we can trust God to keep His Word; our trust rests on His trustworthiness. No God-sent missionary is a failure, for Jesus is the victorious Prince. This God is worthy to be known, served, followed, and proclaimed for Who He is.

God is best known in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Him we can see best just how worthy God is to be known, praised and proclaimed. In Jesus the glory of the Father is best seen. At the cross we confront the highest and clearest revelation of God's righteousness and love. Just a moment's meditation of Jesus makes it obvious that God is worthy to be known and proclaimed.

God is great! Therefore, He is worthy of praise. It is the knowledge of God that enables us to serve Him, to proclaim Him, and to praise Him.

Therefore those who know God are equipped to proclaim Him. And those who know God best are the best equipped to serve Him and to tell of Him. To the degree that we have learned God, we are equipped to serve and proclaim this glorious God.

The most important and practical consequence of this is that we fill our minds and hearts with thoughts of God. Most of modern evangelism emphasizes the need of zeal for men. In such circles we rarely hear of the glorious privilege of knowing God and of making Him known. Although the Bible knows of man's needs, the Great Commission says nothing of what men need. Its emphasis is different. This does not mean that man's needs are unimportant. Rather the Bible takes another view-

point, namely, that man's needs are not first. The gospel must be presented in such a way that the convert does not ask, "What is in it for me?" but, "How can I best have the joy of knowing Jesus and how can I act accordingly?"

To the degree that we know God, it is not only true that we can make God known, but it is also true that we must make Him known. This is not as difficult as it sounds, but the supreme passion of those who know God is to declare God's glory and to praise Him from Whom all blessings flow. It is our personal knowledge of God that inspires us and moves us, that drives us to obedience to His commands.

The better we know God the more we will be praying. Our knowledge of God makes it plain that the outcome is solely up to our sovereign God. When Jesus spoke of the great need for missionary laborers to gather in the plenteous harvest, He made plain that their first responsibility was to pray to the Lord of the harvest. These prayers are not only that He will provide the missionaries, but also that He will provide the harvest, the fruit upon the labors.

Our knowledge of God will spur us to action. Contrary to the false charge of some and to the evil practice of others, the knowledge of God's

sovereign determination and control of all things does not make us passive nor lethargic. It is not God's decrees or providence, but His commands, which are the Christian's rule for life.

We must find our inspiration in God's character, not in our successes. This is true, of course, not only in the work of evangelism, missions, and witnessing, but also in every sphere of life. This is true for the housewife, student, employer and employee, the rich and poor. We must burn inwardly at the thought of God's glory, for then we will not burn out in His service.

It is always easy to criticize others' evangelism. But, as is always the case, criticism is also a call. It reminds us to deepen our own knowledge of God, to search the Scriptures, and to testify of Christ. To mine the Bible's treasures is our life's work, and to find our satisfaction in God is our goal. Let us pray and learn: otherwise our criticism is little more than hot wind.

If we love our Savior, let us seek to know Him and to make Him known.

Those who know Him best are the best equipped to make Him known, for it is the knowledge of God Himself and of the Jesus He sent which is the grandest vision for missions.

GUEST ARTICLE

Robert C. Harbach

Jesus' Blood Shed

At the institution of the Lord's Supper, Jesus had spoken these words, "For this is My blood of the new testament which is shed for many, for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28). He could speak of His blood as already shed, for He is the fore-ordained "Lamb slain before the foundation of the world." John the Baptist did too, introducing Jesus not only prospectively but actually taking (bearing) away the sin of the world (Jn. 1:29).

How do we speak of the blood of Christ? In the Modernist churches it is spoken of as little as possi-

ble. In our churches, and we say it humbly, you hear prayers exalting Christ crucified. Those same prayers express our earnest desire to walk even as He walked, and also express the church's longing for the coming of the Lord. In the preaching you hear but one theme — Jesus Christ and Him crucified. So we preach, though this be to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the heathen foolishness; for to those being saved and added to the church daily, it is the wisdom and power of God!

Its Vital Importance. The words "My blood" have

much more meaning than merely to signify Christ's death. Death may occur without any blood being shed. There are modern New Testaments which change the familiar reading, "in whom we have redemption through His *blood*" (Eph. 1:7) to, "For by the *death* of Christ we are set free" (cp. Today's English Version). This is a false and perverted translation, especially when the words "the blood" are found to be omitted some sixteen times. The word *death* is used instead. But although Jesus gave Himself up to death, even the death of the cross, He died by the shedding of His *blood*. Therefore, in our "Form for the Administration of the Lord's Supper" (p. 60) we retain the words, "I have given My body to the *death* of the cross, and shed My *blood* for you"

Jesus commanded His remembrance in observance of the Lord's Supper: "This *do* ye in remembrance of Me." Then why do some Christians neglect the sacrament (the means of grace)? Why is it that some in the church never have partaken of the Lord's Supper, nor prepare themselves to do so? Does *our* faith respond to this command of Christ's personally and individually? It cannot be complied with by proxy, nor by an alternate in one's absence from the Lord's Table, nor by a substitute deputized to take one's place. Each believer has personal contact with the blood of Jesus, and so must come personally to the Table of the Lord. Each believer must be able to say *at His Table*, "He loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*." We are *commanded* in "this *do* ye" and "drink ye," not to a funeral, but to a festival; not to a fast, but to a feast, a thanksgiving feast. Why then would any saint keep from the Lord's Table as though its spread was distasteful? Is not the Bridegroom's dying love to us better than wine? (Song 1:2).

Its Covenant Connection. "This is My blood of the new testament," or new covenant. God in His own being, in the three persons of the trinity, lives a covenant life. These three persons are three sovereign friends of one another. The triune God brings His people into covenant relation with Himself, making Himself their Sovereign Friend and them His friend-servants. For the covenant relation is a relation of friendship. The covenant itself is unilateral, one-sided, since God establishes His own covenant with His people, making them to be of the party of God. The covenant was neither initiated nor maintained by mutual agreement between God and man. We are of God's *party* in the covenant, and our *part* in it is to live a new and holy life of thankfulness. The covenant bears the seal of the blood of the atonement. Holy and divine Scrip-

ture calls that blood the blood of God (Acts 20:28). Scripture also bears out the fact that the covenant has its origin, ground, foundation, and maintenance from the side of God alone. On that side we take our stand.

God's part in the covenant stands absolutely sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are His." Our part in the covenant, which is to depart from iniquity and live in all godliness, is guaranteed by Jesus its Mediator and Surety. He, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, makes you "perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight." This He pledges in His unconditional covenant, saying not, "If you will do your part, I will do My part," but "I *will* and you *shall*."

The word *covenant* is here properly translated *testament*, the idea being of a last will and testament which originates only with the decree of the Testator (Heb. 9:16, 17). Of necessity, the drawing up of that last will and testament is strictly unilateral. So with the affixing of the seal in the blood of the Testator. In this way alone God reveals Himself just and the justifier of the ungodly (Rom. 4:5).

As we have seen, this is "the everlasting covenant." There is no other covenant. Arminians today, like the Remonstrants of old, say "everlasting" does not mean *everlasting*. They tell us that Scripture references to "the everlasting covenant" and to "everlasting life" point to a period to which an end may come sooner or later. Arminians, in order to keep their enthroned idol of "Free Will," must reject the everlastingness of Heaven! But thinking, especially perverted thinking, does not make it so — does not make *everlasting* to mean no more than something that possibly may come to an end, sooner or later. Carry out logically the implication of this insufferable thinking and then the future of the impenitent wicked holds for them no "everlasting punishment."

Members of the covenant are not all men (it is not a "common grace" covenant), but those who belong to "the great Shepherd of the sheep"; they are the sheep. Then how may you know that you are in the covenant? Do you trust alone in the power of the blood to save you? Do you *want* to believe you are one of His sheep? Then He has already saved you. He will also keep you to the end and through eternity with an everlasting salvation.

Covenant theology gives the glory to God alone. Other theologies magnify man, perhaps man's little finger, or man's two cents, his boasted power to "accept Jesus as his Savior." These other theologies teach that it is all uncertain whether any shall be saved, it being just as possible that not one ever

come to Jesus. But covenant theology stops every mouth, lest any should boast, so that a saved person gives all the glory to God. Our last mercy on earth will be covenant mercy; our first mercy in heaven, covenant mercy.

Its Intended Effect. "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins." This *many* does not mean "all men as ever were, are, and ever shall be." For "*many* (not all) will say unto Me in that day, 'Lord! Lord! . . .'" (Matt. 7:22). Also, "the love of *many* (not all) shall wax cold" (24:12). *Many* is here used in the sense of "some." *Many* is also used in exclusive reference to God's own people, as in, "the Son of Man gave His life a ransom for *many*" (20:28). God's people are believers, and "as *many* as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48). God's people are the elect, and our great high priest prays for them all, for He said in prayer to the Father, "Thou hast given Him power over all flesh that He should give eternal life to as *many* as Thou hast given Him" (Jn. 17:2). John Gill put it this way: "the persons on whom He confers this gift are not all men, but such as the Father in the everlasting covenant has given to Him as His people and portion, His spouse and children, His jewels and His treasure, to be saved and enjoyed by Him: whom He has chosen and preserved in Him, and made His care and charge. To these, and every one of these, Christ gives this great blessing (17:2); nor shall any of them come short of it; and it is for . . . this that all creatures and things, all power in heaven and in earth, are given to Him." So all through this New Testament dispensation He is "bringing *many* sons unto glory" (Heb. 2:10). He has chosen them to Glory, prepared it for them and them for it; He will infallibly lead them to it!

"The blood of the new covenant is shed . . . for the remission of sins." The word *remission* means a releasing, a release from a debt. Man owes God a debt of obedience, which, with the Fall, he failed to pay. Fallen man became morally, spiritually, and totally impotent, incapable of doing any good and inclined to all evil. This debt, in arrears by ten thousand talents with nothing to pay it off, could only daily increase. Yet to this was added the debt of punishment for disobedience. Now man owes the double debt of (1) perfect, personal, and perpetual obedience to His law, and (2) the debt of punishment for his fall by disobedience. He is called to account for this double debt. For every transgression of the law shall receive a just recompense of reward, that of righteous judgment and punishment, either in the sinner himself, or in a surety who pays the debt on his behalf. "Is there no (other) way by which we may escape that punishment (that debt), and be again received into favor? God will have His justice satisfied!" Payment must be exacted from us who owe it all. We must pay the penalty either personally or vicariously. To do so personally would mean to endure extreme, that is, everlasting punishment of body and soul in hell. Our only hope is in the double debt being paid off vicariously, by our Representative, our Savior, who with His precious blood has fully satisfied for all our sins and delivered us from all the power of the devil. In that way alone are we *released* from our debt. So we are not our own, but are bought with the infinitely precious price of His own blood. The debt of sin and the penalty of death are justly put away. The Lord cannot deny Himself or deny His own holy nature by forgiving sin at the expense of His justice. Jesus paid it all with His own life, blood, and death. Thus His the justice, ours the mercy.

Book Reviews

CHRISTIAN AND REFORMED TODAY, by John Bolt; Paideia Press, 1984; 158 pp., (\$6.95 (\$8.95 Can.) paper). (Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko).

If anyone is in any doubt that the Association for the Advancement of Christian Studies (AACS) and the Institute of Christian Studies (ICS) have maintained their doctrinal and philosophical position over the years, he has only to read this book; it will soon convince him that no change of substance has been made in the thinking of the men in this move-

ment. The same doctrinal errors appear in this book which have appeared in the writings of other men from the ICS. The errors set forth in the book are, however, important enough to discuss, though briefly, in this review. Let us trace the argument which the book constructs.

The general purpose of the book is, as the title indicates, to deal with the problem of what it means to be Christian and Reformed in today's world. The answer is given along strictly neo-Kuyperian and

Dooyeweerdian lines.

Very clearly the author must face the question at the very outset what is a definition of "Reformed." Here already he makes a fundamental mistake. He rejects traditional ideas, such as the idea that the truth of God's sovereignty lies at the heart of the Reformed faith, and comes to the conclusion that, "A Reformed person is *trinitarian* in theology and *catholic* in vision." "Reformed Christianity," he says "purports to be nothing more or less than authentic orthodox, catholic Christianity." And he adds to this, "In other words Reformed Christianity is self-consciously non-sectarian" (pp. 20, 21). Now this is simply not true in any genuinely historical sense of the term. Whether one interprets "Reformed" to be all that which stands in the tradition of the Protestant Reformation, or whether one speaks of "Reformed" in the more limited sense of that branch of the Reformation, in distinction from Presbyterianism, which developed continental federal theology, the definition of Bolt is neither historically nor theologically correct.

But it soon turns out that he has a purpose in defining Reformed Christianity in trinitarian terms, for the whole book is really based on his conception of the trinity. Yet, in his conception of the trinity too he is wrong. Rather than proceeding from the Biblical viewpoint that all the works of God are *from* the Father (as the triune God), *by* the Son (as our Lord Jesus Christ), and *through* the Spirit (as the Spirit of Christ), he ascribes separate works to each Person of the trinity. By means of this distinction he really becomes guilty of tri-theism, for one Person acts in a given work apart from the other two. And, even more importantly, while claiming to believe in the equality of the Persons of the trinity, he teaches a certain pre-eminence of the Father in the work of creation: "What does make Reformed trinitarian Christianity distinctive however, is that the Father and creation receive the pre-eminence" (p. 26).

But this too is not without purpose, for by giving the first Person of the trinity in the work of creation pre-eminence, he separates our work in creation from our salvation, and in fact gives to our work in creation a certain precedence over our salvation. Here again it is true that repeatedly throughout the book he claims not to make separation between the two — creation and salvation; but the fact is that he does and does this repeatedly. He is too well aware of Reformed thought to make such a separation explicit, but in the interests of maintaining his philosophical position, he nevertheless makes this distinction and does so in a very decisive fashion: "When Reformed trinitarian theology begins with the Father, this has some important implications. It means specifically that creation has priority over

salvation . . ." (p. 28. See also pp. 31, 36, 38, etc.).

Now this incorrect distinction is carried through when applied to the other Persons of the trinity. He makes a distinction again between the second Person of the trinity and our Lord Jesus Christ and argues that, as the second Person of the trinity, Christ is the creation Word, while as the Son in our flesh He is Redeemer. While, in a certain sense, this distinction is, of course, true, his conclusion is that we have two callings: one cultural and the other spiritual; one dealing with the creation in which we live, the other dealing with salvation and the mission task of the church. Between these two callings there is apparently no relation whatsoever because the author repeatedly speaks of "tension" between these two callings (cf. the whole of chapter 4 where this matter is discussed).

The same applies to the Holy Spirit. There are two works of the Holy Spirit, one in creation and one in salvation, and between these two works there is no discernable relationship. It is true that the author repeatedly reminds us again that these two must not be separated and only distinguished, but the fact is that he himself constantly makes separation and never shows us how they are related. And so, here too the citizen of this world has a twofold task — one having to do with the cultural mandate and the other with salvation of souls (See Chap. 5, especially pp. 81, 83).

These distinctions lead quite naturally to a distinction (traditionally made in Reformed theology) between the church as institute and the church as organism. The church as institute is to be busy with salvation and mission work; the church as organism is to be busy with social, cultural, and political activity (pp. 68, 69). And, again, while the distinction between the church institute and the church organism is a proper one, his use of this distinction is neither correct nor Reformed.

From all this follow several important conclusions. In the first place, the Christian has really a dual calling in the world, one which relates to the cultural mandate and the other which is concerned with the salvation of sinners. Nowhere in the book is the relation between these two callings set forth. The most the author ever says is that the Christian must subdue the world *and* live as a saint, must emphatically do the former while continuing to be the latter. This is a totally unacceptable dualism in the life of the child of God which is neither Biblical, nor Christian, nor Reformed.

In the second place, he concludes that the covenant of grace can never serve alone as a basis for Christian schools (p. 101), although the author could just as well have said that it cannot serve at all as a basis for Christian schools. In fact, he af-

firms that the covenant of works is really the basis for education in the schools (p. 102), and this is because the primary (if not only) task of the schools is to prepare children for their work in subduing the earth. Here too there is some kind of absolute distinction implied between the church and the school. The church gives spiritual instruction, while the school gives cultural instruction. The church prepares people to engage in saving souls; the schools are interested in teaching children how to fulfill the cultural mandate. And it ought to be rather clearly understood that the latter is the most important of the two (cf. pp. 102, 104, 105, 113-116).

And all of this leads to a certain implicit post-millennialism. The author does not come out forthrightly for post-millennialism, and in fact, in some passages, seems to argue against it; but it is there for all that. Consider, e.g., a statement such as this: "Christians are not only to save men from sin; they see themselves as obligated to build the kingdom of God on earth" (p. 36). Even Scripture is called in to support this thesis: "Scripture is not *only* about salvation from sin but it is also a word about creation" (p. 36). And the great Reformed fathers (Calvin, Kuyper, and Bavinck) are extensively quoted in support of these theses — when in fact they taught nothing of the kind.

We have written on other occasions concerning the errors of this movement, and need not go into detail here. Nevertheless, there are two or three points which ought to be made. While the basic error is undoubtedly to be found in the application of the truth of the trinity to the life of the child of God in the world, other errors follow from this. One such error is a failure to take sin seriously. When Adam fell as the head of the creation as well as the head of the human race, this had important implications for the cultural mandate, for the fall of the head of the creation brought upon it the curse, a curse which makes all true cultural activity in this present creation impossible. In the second place, and closely related to this, no dualism exists in the life of man. In this sin-cursed world sinful man is able only to develop in sin until the cup of iniquity is full. But the purpose of redemption in Christ is accomplished by God in the salvation of His church. This does not mean that the people of God anabaptistically are called to separate themselves from the world, for the creation remains God's and is destined to be redeemed with the elect in Christ Who is Head of all and Who has reconciled all things to God by His death. Every creature of God is good and is to be used with thanksgiving by God's people. But the child of God has not two callings, basically separate from each other: he has one, for that one calling is to "seek the kingdom of

God and His righteousness" in distinction from taking thought for our life, what we shall eat and what we shall drink and wherewithal we shall be clothed (Mt. 6:25-34); he is to "seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." He is to "set his affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:1-3).

And this is not just half of his calling so that in addition to this he must also fulfill a cultural task which is not related basically to this calling, for "ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." This calling is an *only* calling. He is to live exclusively as a citizen of the kingdom of heaven. He is to do this in every aspect of his life. He is to use the creatures of this creation which God will someday make new in the new heavens and the new earth as a citizen of the kingdom of heaven. That is, he is to use them in *seeking* the kingdom of heaven. And to prepare him for this kind of life in the world, he is given the home, the church, and the school, all of which are to labor in unison towards this one glorious task.

In other words, God ordained in His eternal counsel that even the original creation (as well as the fall) would have its meaning and significance only as it stands related and subservient to redemption. The creation and the cultural mandate have no meaning and importance apart from salvation and the realization of the kingdom of Christ. After all, by Christ "were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, . . . and he is 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 death; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:16-18). This is not said of the second Person of the trinity in distinction from our Lord Jesus Christ. This is our Lord Jesus Christ Who is the Head of the body, the church.

It is only with a radical and unBiblical view of common grace that one can come up with a position such as Bolt advocates. It is dangerous teaching and must be rejected by those who want truly to be "Christian and Reformed today."

CALVIN AND HIS TIMES, by Jansie van der Walt; Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, 1985; 151 pp., \$7.50 (paper). (Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko)

While a number of good biographies of Calvin are to be found on the market, we do not regret that this one has been added. The author, professor at Potchefstroom University in South Africa, is something of an authority on Calvin, and he has used his vast knowledge of the Calvin Reformation to

prepare a very good biography of the Genevan Reformer. As the title suggests, the book puts Calvin's life into the terms in which he lived and thus gives many details of Calvin's life which are not to be found in most existing and popular biographies. The book is well-written and easy to read by people of all ages including children from Junior High level upwards.

We strongly recommend the book as a very worthwhile addition to home, church, and school libraries. It can be obtained from: The Institute for Reformational Studies, c/o Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, Potchefstroom, 2520 Republic of South Africa.

*Start the New Year
off right by faithfully
reading and studying
the Standard Bearer!*

News From Our Churches

Ben Wigger

January 1, 1987

With this issue of the *Standard Bearer* we begin a series of church profiles. The idea is to have all of us get better acquainted with each other. So from time to time the news column will contain a short profile of one of our churches. We begin with Covenant Protestant Reformed Church of Wyckoff, N.J.

The inception of the church dates back to the early 1970's, when a copy of *The Standard Bearer* fell into the hands of Mr. & Mrs. Charles de Groot. Favorably impressed, they read it thoroughly and passed it around to several of their friends, who, like them, were at the time experiencing difficulties with various aspects of Christian Reformed doctrine and practice. Meanwhile, somehow or other, the Reverend David Engelsma had gotten wind of the interest in the Protestant Reformed church in that part of the country. And in April, 1973, he arranged a meeting with several couples, including the Charles de Groots, their son Clarence and his wife, and Mrs. Thomas Nelson. After this meeting, Rev. Engelsma promised to send them one of the denomination's pastors to preach for them for a month. In due time Rev. Robert Decker arrived and preached his first sermon at the home of the Charles de Groots. Throughout the summer of 1973 various ministers and seminary students preached for them. Later, after their request to organize as a congregation was granted, the Reverends H. Veldman and C. Hanko arrived, and on Sept. 11 their organizational meeting was held in the Pros-

pect Park Veterans Hall. The first congregation consisted of five families. Two elders and one deacon were also ordained at that time.

About one year later, they got their first minister: Candidate Arie den Hartog, who was ordained by Professor Hanko on Oct. 6, 1974.

In July, 1976, they changed their name from the Prospect Park Protestant Reformed Church to Covenant Protestant Reformed Church. They chose this name because it reflects the glorious truth of God's covenant of peace which had become so clear to them as a result of their fellowship in the Protestant Reformed churches.

In 1975 they purchased a parsonage and property for a building on Squawbrook Road in Wyckoff. After various problems, both administrative and legal, they finally obtained a building permit from the town. In June, 1979, more than a year later, the foundation of their new building was laid. And although much progress has been made, to date they have not progressed to the point where the municipality will permit them to worship in the as-yet-incompleted building.

In 1979 they changed their temporary meeting place from Prospect Park Veterans Hall to the United Methodist Church of Franklin Lakes.

Rev. den Hartog stayed with them until November, 1979 after which he was succeeded by Candidate Ronald Hanko, who was ordained by his father on November 9 of the same year.

In 1983 a group of people in the northern suburbs of Philadelphia asked their church to spon-

Ben Wigger is a member of the Protestant Reformed Church of Hudsonville, Michigan.

sor them as a mission field, and in June, 1984, this was approved. On September 23, 1984, Rev. K. Hanko was ordained by his father as their missionary there.

In February, 1986, Rev. R. Hanko accepted a call from Trinity Protestant Reformed Church in Houston. After eight months of supply pastors and struggling along by themselves, Rev. Richard Flikkema arrived to be their new pastor in October 1986.

The congregation is comprised of largely middle-class people of the type one would expect to find in a large metropolitan area: a mix of blue-collar and white-collar workers concentrated largely in the service industries; some small businessmen and maybe one or two professionals. Here are specific examples: cabinet maker, carpenter, landscaper, draftsman, librarian, milkman, computer technician.

The congregation is also especially thankful that by joining forces and working together evenings and weekends, they were able to renovate the parsonage and have it ready for their new pastor, Rev. Flikkema, when he arrived with his family last September. By utilizing the many talents and skills of the members, they were able to do a professional-looking job on it.

They would also like to mention in this connection, that they managed to keep almost all the regular activities of the church functioning during the eight months they were without a regular pastor.

NOTICE!!!

The Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School of Walker, Michigan, is in need of a teacher/administrator for the forthcoming 1987-1988 school year.

Any teachers interested in applying for this position please write the school at 1545 Wilson Avenue, Grand Rapids, MI 49504; or contact Clare Tinklenberg (616) 457-3212, or Rich Van Baren (616) 531-8048.

NOTICE!!!

TO ALL TREASURERS OF OUR PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCHES AND THEIR SOCIETIES

All collections taken and gifts given to the Mission Committee for the Jamaican Mission Field should be sent to: MR. CLARE PRINCE, 7435 PINE GROVE, JENISON, MI 49428.

In other news: During the Christmas season now past, many of our schools presented programs.

The band and choir of Adams School presented a program on December 18.

Hope School in Walker gave a band concert December 3 at Covenant High School.

Heritage School presented a combined band and choir concert at Heritage, December 11.

Covenant High joined in with a band and choir concert December 17 at First Church.

Over the past several months many of our churches have taken collections for our sister church of Wellington, New Zealand. As many of you know, the congregation there is small and therefore not able to pay all the expenses of supporting their own minister and they have asked our churches to help them in this. The figure that we must raise comes to approximately \$13,500 per year. The Contact Committee reports that as of December 2 more than \$15,000 has already been collected to help out the Wellington congregation.

The Reverend A. den Hartog has accepted the call to Randolph, Wisconsin.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On January 18, 1987, our parents, MR. AND MRS. THYS FEENSTRA celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary.

We are thankful to our covenant God for the many years we have enjoyed with them, and for the good instruction and guidance that we have received through them. We pray that God will continue to be near them and bless them in their remaining years.

"So we thy people and sheep of the pasture will give thee thanks for ever; we will show forth thy praise to all generations."

(Psalm 79:13)

Bill and Shirley Feenstra	Donald and Janice Feenstra
Everett and Audrey Van Voorthysen	Marvin Feenstra
Wacy and Marjorie Armstrong	25 grandchildren
John and Beverly Feenstra	38 great-grandchildren
Gerald and Celia Feenstra	

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The members of the Adult Bible Study Society of the SouthEast Protestant Reformed Church wish to express their Christian sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Vander Wal in the death of her mother and mother-in-law, NELLIE VOGEL at the age of 91 years.

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

President - Rev. S. Key
Secretary - Miss A. Reitsma