

The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Our Catechism is so right when it states that "even the holiest of men, while in this life, have only a small beginning of this obedience." That small beginning is not like starting out on a long road, and never getting any farther. But that small beginning that Abraham had, that Isaac and Jacob had, that Paul had, and that we have, is the principle of the new life, the kernel of seed that bears fruit unto everlasting life.

See Meditation, page 218

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MEDITATION
Cornelius Hanko

A Final Look At God's Law

Ques. 114. But can those who are converted to God perfectly keep these commandments?

Ans. No: but even the holiest of men, while in this life, have only a small beginning of this obedience; yet so, that with a sincere desire they begin to live, not only according to some, but all the commandments of God.

Ques. 115. Why will God then have the ten commandments so strictly preached, since no man in this life can keep them?

Ans. First, that all our lifetime we may learn more and more to know our sinful nature, and thus become the more earnest in seeking the remission of sin, and righteousness in Christ; likewise, that we constantly endeavor and pray to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, that we may become more and more conformable to the image of God, till we arrive at the perfection proposed to us, in a life to come.
—Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 44

O how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day!

The law of the Lord is perfect! The testimony of the Lord is sure! The statutes of the Lord are right! The commandments of the Lord are pure!

The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever!

The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether!

More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter than honey and the honey-comb! (Psalm 19)

How could it be otherwise, since God is perfect, sure, right, and pure; our only Good!

This perfect law of God is not only summed up in the ten commandments, but is the content of the entire Scriptures! Law and Gospel are one! Inseparably one!

For God's law is the lamp before our feet, the light upon our pathway!

To change the figure, that law is the one and only highway that leads to heaven, the narrow way that the saints have trodden throughout the ages!

Even more than that, the law is God's power unto salvation in Jesus Christ!

Should I not love that law with my whole being, even as I love Him who says to me: "This is the way, walk therein and have covenant fellowship with Me!"

On that narrow way we experience peace with God, joy unspeakable!

Yet by nature we can never say that we love God's law.

The Catechism confronts us with the question: "Can those who are converted to God perfectly keep God's commandments?"

This question is not directed to the unconverted, but to those who have the love of God in their hearts.

Can you, can I keep the law? The question is not whether we do keep it. Nor is the question whether we keep some of God's commandments, or keep it partially. If we are honest with ourselves, we must admit that we do not keep even one commandment, for he who sins against one command has transgressed them all. No, the question is not: do we? But: can we? Can we, if we try? Can we keep each commandment perfectly? For it is perfectly, or not at all!

The Lord requires of us that we love the Lord our God with our whole being, with our family, with

the neighbor, with friends and companions, with our house, our auto, and all our possessions. Our one desire must always stand foremost, that God be glorified with our thoughts, with every word we utter, in every act or deed we perform. And others must be benefited.

Is that my life? Shamefacedly I must admit that I am evil, born in sin, while God requires truth within. I so readily seek myself, my own vain-glory, and I want nothing, not even God, to interfere with that!

Is, then, the law right in demanding of me that which I cannot do? Is it proper to demand of a blind man that he see, or a deaf man that he hear? That brings us back to Lord's Day 4, where we brought up the same objections. Then we were told that we have no right to raise that argument, because God created us good, but we, by our willful disobedience in Adam, forfeited the good and brought this evil upon ourselves.

Rather we should ask: Should God, because of our sinfulness, cease from demanding that we love Him? Must He cease from demanding what is right and good? Must He cease from being God, and let us play god? Is He merciful to us when He gives in to our foolish and sinful whims? Should He treat us like spoiled children? Would He be doing us a favor by allowing us to walk the pathway of death to hell?

God forbid! We may be grateful that God's law exposes our pride and sinfulness. We are reminded of the boy who sees the sign, "Keep off the grass", and deliberately runs over the grass. I think of the "wet paint" sign, and my sinful urge to find out whether the paint is actually wet. The law says, "Do this and live", and I do the opposite!

I am inclined to all evil, incapable of any good!

Under the preaching of the Word my conscience convicts me of sinning, sometimes inadvertently, and that to my shame, but often even deliberately, and that is worse. I see my reflection in the mirror of God's Word and am forced to cry out: O wretched man that I am!

By the law is the knowledge of sin!

That same law is our deliverance by the work of the Spirit in our hearts!

Apart from that I would be lost, lost in sin. Though I bathe myself with the strongest soaps, I cannot remove a single guilty stain. Though I make the firmest resolutions to reform my ways, I return like a pig to the mire! Though I would spend all my money to find peace for my soul, even that could avail me nothing!

What can wash away my sins? As far as I am concerned, nothing! Absolutely nothing!

We are redeemed from our vain conversation, not with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, (I Pet. 1:18, 19).

Christ did not destroy the law, but He fulfilled it. He willingly placed Himself under the law, took on the form of a Servant, in order to bear the wrath of God against the sins of His people, and to bear them away. He laid down His life for His sheep, in order to bring them into the eternal sheepfold of glory!

He knows His sheep, and He calls them by name, and they come to Him. Through the preaching of the Word and by the Spirit in our hearts He draws us to Himself. All that the Father has given Him come to Him, and not one of them, no matter how great their sins may be, is cast out!

By faith we are brought face to face with the true and living God, Who has every reason to condemn us on account of our sins, yet He declares us righteous in Christ, and worthy of eternal life!

When I kept guilty silence my strength was
spent with grief,
Thy hand was heavy on me, my soul found
no relief;
But when I owned my trespass, my sin hid not
from Thee,
When I confessed transgression, then Thou
forgavest me!

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple," (Psalm 19:7).

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus!

God regards us in Christ, as if we never had had any sin, even as if we in our own bodies had fulfilled all the demands of God's holy law, and are worthy of eternal life!

We are saved by the very law that condemns us!

"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord," (II Cor. 3:18).

The central message of the Scriptures is Jesus Christ, crucified and risen from the dead! He was delivered over to death, the accursed death of hell, because of our transgressions, and was raised again because He has justified us. With a spiritual eye of faith we now see Jesus, crowned with glory and honor, as our Mediator and Advocate in the heavens. From heaven He blesses us with every spiritual blessing, restoring us in His likeness in true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. We experience the forgiveness of sins, the adoption to sons, the grace that changes us into sons and

daughters of our God, the desire to walk in a new and holy life, to the glory of the Father!

We say with Paul, "Not as though I had attained, either were already perfect," (Phil. 3:12).

Our Catechism is so right when it states that "even the holiest of men, while in this life, have only a small beginning of this obedience." That small beginning is not like starting out on a long road, and never getting any farther. But that small beginning that Abraham had, that Isaac and Jacob had, that Paul had, and that we have, is the principle of the new life, the kernel of seed that bears fruit unto everlasting life.

"Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, we press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," (Phil. 3:13, 14).

Or, to put it slightly differently, "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then I shall know even as I am known," (I Cor. 13:12).

Every Sunday and every time the Word is preached or read we stare into the mirror of the Scriptures. We see ourselves, sinful, wretched, guilty sinners, yet sanctified in Christ as members of His body! We hear the voice of Jesus drawing us in ever closer communion with God!

We delight in the law of God according to the inner man! For in the battle of faith against foes round about us and within us, we soon grow weary, falter and fail, but the Word of God, as our spiritual armor, makes us strong to fight in the power of God's might. As we struggle along our earthly pilgrimage, wending our way through dark valleys, and scaling steep precipices, Christ's rod and staff sustain us even to the end.

How blest is he whose trespass hath freely
been forgiven.

Whose sin is wholly covered before the
sight of heaven.

Blest he to whom Jehovah imputeth not his
sin,

Who hath a guileless spirit, whose heart is
true within.

O how love I Thy law, according to the inner
man in Christ!

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

EDITORIAL

Why Evolution? (2)

The first main section of Dr. Howard Van Till's *The Fourth Day* is entitled "The Biblical View." It is against this section that this critique is directed. His position stands or falls with this section. His "The Scientific View," the second main section, stands if his "The Biblical View" meets the test of Scripture and the creeds; it falls if this test is failed.

What is this Biblical view, according to Dr. Van Till?

Chapter 1 is entitled "Taking The Bible Seriously." To take the Bible seriously, according to him, "means to respect the Bible for what it is and to respond to it appropriately," p. 4. And again, "it involves the following four actions: (1) affirming its true status, (2) respecting its multifaceted character, (3) promoting its proper function, and (4) engaging in a disciplined study of what it has to say," p. 5.

All of this is outstanding for its vagueness and its lack of specifics. But even more, it represents an incorrect starting-point. A Reformed man teaching in what is supposed to be a Reformed college, where he is required to subscribe to our Reformed creeds, might surely be expected, it seems to me, to turn to our Reformed creeds and to Scripture itself. Our Belgic Confession certainly furnishes us with much more specific language than the above. Article 3 tells us very clearly and with plain reference to Scripture itself how the written Word of God came into existence, what its source was, and why we call Scripture holy and divine. Article 5 teaches us that Reformed believers are characterized by "believing without any doubt, all things contained in" the Scriptures and tells why we so believe. Article 7 also speaks clear and pertinent language concerning the sufficiency of Scripture and its being the only rule of faith: "We believe that those Holy Scriptures fully contain the will of God, and that whatsoever man ought to believe, unto salvation, is sufficiently taught therein." And again: "Therefore,

we reject with all our hearts, whatsoever doth not agree with this infallible rule, which the apostles have taught us, saying, Try the spirits whether they are of God. Likewise, if there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house."

But Dr. Van Till does not follow Reformed methodology, which appeals to Scripture and the creeds. He simply starts out with his own ideas and later expands on them, without reference to the faith of the church and without reference to what Scripture says about itself.

Next he creates a distinction between the "status" of the Bible and the "form" of the Bible. Such a distinction might, perhaps, be all right in itself; but the author uses it to serve his own ends. He creates a disjunction between "status" and "form." According to him, "the Bible has the status of 'holy Scripture' — the 'Word of God' expressed in the form of human language and literature." Again: "Though it has the *status* of the 'Word of God,' the Bible comes to us in the *form* of thoroughly human language and literature."

And where does he go with this distinction? Notice:

The Bible is the "Word" of God, not the "words" of God. The Bible did not drop from the sky by an act of divine magic. (As if anyone in the Reformed tradition ever taught this! This reminds me of the opening words of a lecture by Harry M. Kuitert some years ago at Calvin. HCH) God did not circumvent human means of writing, editing, and assembling the body of legal, historical, and literary documents that constitute the Bible. Yet, while the words of the Bible were produced by human writers, the Bible as an organic whole functions (Note the term *functions*. He does not say: *is*. HCH) as God's Word, holy Scripture.

How does Dr. Van Till make use of this disjunction of status and form?

He claims that we must be "alert to two ways in

which the status of the Bible is often incorrectly identified." One of those ways is the "error of placing the Bible entirely within the category of human literature" This statement leaves the impression of a degree of orthodoxy. But listen:

There is on the other hand the error of placing the Bible entirely outside the category of human literature as if it were divinely dictated to mechanical printing machines. Such an approach, and others closely related to it, lead to the all too common phenomenon of breaking the Bible into many separate pieces, which, when isolated from one another, or isolated from their cultural, historical, literary, and canonical contexts, can be forced to support all manner of bizarre speculations (as we will see later).

Here he sets up a straw man, and a very old one at that. Who in the Reformed tradition ever taught such mechanical inspiration? When and where in the mainline of the church and of the faith was this taught? And which are the unspecified, unnamed, and undocumented views of Scripture "closely related to it"? Van Till should not create or conjure up bogey-men!

Meanwhile, what is Dr. Van Till going to do with the clear teaching of Scripture that "holy men of God spake as they were moved (borne, carried) by the Holy Ghost?"

Later (pp. 8, 9) he professes an aversion for such terms as "organic inspiration," "verbal inspiration," and "plenary inspiration." Here he begins to get rid of the ideas expressed by such terms and to depart from the Biblical and confessional doctrine of infallibility by drawing a further distinction between *Word* and *words*, p. 5:

The true status of the Bible, then, is properly identified by the phrase "Word of God." This clearly indicates that it occupies an elevated position relative to other human literature. (Note: only an "elevated position," HCH) And if we understand that the term *Word* is being used in a metaphorical sense to acknowledge divine revelation, rather than in the restricted literal sense to indicate mere words, then we can also avoid the error of denying the form in which God has chosen to reveal himself to us.

Exit verbal inspiration — the Scriptural and confessional truth that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost!"

Where does all this end?

I will not weary the reader with a detailed summary and critique of all the meanderings (with an appeal to such writers as Meredith Kline, Leland Ryken, Gerhard Lohfink, and even C. S. Lewis) concerning the literary forms and qualities of Scripture. I must point out again, however, that Van Till's *method* is wrong. Instead of inquiring what the Bible *says about itself*, he puts the Bible on the laboratory table, so to speak; and he tries, unavoid-

ably, of course, with all his own presuppositions, to take it apart and analyze it and determine what it is.

But Dr. Van Till ends with what he calls "the vehicular model of the Bible." What is this? We shall let the author speak for himself:

Scripture is often referred to (by whom and where? HCH) as a vehicle of God's communication to humanity. This is an apt metaphor, pointing to the fact that indeed if there is to be a message carried or conveyed from God to mankind, then there must be some concrete, or at least identifiable, means of conveyance: there must be a vehicle that transports the message from sender to recipient.

But let us press the vehicle metaphor a bit further. Just as in the world of commerce many types of vehicles are used to convey goods from producer to consumer, so too there are many types of literature, many literary genres, that God uses in the Scriptures to convey his message to his audience, his people. As the type of vehicle is chosen according to the nature of the goods to be carried, so in the Bible the literary genre is suited to the message it must convey. Simple matters of historical record may be conveyed by a matter-of-fact chronicle of events. Profound truths of immense magnitude, however, cannot always be adequately expressed in the genre of straightforward expository discourse; they are often expressed better in a more symbolic or poetic form. How often we say, "Words just can't describe what I want to express." Our best alternative, then, is to shift from expository discourse, which does constitute an attempt to contain something in words fully, to poetry or some other highly symbolic form that makes no pretense of exhaustively describing some great thought or event or emotion, but instead freely admits that it is simply pointing in a certain direction that readers must creatively and imaginatively follow if they are to get even the beginning of an understanding of that profound idea. (pp. 14, 15)

Pay careful attention to the last few sentences of the paragraph just quoted.

Dr. Van Till then goes on to assert that the Scriptures must be conceived of in terms of many such vehicles.

But there are not only vehicles but also packaging, p. 15:

To press the model still further, we might note that when goods are carried by a vehicle, it is wise to package the goods appropriately in order to protect the contents from damage and to provide convenient units for handling and delivery. Similarly in the Scriptures, each vehicle is loaded with its content (God's message) contained in appropriate packaging — the specific story or account of an event; the particular symbolism used in a poem; the specific cultural patterns that form the context of commentary or instruction or description.

And here is the rest of the picture, pp. 15, 16:

To complete the introduction to this vehicle model

of Scripture, let me note, finally, that the Bible can be viewed as a complete unit, including the vehicle (literary genre), packaging (specific story, symbols, etc.), and contents (God's message to us). The message or *teachings* of the Bible come from only one source — God. Scripture ought never to be viewed as a mixture of God's teachings and man's teachings. Since all of the teachings of Scripture come from God they are trustworthy and authoritative. We can be confident that all of the content of God's message in the Bible is delivered to us undamaged and unspoiled. It ought never to be viewed as a mixture of teachings, some true and others false. However (and here comes the crucial "however," HCH), as our model suggests, just as a consumer must first unload the packaged goods from a delivery vehicle and then carefully unpackage those goods for use or consumption, so we as readers of Scripture must be studiously and prayerfully wise in separating the contents (the trustworthy teachings of God) from the vehicle and the packaging. Neglecting that separation would be as foolish as attempting to eat a granola bar without first removing it from its wrapper or, more absurd yet, without distinguishing it from the truck that delivered it to the store.

And so, as Dr. Van Till makes plain in the conclusion of this chapter, the task of the interpreter

becomes: 1) that of distinguishing between vehicle, packaging, and goods. 2) that of extracting the contents from the vehicle and the packaging.

In conclusion, the following:

1) This is a view of Scripture which has been imported from the Netherlands. It is the view of men like Dr. Harry M. Kuitert and Dr. G. C. Berkouwer. It is a departure from the Reformed position.

2) Clearly, the whole task of explaining Scripture, under this view, becomes totally subjective. Man determines what is vehicle, what is packaging, what is contents. Under this view, you can make Scripture say almost anything you want it to say.

3) Under this view, you take the Bible away from the people of God, just as Rome did prior to the Reformation. The people of God must have the "experts" to interpret the Word of God and to tell them how to read it. The hierarchy of the experts is substituted for the hierarchy of the church.

4) Having adopted this view, Dr. Van Till has prepared the way for his denial of the Genesis record, as we shall see.
HCH

PRE-CONVENTION PUBLICITY

Rev. Ron Cammenga

1987 P.R.Y.P.'s Convention

The 47th annual Protestant Reformed Young People's Convention is scheduled for August 10-14, 1987. The Convention will be hosted by the Loveland, CO Young People's Society. Plans and preparations are in full swing.

Registration will take place early Monday afternoon, August 10 at the Protestant Reformed Church of Loveland. The church is located at 705 E. 57th Street in Loveland. After registration, all conventioners will be bussed into the mountains. The Convention itself will be held at the YMCA of the Rockies just outside of Estes Park, Colorado. The YMCA camp stretches over 1,400 acres and is bordered by Rocky Mountain National Park. This is an ideal spot for the Convention. Accommodations

are excellent: spacious lodges, meeting rooms, a large auditorium. There are almost unlimited opportunities for leisure time activities: indoor swimming, roller skating, basketball, tennis, horseshoes, volleyball, miniature golf, softball, bowling, and more.

The Convention theme is: "Lessons From The Life Of David." Our purpose is that by the speeches which develop this theme, the young people may be instructed and warned by the example of the life of David, the one whom the Scriptures refer to as "the man after God's own Heart." Our purpose is that the result of the Convention may be that under the work of the Spirit, we be made more and more young men and young women after

God's own Heart.

The three speeches planned are as follows. Rev. Ron Hanko will present the first speech entitled "David And Goliath." Rev. Ken Koole will follow with a speech entitled "David And Bathsheba." Rev. Wayne Bekkering will present the last speech, "David And Absalom." Besides the three speeches, the young people will interact and exchange ideas in the various discussion groups that are being planned. We think we have some fresh approaches to the discussion groups that will be stimulating and make the discussion groups a valuable part of the Convention experience.

Once again, we are issuing a special appeal to the older young people, those in their 20's who have probably dropped out of society. We would like you to attend the Convention with us. We have again planned some special activities for you, and believe that you have much to add to as well as profit from the Convention.

We would like to extend a special invitation to the families of young people who might be attending the Convention to take the opportunity of the Convention to vacation in Colorado. We have put together a special packet of information concerning campgrounds, recreational facilities, and all the vacation possibilities available in our beautiful state. In order to receive this packet, simply write to us at the address of the church: Loveland Protestant Reformed Church, 705 E. 57th Street, Loveland, CO 80537. Those parents who do take their young people to the Convention, we would invite to attend the three speeches that will be given.

Because of the fact that the Convention will be held at a camp in the mountains, the projected cost will be fairly high. For this reason we are encouraging all societies to sponsor *at least* two fund-raisers for the Convention. We are also encouraging once again the idea of individual patrons for the Convention. We would like every society to contact all of the members of its congregation individually soliciting a contribution towards the Convention.

We will keep everyone informed on the progress of the Convention. Monthly newsletters will be sent to each Young People's Society. Periodic announcements will be placed in church bulletins, in the *Beacon Lights*, and the *Standard Bearer*. We ask parents, pastors, and Christian school teachers to promote the Convention among our young people.

Our aim in the 1987 Convention will be the fun and edification of the young people. We want you to have fun, good clean fun. We also want you to be built up spiritually. But especially do we aim at the glory of God in this Convention. In order to accomplish this aim, we will demand godly behavior on the part of every young person at the Convention. The few basic rules necessary for the running of the Convention will appear on the pre-registration form which will be sent out in due time. Those rules must be obeyed; infractions will not be tolerated. We ask that parents impress this upon their young people before they come to the Convention.

We in Loveland are pleased to be your hosts for the 1987 P.R.Y.P.'s Convention. We look forward to seeing everyone of you the second week of August.

IN HIS FEAR

Barrett L. Gritters

Catechism: Official Ministry of the Church

Catechism instruction is part of the *official ministry* of the Church of Christ.

That means that catechism is different from the instruction of children in Sunday School or Young People's Societies, which are part of the *organic life*

of the church. Sunday School and Young People's Society are not official functions of the church. That is, they are not aspects of the ministry of the church directly under the consistory. Parents decide whether or not they want to have a Sunday

School for their children; the young people decide to have a Young People's Society; just as men or women with Men's Society or Ladies' Aid and couples with a Mr. & Mrs. Society. This is not to say that Young People's Society or Men's Society are not good for, or even necessary in, the church. It says only that they are not part of the official ministry of the church.

Positively, this means that catechism is the official ministry of the gospel, the work of the church institute, the means of grace for our children. It is preaching adapted to the age and needs of the children in each particular grade level. For many years Reformed churches have considered catechism for the children her official ministry. (For reasons and texts, see last article, December 15, 1986 "Why Catechism?")

That it is the official ministry of the Word of God says a lot about catechism.

1. Teaching catechism is the work of the minister or elders in the local congregation.

First of all the pastor is called to teach the catechism, since he is a teaching elder in the church (I Timothy 5:17, II Timothy 2:24). If, for some reason, the minister cannot teach, it is the duty of no one else but the elders to take over. As ambassadors of Jesus Christ in the church of Christ, the ministers (or elders) have the calling to bring Christ's Word to Christ's children. Through the election of the congregation, Christ has called them to that teaching office.

There is the temptation to let just any "qualified" person teach the catechism classes for the children. In more and more churches, this is being done. But the women of the church or men without office are not called. It is the duty of the minister and elders.

Qualification to teach is not the question here. It may be that a school teacher has greater ability to teach catechism than an elder. The question comes down to whom Christ has called to be his ambassador in the official work of the church. As in the pulpit, we allow only ministers or elders officially called by the church to bring the Word, so in catechism.

This does say something about the qualifications of elders and ministers. For that reason pastors and elders must not only be sober, of good behavior, and patient, but "apt to teach" (I Timothy 3:2; II Timothy 2:24). It would be a worthy effort sometime to see a consistory sponsor instruction for their elders in the principles of teaching.

2. Catechism needs careful preparation on the part of the instructor.

If catechism is official ministry, and if it is the preaching of the gospel, the means of grace for our children, we as teachers need to be reminded that the same diligent care needs to go into catechism teaching as the preaching of the Word. Thinking that children might detect lack of preparation less quickly than the adults, the minister might find it easy to be less prepared in the catechism room. We ministers might ask ourselves the question, "Do we love 'the praise of men more than the praise of God?' " (John 12:43) But for the number of people, why should the preacher think so much more of Sunday worship than catechism?

3. Catechism teaching is under the supervision of the elders.

One way, generally, to insure proper preparation on the part of the preacher is to have the elders supervise the teaching. If preaching falls under elder supervision, catechism teaching does also.

Most members of the church, usually seeing no further than the minister's work in teaching the classes, probably are not aware of the consistory's involvement in supervision. Once per year careful questions are asked consistories by church visitors. Three of the questions to the full consistory are: "Does the consistory see to it that catechism classes are regularly conducted? Does the consistory determine the material for instruction? And does it (the consistory) see to it that the classes are regularly attended?" And second only to a question about elder's attendance in worship and consistory meetings are these questions asked about elders (in their absence): "Do they (the elders) at set times attend the catechism classes to see how they are conducted and attended; and do they (the elders) assist the minister when the need requires it in catechizing?" (Church Order of the Protestant Reformed Churches, pages 96ff)

The minister who realizes the backing of the consistory, who hears the elders' concern about catechism, who receives help from the elders at times in teaching, is thankful for the involvement of the elders in catechism instruction.

In the minds of our fathers, high on the list of priorities for elders was supervising the catechism instruction. Why? Only because it is part of the official ministry of the Word of God.

That catechism is the official ministry of the church means that:

4. We have children's sermons.

From churches that have always called the children to worship with them (as soon as they

could keep quiet) and have never had separate services for children, this statement might sound a bit strange. The truth is that in catechism instruction we have "children's sermons" for all ages of the youth.

A number of churches today have special worship services for the children. Either the children are called out of the service at an interval during worship, or the children come to the front during the church for a mini-sermon (which, in some cases, has been given by the minister's wife). The idea behind these special services is that the children are not mature enough for the worship, so ought not be subjected to much they cannot understand.

Why is this not our practice? First, we ought not assume that young children are not mature enough for the preaching. Children do understand ("receive") a great deal from the worship services. We parents ought to train our children to listen to the sermon by asking them questions to and from church about the sermon. If this were done, it might be a little easier for the children, after becoming adults, to have an intelligent conversation at "Grampa and Gramma's house" about the sermon, instead of gravitating to the mundane things with which it is easy to pass the time.

Besides, pastors can address the children at different points in the sermon (applying it to them, or rephrasing a truth in simple language) to let the children know that the preaching on Sunday *IS* for them. In this way the children learn that they can receive the Word in church and gradually learn to receive greater blessing in the worship.

But most important, special children's sermons are not needed because we direct the Word of God to the specific need and age of each child in *catechism*. There the truth of the Scripture is brought at a simple level, depending on the age, and applied to that same age. On Sunday, preachers are called to apply the Word "as well in general as in particular, to the edification of the hearers; instructing, comforting, and reproving, according to everyone's need; preaching repentance towards God and reconciliation with him through faith in Christ" (Form for Ordination of Ministers). No less must this be true in the catechism room. In fact, the Form for Ordination makes no distinction between bringing the Word in catechism and bringing it in formal worship on the Sabbath.

Reformed churches have maintained catechism teaching for children from first grade to confession of faith, and beyond. When this practice is discontinued, there is a void in children's instruction and special services have come to fill the void. Let us not fall into that practice.

Again, if it is true that catechism teaching is official ministry of God's Word,

5. *Children need to come to catechism prepared, mentally, physically, and spiritually.*

Just as no person can worship well on the Lord's Day without proper preparation, no child can learn well in catechism without good preparation. Thus children should come with good attitudes and dress befitting the occasion.

No doubt that is not easy. Just having come from school for six hours makes children tired (and possible filthy). Having supper after a busy afternoon of piano lessons or ball practice makes coming to evening catechism properly prepared difficult for the best disciplined family, especially when the family is large. But if catechism is what we believe it is — a vital part of the ministry of the church, and the groundwork for the spiritual training of our children — then we seek God's help to bring our children to God's house in a disposition both physically and spiritually fertile for worship.

6. *Catechism is worship.*

It naturally follows from our main proposition (that catechism is the official ministry of the church) that catechism, in a certain sense, is worship. We come to catechism not simply to give and receive a lecture on theology and Biblical history, aiming only at the student's intellect. We aim at the heart. Our classes must be a time of worship, in which the entire atmosphere is reverent and our children brought to the knowledge that they stand before a great God Who loves His people through Jesus Christ.

Although parents can do much to prepare their children for this worship by promoting proper study, dress, and attitude, it is the minister's burden to create the proper atmosphere in the catechism room to make the children realize they are worshipping God. In part this is done when the class is begun with prayer, singing, and offering — three basic elements in worship. The other (basic) element of proper worship is the presentation of the gospel of Christ as the heart of the catechism class. Especially this the Lord will bless to bring covenant children to spiritual maturity, for His glory, and the good of His Church on earth.

Next time, if God wills: "What is taught in catechism?"

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the Standard Bearer.*

ALL AROUND US

Robert D. Decker

Science or Religion To What Lengths!? Worship Tasting

Science or Creation:

In 1981 the state of Louisiana passed a law which requires balanced treatment for creation science and evolution science in public school lectures, textbooks, and library materials. The result has been a long legal battle. The case now has reached the United State Supreme Court. *Christianity Today* (January 16, 1987) reports:

Louisiana has waged a dogged defense of the law over the last five years as four federal court decisions ruled it unconstitutional without holding a trial. The Supreme Court represents the state's last chance to save the statute.

Wendell R. Bird, a creationist legal scholar who served as special counsel for the state of Louisiana, denied that creation science is a religious doctrine. He stressed that the law sanctions only the teaching of scientific material.

"Creation science means the scientific evidence for creation and inferences from those scientific evidences," Bird told the justices. "... The teaching of the Bible as part of the implications of the statute would be unconstitutional."

Inquiring into the religious nature of the law, Justice Antonin Scalia asked if it "requires teaching of a personal God." Citing the big-bang theory as an example, Bird told the court, "the term *creation* is often used without any concept of a creator."

Bird said lower courts simply determined "out of thin air" that creationism is exclusively a religious concept and, based on that assumption, voided the Louisiana statute for having the unconstitutional legislative purpose of promoting religion. He asked the Supreme Court to send the case back to be tried in a lower court, where experts could show creation science is scientific.

Under close questioning from several high court justices, Bird noted that lawmakers probably had a variety of reasons for enacting the law. He conceded that "undoubtedly some legislators had a desire to teach religious doctrine in the classroom." But he argued that the statute's predominant legislative purpose is promoting fairness and academic freedom by including an alternative scientific view in public school curriculum.

Jay Topkis, a New York attorney associated with the American Civil Liberties Union, argued against the creation science statute. He quoted a dictionary definition of the word "creation" as an "act of creation or fact of being created . . . by divine power or its equivalent." Creation requires a creator, Topkis argued, and creationist teaching involves religious doctrines that are inappropriate for public-school education . . . Topkis asserted that creation science means "basically the fundamentalist point of view." And he criticized Bird for creating nonreligious meanings for the term . . .

To deny that creation science involves religion or that it requires a creator is ludicrous. The Bible tells us: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," (Genesis 1:1). The Bible also denies any possibility of evolution. (cf. Hebrews 11:3, II Peter 3:4-7) This great truth we understand only through faith, (Hebrews 11:3).

It is also true that evolution is religion. It involves "belief" in its theory of the origins of the universe. That "belief" is unbelief in God and His Word. It is on this basis that Bird and the state of Louisiana ought to be arguing the case. Both sides are from this point of view less than honest.

To What Lengths!?:

The debate over the biblical roles of women and men continues. Nearly every denomination is affected by this issue. *Christianity Today* (January 16,

1987) informs us that:

The Thirty-eighth annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS), held in suburban Atlanta, was officially titled "Male and Female in Biblical and Theological Perspective." But Aida Besancon Spencer, of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, dubbed it "the battle of the lexicons" in her response to discussion of a paper by University of Minnesota classics scholar Catherine Kroeger. Kroeger's paper was titled "The Classical Concept of 'Head' as 'Source'."

Gilbert Bilezikian, of Wheaton College (ILL.), and Wayne Grudem, of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, joined Kroeger in debating the meaning of *kephalee*, the Greek word normally translated "head" in such Pauline statements as I Corinthians 11:3 ("the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man . . .") and Ephesians 5:23 ("For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church . . .").

Grudem and other traditional interpreters suggest that in New Testament Greek, *kephalee* carried the connotation of authority, as in ancient Latin and Hebrew where *head* can mean "boss" or "chief."

Since not all languages use *head* as a metaphor for authority, Kroeger, Bilezikian, and other feminist interpreters suggest *kephalee* means "source," as in English usage where the source of a river may be called its "head."

Kroeger also documented the ancient view of the head of the human body as the source of bodily moisture, including tears, mucous, and semen. Indeed, semen was thought to be produced in the brain and to run down the spinal column to the genitals. Thus the head was considered to be the source of life.

Kroeger applied this notion of head as "source" to Paul's assertion that man is the head of woman, commenting that the biblical phrase reinforces the Genesis story of the creation of woman from the substance of man. This contrasts with pagan notions that the gods perpetrated a sneaky trick on man by making woman from inferior material. Kroeger called the teaching that man and woman were made of the same substance "a positive affirmation of heterosexual marriage," since the low pagan view of women led some ancient philosophers to consider the love of boys to be superior to the love of women.

In his response to Kroeger's paper, Grudem noted the time lapse between the writing of Paul's epistles and the comments of Greek-speaking church fathers that Kroeger had quoted to support her understanding of *kephalee*. Grudem also cited a number of Greek dictionaries (lexicons) that do not support Kroeger's interpretations.

The debate over *kephalee* was further heated by Bilezikian's presentation, which attacked a previously published paper in which Grudem used a computer to search an exhaustive listing of ancient texts for occurrences of *kephalee*. According to Grudem, his search of 2,336 sources showed 49 instances where *kephalee*

referred to a ruler or person of superior rank. Grudem's sources included nonbiblical writings as well as ancient Greek translations of the Old Testament. Bilezikian examined each of the 49 instances, arguing in each case that *kephalee* meant either source or the physical head of a human being or animal . . .

Aside from anything else, the concept "head" in I Corinthians 11 and Ephesians 5 clearly connotes authority. I Corinthians 11 must be understood in the context of chapters 12, 13, and 14 which plainly teach that women are to "keep silence in the churches," (I Cor. 14:34). Ephesians 5:23 is the ground for the command of verse 22: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." Why should wives submit to their husbands if the latter have no authority over them?

To what lengths will the feminists go to make the Bible say what it does not say!?

Worship Tasting:

The same issue of *Christianity Today* carried an interesting item in its column, "Reflections" under this title:

Worship . . . fits right into the consumerism that so characterizes American religious life. Church-shopping has become common. A believer will compare First Presbyterian, St. John's Lutheran, Epiphany Episcopal, Brookwood Methodist, and Bethany Baptist for the "best buy." The church plant, programs, and personnel are carefully scrutinized, but the bottom line is, "How did it feel?" Worship must be sensational. "Start with an earthquake and work up from that," advised one professor of homiletics. "Be sure you have the four prerequisites of a successful church," urged another; "upbeat music, adequate parking, a warm welcome, and a dynamic sermon." The slogan is, "Try it, you'll like it." Duane W.H. Arnold and C. George Fry in "Weothscrip" (*Eternity*, Sept. 1986)

What a "far cry" this is from the biblical truth concerning the marks of the true church (the pure preaching of the Word, the proper administration of the sacraments, and the exercise of Christian discipline) so aptly summed in Article XXIX of the Belgic Confession of Faith! From the church displaying these marks, "no man has a right to separate himself," says the Confession.

*Take time to read and
study the Standard
Bearer with your
family today!*

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

John A. Heys

The Gospel Preached In Nineveh

A question which we may not avoid in our consideration of the book of Jonah is "Where do we find Christ in the sermon that God gave Jonah to preach in Nineveh?" After all is said and done, a Christless sermon is not the gospel. And it is only through the gospel that the Spirit brings us to faith and salvation. In the day of shadows, as well as today, Christ had to be preached. There was no salvation in the Old Testament dispensation apart from Christ any more than there is today. And the preaching had to be preaching of Christ to be the gospel then, as well as it does now in the new dispensation. Christless sermons do not bring men to faith and salvation. And a sermon has to have more in it than the name of Christ to be the gospel. Antichristian sermons will have His name in them; and sermons that strengthen in unbelief also do. Did not Satan, in his first attack upon mankind, use God's name, Genesis 3:1, 5? No, Paul spells it out clearly in I Corinthians 1:23, when he writes, "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." There you have it! Christ crucified is the gospel, the good news of salvation.

In the day of shadows, from the fall of Adam onward, the cross of Christ was held before the eyes of the church. There was the shedding of blood that provided Adam and Eve with skins to cover their nakedness and consciousness of guilt. There were lambs sacrificed and high priests who sacrificed them. There were altars on which these lambs were sacrificed. Indeed the shadow of the cross of Christ was there for the Old Testament saints as the way of salvation.

But where do you read of any of this preached in Nineveh, when a goodly number of people, from the king downward, believed and repented? Did

Jonah preach salvation? Did he not instead preach damnation?

Dare we say that God forgot to give the Ninevites this important, indispensable element? Is Christ in those eight words which Jonah preached, namely, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown"?

To answer this question we must first of all consider the fact that wherever God's grace is, there is Christ; and wherever Christ is, there is God's grace. There just is no grace apart from Christ and His cross. As Paul writes in Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." God already said that to fallen Adam and Eve in the very first preaching of the gospel. He assured fallen man that The Seed of the Woman, namely, Christ, would crush the head of the serpent, and that He would have His own heel crushed, which later on the church saw in His cross. And everlasting life — I prefer to call it that, and always speak of everlasting when referring to the creature which always has a beginning, and then reserve the word eternal for God, with the meaning of without beginning or end — this everlasting life is a gift of God through Christ and His cross. As a gift it is a work of grace. Man deserves the wages of sin, and the gospel promises that which the sinner does not deserve, yea is the opposite of what he deserves.

Jonah himself realized all this. In Jonah 4:2 we read, "I knew that Thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and repentest Thee of evil." THAT is exactly why he did not want to go and preach in Nineveh, and as he said, "Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish." He saw God's grace in his message, and thus in effect saw Christ, in those eight words which he was to preach.

Wherein was that grace of God in that message? In this that it was a warning, and not a mere predic-

tion; and it was a warning that contained a time period wherein repentance and escape from that punishment could be realized. For a warning is quite different from a mere prediction, as was clearly the case with Sodom and Gomorrah. There only Lot and his family were warned. The Sodomites were not even informed of a destruction coming in a matter of hours. Here is a warning with a period of time for repentance.

Now the idea is not that God is going to give them a chance to be saved. God takes no chances and gives no chances. He is not a gambler. He eternally decreed all things that will happen, and in time executes what He sovereignly, unchangeably and eternally decreed. Because He had eternally decreed to bring some of these Ninevites to the faith and repentance, He in His grace warned them, and then applied that warning by His Spirit. He specified forty days, not so that the Ninevites could help Him make His counsel stand, for He needs no help. But the forty-day-period is given so that every last elect Ninevite in that great city might be contacted with this warning and gospel, and might by His grace be brought not merely to fear of physical harm and woe, but to sorrow for sin and faith in God.

But the cross of Christ is also here for the Ninevites. Jonah did not preach it, or want to preach it. He did not urge the Ninevites to repent and approach God through the blood of a lamb. He did not offer to sacrifice for them. He did not hold up before their eyes a picture of that cross by telling them of the types and shadows that Israel had. But God did so through the king of Nineveh, when He moved him to command the people to cry mightily to God and then said, "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from His fierce anger, that we perish not?"

Now our King James Version does not bring this out as clearly and powerfully as the Hebrew does — although the KJV by no means denies it or fails to suggest it — for what the king said was, "But let man . . . cry mightily to Elohim . . . Who can tell if Elohim will turn and repent . . . ?" And that name Elohim means The Almighty One. Doing so the king expresses his own conviction that God *can* "turn and repent and turn from His fierce anger." He does not question God's ability to save Nineveh; but he is not sure yet of His intent. We have a similar example in Matthew 8:2 where a leper, who had a much richer doctrinal background, said to Jesus, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." He wanted healing, and was absolutely sure that Jesus could. But he had no way of knowing whether Jesus intended to do so. This does not mean that neither the king nor that leper had faith in God. They both did, and later on they both

learned that God's intent was to save them. The very question of the king revealed that God had begun the work of salvation in him. He was born again, and he who speaks here of God turning and repenting was himself turned and caused to repent of his sin.

Do not think ill of this king because he asked that question. Did Jesus not ask on His cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" All questioning of God's ways is not sinful. Well might the Gentiles in Nineveh wonder whether the God, Who had done so much for the Israelites, would also do so much for Ninevites. They believed that He could, but would He?

The point is that the king was given to see, and to call the attention of the Ninevites to the fact, that the cross of Christ is the only hope of salvation. No, he did not see that cross itself. He did not even see the Old Testament types and shadows of it. He had no picture of it in the bloody sacrifices to look at; and the cross would not be there yet for hundreds of years. But he saw two basic truths, namely, that what happened at the cross was indispensable for our salvation, and that God would have to do something without our help. Man cannot turn the Almighty One. Man cannot make Him repent and turn away from His fierce anger. Man can, after God begins the work of salvation in him, cry mightily to God. But his cry will have to be that God fulfills all the conditions of our salvation. Our turning and repenting will not save us. Our turning and repenting are due to the fact that God has already begun salvation in us.

That which we, on this side of Pentecost, now see as the repenting and turning away of God's fierce anger is the cross. There God turns in the sense that He, having the vials of His holy wrath against our sins in His hand, turns away from us to pour these vials out upon His Son, yea, pours them out upon HIMSELF — His Son in our flesh. Surely we could not make Him do that! God does not turn off His holy wrath. He cannot wink at sin or forget it. But He can turn to pour it out on Him Whom He had eternally decreed to be our Head and representative, and Whom He in His love and grace sent into our flesh.

Do we not read in John 3:16 that He *gave* His only begotten Son that we might not perish but have everlasting life? Did He not through Isaiah say that He laid on Him the iniquity of us all, and that He was wounded for our transgression, bruised for our iniquities, Isaiah 53:5, 6? Does Paul not write in II Corinthians 5:21 that He was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him?

God does not turn in the sense that He changes

His mind. All this was eternally planned. The cross was the execution of an eternal plan. The saving of Nineveh likewise was decreed before the world began. The cross was no after-thought or repair work. The saving of Nineveh was not due to a change of God's mind. It looks that way to us who are so limited in our vision and do not know what God has for us in the future outside of the broad lines of prophecy in His Word. But God never turns around. He goes straight forward to execute in minutest detail His eternal counsel.

The word *nacham*, which is here translated repent, has the root meaning of lament, be grieved, find no pleasure. When it refers to one's attitude towards one's own works, it is translated as be comforted or repent. And although it is translated more often as "be comforted," the context here certainly reveals that God repents, that is, finds no pleasure. Here in Jonah 3:9 it means that God finds no pleasure in pouring out the vials of His holy wrath upon those whose sins have already been fully paid for by His Son. Rather He will turn away from doing anything like that. And because eternally He saw His elect in Christ, He never found delight in punishing them. To us as creatures of time it looks as though there is a change or turning in God, and that He repents, but note Revelation 13:8 which speaks of "... the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Because we are creatures of time, we must often speak to each other about

God the way we would about each other. We experience a change in our lives, but God planned it unchangeably from eternity.

How clear it ought to be to us then that the king was correct. God had to fulfill all the conditions of our salvation, and did so through the cross of His only begotten Son. We could not bring forth in a human nature one without sin, and one who could bring an everlasting punishment to an end. We could not realize a virgin birth so that a divine Person could come into human flesh. No, God must turn, repent, and turn away from His fierce anger. We cannot turn Him, make Him repent and turn away from His wrath. He designed and realized the cross of His own Son.

And when, after forty days, Nineveh was not overthrown, the believing Ninevites saw that God's fierce anger was not only turned away from Israelites but also from believing Ninevites. They did not see the cross as we now can see it by God's grace. But they did see the same fruit of that cross that the whole church of God enjoys. And remember that even the disciples after Jesus' resurrection did not see that cross as they did from the day of Pentecost onward. They and we see that Ninevites as well as Israelites are saved by that cross, and that Gentiles as well as Jews are saved by Christ's blood. God's justice must be satisfied, and it was by the cross of Christ for the whole church of God.

"Good Morning, Alice" (18)

Gise J. Van Baren

It was discouraging, even depressing, for the family to see Alice so completely helpless — yet so fully conscious of everything. It was as though she was trapped, imprisoned, in her own body. She was there; we knew she was there — but only her eyes seemed to show it. It took longer and longer also

each night to prepare her for sleep. She still needed her limbs adjusted exactly to her liking. But especially her head had to be in a proper angle: with the bed head turned up, and a pillow at the precise, proper place under her neck. This provided the best way of keeping air passages open so that she could breathe most easily through the night. She must have thought often that there was the real possibility that she would not live through the night.

Good Morning Alice:

I think I can understand just a little more now, why when you keep the first part of the law, you will keep the second; and if you keep the second, you have kept the first. Do you understand what I mean? Actively thinking often during the day that God is God, and desiring to live my life in obedience to Him and not be selfish to do my own will, I do desire to love others, and live for them. I am not saying I succeeded in thinking God is my God every hour yesterday; I failed miserably.

And yet, I did learn something; learn experientially that is. I've learned I can not harp at my children with the thought "God is God" still ringing in my mind. It is simply impossible to snap back at my husband's wishes while I am consciously remembering, "Is the blessing of the Lord upon this?"

Yet, human as we are, we are going to fail. Just as Peter started sinking when he took his eyes off Jesus, so as soon as we are no longer conscious of God in our lives, we are bound to sin.

Knowing all this, I must still examine my attitude to others to be aware of the many ways I tend not to love others. (It's hard to say "hate others", and yet, what is it, if it isn't love?)

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Here again I'm afraid my own sinful self-love comes out. I have thought a lot about the right way to love myself as the text commands, and I am far from clear on it. I just don't know. It seems like any way I could love myself would be pride. I do however know that wrong, sinful way of how I love myself.

All too often I get upset at the way another Christian lives. (How can she be a child of God!) But then I must remember my own sins and say with Paul: "I am chief of sinners."

Do I love my children? Then I will strive to train them according to Scripture in the fear of the Lord, and not correct them sarcastically to make my own life easier.

Do I love my husband? Then knowing what he desires of me, I will strive to do just that and not think (or say) he could easily do that himself.

I guess above all else, the proper way to love another is to show them in my every word and action what God has done for me.

Why is it, Alice, that the more I think of the proper way to love God and others, my own selfishness always gets in the way? Do you have that in your life? Does that plague every child of God? Do you find yourself thinking: "Huh, they don't love me or they would be different to me — show me more love. (But do I show a tender love to them?) Yes, but they just don't realize how difficult my life is. (But do I think of how

difficult their life is?) Yes, but really they should try to understand and make things easier and more pleasant for me; they know what I want. (But do I ever stop and try to understand their needs and desires? Have I thought lately of their emotional and spiritual needs?)

Let's both remember again today that God is God — our God — a God Who demands that we love Him above all, and our neighbor as ourselves; and then when we are about to grumble, we will understand that we are not loving one another. Then like later today, when I'm in a hurry to get groceries (as I always am), if I'm tempted to grouch at my little one, I'll know that it is not right, but a selfish way of blaming him for my not handling my time properly.

And later this evening when we visit with friends, if the conversation gets led in directions where it shouldn't be (as it sometimes can), I will forget my foolish pride and say that we are not glorifying God.

Oh, Alice, Alice, we fall so far short! There is so much to examine and change!

It is with tears in my eyes that I write: if God takes you before me, rejoice! Rejoice in that perfect salvation that will be yours, and that you will no longer have to struggle against the ever constant sin and self-pride that is in us.

Won't it be glorious to serve God perfectly?!?

In His love, Your friend!

Please read Ps. 29:11

We knew that the time would shortly come when decisions would have to be made about Alice's hospitalization. With that was also the question of the use of a respirator — for ALS patients often are kept alive for months and years with that. We had a supply of oxygen at John's house in case that was needed, and an aspirator to clear out her throat. But she refused to use all of this until the last few days of her life — when she conceded that the aspirator could give some relief. Thankfully, God made a final decision concerning hospitalization unnecessary.

Good Morning Alice:

What a comforting verse today's is — especially after we know how far short we fall from obeying God's law for our lives.

*The Lord will give
strength to His people;
The Lord will bless
His people with peace.*

Another beautiful promise God graciously gives to His people.

Recognizing how far short we fall from obeying God's law for our lives, we could become very depressed.

But God is gracious! *He doesn't save His people and then leave them to sorrow and distress. But time and time again He gives us promises of strength and peace.*

Inner strength of soul and inner peace of heart and mind. What more can we ask for in this life?

Read those promises often, Alice, and that inner strength of soul and peace of heart will rule over the present turmoil your body is going through and will carry you on in peace.

With love, Your friend

Please read I John 4:15-17

While living in Illinois, Alice had gone every week to Hazel to have her hair washed and set, and when necessary, cut. On March 12, Hazel made the trip to Grand Rapids to visit Alice — something so deeply appreciated. In fact, Hazel even gave Alice her last haircut. Alice enjoyed the visits from old friends, for this all helped to pass the weary hours of lying on that bed. These visits helped her also to cling to a more happy and pleasant past. But when each left, the sad reality of her present condition seemed to overwhelm her.

Good Morning, Alice:

Did you read I John 4:15-17 yesterday? Can you at all imagine that we may have boldness in the day of judgment? John's epistles are as hard for me as some of David's statements in the Psalms. Hard because the more I know myself, the more I know my sin and the less I see how God can live in me.

And yet, I believe I am a child of God, and He tells me through His Word that He does dwell in me. And I may believe that my love will be made perfect — completely accomplished, when in the day of judgment I may have boldness — only because as He is, so am I in this world. Hard to understand? It certainly is — and is only by grace; only by grace.

Can you imagine, Alice, how close John must have been to God to write this? Yes, I know he was inspired to write it, but God didn't make him write words he didn't believe. And hard as it seems — we may believe it too, because it's all of Him!!

With love, Your friend

Please read Phil. 1:19-20

The vaporizer had now become another important part of Alice's night. Each evening, there was the ritual of cleaning and filling it with water. The moisture made breathing easier and made her more comfortable. She did not particularly pay attention to our activity, but we know that she appreciated anything which would make her nights a bit more bearable.

Good Morning Alice:

What a beautiful morning! I guess it helps knowing that warmer weather is expected later in the week, but the snow is beautiful.

It's hard sometimes, when the apostles write of their experience as ministers of the gospel, to know just how those verses fit into our lives.

We don't preach Christ, and are placed in bonds as Paul was, and yet, living as true children of God, we will experience suffering and persecutions. And then, upheld by the prayers of fellow saints, and encouraged in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, we hope. And then in that hope — that assured confidence, in life or in death, we are faithful to Christ.

It must be our desire that others may see in us that we give Him all honor and glory.

Let us then, in this day and everyday — in living and dying, magnify Christ Jesus our Savior.

In His love, Your friend

Please read Luke 12:22-34

Shortly before Alice passed away, a second nurse was obtained to help Alice and stay with her through the night: Jane. Since someone had to be with her all of the time now, it seemed wise to us to have a registered nurse at night. It was another reminder that her condition had worsened over the past weeks.

Good Morning Alice:

Well, I did it again! I just wrote way too many verses for you to read. When I chose them yesterday, it just didn't seem like you could have one of them on your mind without the rest of them explaining it. I'm just not ready to write anything to you yet when I don't know how it applies to me.

I think the two most important thoughts are: "O ye of little faith", and, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Read Luke 12:22-34 again, Alice, thinking of yourself as you read them, as I will.

"See you" tomorrow, Love, Your friend

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is a wonderful source
of study material
for the whole family.*

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the Standard Bearer.*

WALKING IN THE LIGHT

Herman C. Hanko

Moral Aspects of Medical Technology (14)

In our last article we were discussing what others have to say about artificial insemination by husbands (AIH) and artificial insemination by donors (AID). We consider it important to quote extensively from other writers to demonstrate: 1) that the problem is so acute as to require elaborate treatment by many ethicists; 2) that, while there is some disagreement of opinion on these issues, evangelical scholars who condemn such practices are in the majority.

Some additional arguments have been raised which we can briefly mention. We have acquired these from the Spring, 1986 issue of the *Calvary Baptist Theological Journal*.

Jay E. Adams is quoted in this article as opposing artificial insemination whether AIH or AID on the grounds that it involves masturbation, the possibility of adultery, the great temptation put to those involved and the doubts regarding the rightness of the process.

The article also raises some practical problems. These problems are first of all social.

Among the social problems caused by AID are marital problems, children who are born into single-parent relationships, human eugenic programs, doctors who are not thoroughly trained in ethics, incest in ignorance, legal problems and the need for laws, and surrogate mothering and test-tube babies.

Marital problems which may arise include the psychological effects upon a husband who views the need to resort to AID as a blow to his manhood. "The man may feel that he is living a lie when he accepts congratulations on his wife's pregnancy. Because the procedure is kept secret, there is an il-

licit aura about it and it reinforces feelings of guilt. Even the AID mother may struggle with feelings of guilt and fear because of efforts to conceal the fact to friends, relatives and the child."

Each of these is elaborately dealt with in the article. But of special interest is the matter of incest in ignorance. The article states:

The practice of keeping the sperm donors anonymous increases the possibility of accidental incest. English doctors at one time limited the semen donations of a man so that he would not father more than 100 children. The average sperm-bank donor in the United States is used for up to six pregnancies and some for as many as fifty pregnancies. The possibility for inbreeding between half brothers and half sisters later in life is great, especially where the communities are smaller.

Legal problems are many. The article quotes J. Kerby Anderson:

There are three important reasons why a child conceived through AID must legally be declared the child of the couple. First, there must be certainty of child support in the event of desertion or divorce. Second, there must be clear lines of legal inheritance. Third, there must be legal precedents to establish that AID does not constitute adultery. In occasional cases, courts have ruled that AID constituted sufficient grounds for divorce due to adultery (Genetic Engineering, p. 31).

The Biblical arguments against AID are the same as those against surrogate motherhood, for which see our last article in *The Standard Bearer*.

We come now to a discussion of our own opinions concerning these various methods which have been invented by science to bring children into childless homes.

It is important that our readers understand our great sympathy for those who have been deprived

by the Lord of having children. We discussed this at some length in an earlier article and need not repeat here what we have already said. But, while understanding and sympathizing with the agony of childless couples, we nevertheless need to affirm that God is sovereign also in giving and withholding children, and in His dealings He is always wise; and to His people He is always good. He knows not only to whom to give children and from whom to withhold them; He also knows how many children to give to each family. This has been determined eternally, and God's determinations are always in the light of His whole counsel and plan. He knows the beginning from the end and does all things that His purpose may be accomplished. Sometimes saints have to rest in this, knowing that the will of the Lord must become their will.

This does not preclude the use of medical help when various organic difficulties make child-bearing difficult. But when all medical help has been exhausted, a child of God must submit to the ways of Jehovah Who does all things well.

It has also been sometimes argued that because medical science is given also for the benefits of the child of God, whatever medical science is capable of doing is for the child of God. This is often coupled with the argument that God originally commanded man to subdue the earth. These various techniques which have been invented to bring children into childless homes are part of subduing the earth, and therefore good. Thus, without further argument, if science has invented methods of giving children to childless couples, this is *prima facie* legitimate. We reject such argumentation. While in some instances this is certainly true — as, e.g., in the cure of various diseases — science is basically anti-God. Man has chosen to rule the universe which is put under him so that he can use it and all its powers to engage in sin and rebellion. While the creation itself is good (though under the curse) and while its powers are for the service of man, it does not take much thought to see that man uses these powers repeatedly in the service of sin. One need only think of how television is used in the propagation of the lie and of how the great gift of music is used to spread every sexual perversion. Because science has succeeded in developing techniques which can abort a fetus without physical harm to the mother (we cannot say, without great psychological harm), this does not mean that the Christian may make use of such techniques.

With many of the arguments advanced against surrogate motherhood and artificial insemination we agree. We need not repeat them here; we want only to call attention to a couple of these arguments which, in our judgment, are particularly persuasive.

While recognizing that many practical problems arise from these techniques and while assuring our readers that these practical problems are by no means insignificant, we are here more interested in principle objections.

The first of these deals with the intrusion into the marriage bond of a third (or even fourth) party. And along with this, we need to say something about artificial means of conception and birth.

God has created the family as part of His creation ordinance. The family is a reflection of the covenant life which God lives within His own triune being. God, if I may put it that way, is a family God. The human family is patterned after this as a reflection of God's covenant life which He lives in Himself. While man has, through sin, terribly perverted these relationships, they are restored in Christ for the elect, and once again, redeemed families are covenant families, reflecting the relation between God and His people in Christ. This, to our mind, is fundamental. It is of some disappointment to us that all the articles and books we have read on this subject make no mention of God's covenant. A covenantal approach seems to us to be of critical importance.

A covenant family consists of a husband and wife united by God in holy marriage. The two of them together constitute a unity, a whole so complete that they are together one flesh. In this respect they reflect the relation between God and His church through Christ. Marriage is a great mystery, Paul says, but "I speak concerning Christ and the church." In this relationship there is no room for a third party. If a third party is brought in, the relationship is violated and corrupted. If a third party would be brought into the covenant relation between God and His people, this would also be a violation and corruption of the covenant. God cannot and will not love someone other than His elect bride, the church. So also the introduction of a third party into the marriage relation is a violation and corruption of it. Surrogate motherhood and AID do this. These techniques do this mechanically and artificially, but they do this none the less. A third party is introduced into the marriage, and no line of argumentation can possibly gainsay this. This is a corruption of this most holy of all bonds and an impermissible violation of it.

Within that covenant family are normally born children who become a part of it. In fact, our Marriage Form proceeds from the assumption that marriage has as one of its purposes the bringing forth of children. Several times children are mentioned in the form, and the mention of them is always put in such a way that it is but normal that children result from marriage. The point here is that, unless God

Himself withholds children from parents, children are a normal and natural part of the covenant family. That is, they are a normal and natural part of that exclusive bond which exists between husband and wife.

God has ordained that husband and wife, through marriage, become one flesh. As Paul points out, this is a great mystery; and the wonder of becoming one flesh is past definition. As the relation between Christ and His church is a mystical union, so is the union of husband and wife. Only a little can be said about this in the feebleness of our understanding. Surely husband and wife become one flesh in the deepest and highest sense of the word when they are together one in Christ, when Christ is their Head before Whom they both bow. As one in Christ they become one in mind and will, for their minds and wills, both separate, nevertheless become in the deepest spiritual sense of the word, the mind and will of Christ. But they become one flesh also in their life together, and especially in their love for each other. Their life and love are the life and love of Christ their Head, to Whom they both belong.

God has wonderfully ordained that this unity of life and love is expressed in sexual intercourse. Together they become one flesh in this act, an act also, though degraded to unbelievable extremes by wicked men, which is a picture of the mystical relation between Christ and His elect bride. It is a unity of love because it is an expression of their mutual love for each other in the Lord. It is a unity of life because they join themselves by this act in giving life to children who become a part of the covenant family. When one thinks about it, it is in children especially that husband and wife become one flesh, for children are the flesh of father and mother. How beautiful and wondrous are the ways of God.

If this is only understood properly, one can also understand that any intrusion of a third party into

this sacred relationship is a horrible desecration of it. Any form of surrogate motherhood as well as any form of AID can only disrupt this relationship, demean it, corrupt it, break the unity of one flesh that God has ordained. Even AIH — artificial insemination by husband — is a mechanical intrusion into this sacred relationship. The act of child-bearing is divorced from the act of love in intercourse. In animal husbandry surrogate parenthood, artificial insemination and other techniques to improve the quality of a herd are readily used. We are not animals, but rational moral creatures, and to reduce men to animals is to deny their place in the creation.

This emphasis on the covenant character of the home brings another point up which needs strongly to be emphasized. God is pleased, according to the provisions of His covenant, to save His people in the lines of continued generations. Believing fathers and believing mothers bring forth children in the confident hope that these children, because they are born from believers, are included into the everlasting covenant of grace. These children are not saved simply by virtue of the fact that the parents are believers, of course; they are saved by virtue of God's determination to save His church in the line of generations and include children of believers in His covenant. Hence covenant parents see their children as a heritage of the Lord and as olive branches round about their tables.

If one understands this, then surrogate motherhood and AID are a violation of covenant principles. Children born in this way are born, not from believing parents (in the case of at least one parent) but are born through artificial techniques which fly in the face of covenantal truths and mutilate God's covenant beyond recognition. The curses which Scripture says will come upon those who trample under foot for His covenant will come upon those who will not recognize this simple truth.

Book Reviews

DYNAMICS IN PASTORING, Jacob Firet; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan. 319 pp. (cloth) \$24.95. (Reviewed by Prof. R.D. Decker)

This book was originally published in 1968 as a doctoral dissertation. It has gone through five printings since then and is required reading in a number of theological seminaries in Europe. The present English edition was translated from the Dutch by

John Vriend. Jacob Firet has been Professor of Practical Theology at the Free University of Amsterdam since 1968.

Firet writes: "At the heart of pastoral fulfillment is not the activity of a human being, but *the action of God who, by way of the official ministry as intermediary, comes to people in his word*. It seems both necessary and possible to take this position as our point of departure for the construction of a

model of pastoral role-fulfillment." (p. 15) This statement sounds Reformed and, standing by itself, it is. But, what does Firet mean by "his", i.e., God's Word? Firet answers this question: "In the preceding we have made continual reference to 'the word of God.' It became plain that this phrase did not serve simply as the equivalent of 'Holy Scripture.' We confess that Holy Scripture is 'the word of God,' but that thesis is not reversible. With the phrase 'the word of God' we meant 'What God says to us human beings and we hear from him.' In our situation, we may add, this cannot be something which has not been imparted through Holy Scripture. Our interest, however, lies in another point, namely, in the word of God 'coming to pass' or in what we meant by 'the coming of God in his word.' Of that coming of God in his word we have offered a few characterizations and seen something significant." (p. 39) This sounds like a 'Barthian' concept of the Word of God. And it is, for Firet admits: "In selecting these three fundamental concepts we display a certain similarity to K. Barth. Barth describes the ministry of the church — and this includes the calling of every Christian — with the word 'witness.' In that witness he distinguishes three components: 'declaration, exposition, and address, or the proclamation, explication, and application of the Gospel as the Word of God entrusted to it.'" (p. 43. cf. also pp. 52, 53.)

Firet defines what he calls "pastoral role-fulfillment" as the intermediary of God's coming in his Word. God comes in three modes: preaching (*kerygma*), catechetical instruction (*didache*), and pastoral care (*paraklesis*). (cf. pp. 43-82.) He insists that all three of these modes through which God comes to us are functions: "particularly of the church as fellowship in Christ." (p. 89)

When Firet speaks of "dynamics in pastoring," he makes a distinction between "the hermeneutic moment" — the impetus toward understanding — and the "agogic moment" — the impetus toward change. In practice these two merge and presuppose one another. For the purpose of theological analysis and research, however, they must be distinguished. (cf. pp. 95-124.) The emphasis of the book is on the "agogic moment". When God comes to people through the intermediary of pastoral role-fulfillment, he aims at a change in their psycho-spiritual functioning. (pp. 231ff.)

As is obvious from the excerpts quoted above this book is full of difficult, technical terms. This along with its style which inevitably suffers through a translation makes the book tough going. One cannot just read through it. It is not intended for the layman, but is aimed at the Practical Theologians and students of Practical Theology.

ORTHODOXY AND ORTHOPRAXIS IN THE REFORMED COMMUNITY TODAY, edited by John Bolt; Paideia Press, 1986; 160 pp., \$7.95 (paper). (Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko.)

This book contains the papers which were delivered at a conference held at Redeemer College, Hamilton, Ontario on May 30 - June 1 last year. According to the introduction of this book, "the conference was called to explore the problem of polarization in the Christian Reformed community, to come to greater clarity on the reasons for polarization and to promote healing by providing a forum for dialogue and discussion." The rather strange word "orthopraxis," a word which has come into general use only in the last four or five years, means, again according to the introduction, "true or right moral and social action." So the book deals with sound doctrine and sound practice as that relates to the present polarization in the Reformed community.

We cannot give a lengthy review of the book, mainly because this would involve an analysis of different papers by different speakers and this review would then become a book in itself. The best we can do is give the titles of the papers and offer a few comments. The titles are as follows: 1) The Problem of Polarization in the Christian Reformed Community, by John Bolt — a defense of the position that polarization in the CRC is due to controversy over orthodoxy and orthopraxis; 2) The Changing Face of Truth, by John Cooper — a defense of the traditional understanding of truth; 3) Heresy and Toleration, by John Van Dyke — a condemnation of modern ideas of heresy and a plea for the unity of the church; 4) Confessing the Reformed Faith Today, by Gordon Spykman — a defense of the "Contemporary Testimony" as an aid in restoring unity against our common enemy, secularization; 5) Why Apartheid is not a Heresy, by Henry Vander Goot — an excellent analysis and critique of the decision of the CRC which branded apartheid a heresy; 6) The "Women-in Office" Issue: How Crucial is It?, by Nelson Kloosterman — a condemnation of Synod's decision approving women deacons; 7) Liberating Secession or Lamentable Schism: Can a Reformed Church Be Both "Catholic" and "True," by John Bolt — a plea for the two wings of the church to stay together; 8) Reflections at the Conclusion of the "Orthodoxy and Orthopraxis" Conference, by John Hulst.

Further conferences are being planned and the papers of these conferences will also be published. Hence this volume has the general title: "Christian Reformed Perspectives, Volume I." The book is rather important in order to understand what is happening in the CRC today.

VALIANT FOR TRUTH, THE STORY OF JOHN BUNYAN, by Anne Arnot; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1985; 157 pp., \$5.95 (paper). (Reviewed by Gertrude Hoeksema)

In this account, the author starts the story of John Bunyan's life when he was in his teens, a reckless, profane young man, who joined Cromwell's army at the age of sixteen. Although the story traces his life with his family in the context of the seventeenth century ecclesiastical and political structure of England, the thrust of the biography is John Bunyan's spiritual struggle, from severe depression, through his conversion, to his life as a preacher, and later as a prisoner for the cause of God and His Word.

Probably because John Bunyan was a Puritan, and concerned with his spiritual feelings, the biography is at times excessively introspective. It is, however, an enlightening and informative account not only of John Bunyan, but also of church life in his day. Recommended.

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Report of Classis East

January 14, 1987

Classis East met in regular session on Wednesday, January 14, 1987 at the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids. All the churches were represented by two delegates. Rev. J. Kortering was the chair of this session.

An overture to synod to amend its 1960 decision on the baptism of adopted children was forwarded with the disapproval of classis. The grounds (summarized) were (1) that the brother had not shown that the 1960 decision needed amending and (2) that apart from the present practice of rarely removing children from adoptive parents, the legal aspect of baptism requires that all the legal aspects of the adoption must be completed before baptism be administered since only legal parents or guardians may present a child for baptism.

Appeals to synod re classis' decisions on marriage, divorce and remarriage were heard and forwarded to synod for adjudication. Classis considered the matter finished at this level since the essential arguments and principles had been considered and answered.

A protest of a synodical decision to suggest revision of the constitution of the Contact Committee was forwarded to synod without comment on the ground that this was a procedural matter and only synod could decide on matters of its own procedure.

Classis also considered a protest from a brother against advice given him by a consistory re visitation of his children with his divorced spouse.

Classis decided that the protest was not legally before it since it violated the stipulations of Article 31 of the Church Order.

Subsidy requests for 1988 were received from Covenant in the amount of \$27,000 and from Kalamazoo in the amount of \$7,000. These requests were approved and forwarded to synod. Covenant also requested adjustment of their 1987 subsidy from \$17,800 to \$26,000. Grounds for the adjustment were that the size of the congregation has decreased from 11 families to 7 and that there has been an increase in expenses. Classis approved this adjustment.

The following delegates *ad examina* were chosen: Rev. W. Bekkering to a three-year *primus* term, Rev. J. Slopsema to a three-year *secundus* term, and Rev. R. Miersma to a one-year *secundus* term. Rev. S. Key was elected to serve a three-year term on the classical committee. Delegates to synod are as follows: **MINISTERS:** *Primi:* M. Joostens, M. Kamps, J. Kortering, J. Slopsema; *Secundi:* W. Bekkering, B. Gritters, R. Miersma, B. Woudenberg; **ELDERS:** *Primi:* D. Doezeema, D. Engelsma, C. Prince, R. Teitsma; *Secundi:* P. Koole, C. Kuiper, G. Kuiper, J. Van Baren. Revs. Heys and C. Hanko were chosen as church visitors.

Expenses amounted to \$817.75. Classis will meet next on Wednesday, May 13, 1987 at Southeast Prot. Ref. Church.

Respectfully submitted,
Jon Huiskens, Stated Clerk

News From Our Churches

Ben Wigger

February 15, 1987

Rev. den Hartog and his family have now made their way across the country and are settling in to the new routine of Randolph, Wisconsin.

Rev. den Hartog was scheduled to be installed as pastor of Randolph on Friday, January 23. However, before the den Hartogs arrived in Randolph they made a couple of stops: one in Lynden, Washington, and another in Doon, Iowa.

The consistory of Lynden asked Rev. den Hartog to preach for them on Old Year's Evening and for the next Sunday afternoon service. While in Lynden, Rev. den Hartog also gave a talk on his labors in Singapore, along with a question and answer period on Sunday evening, January 11.

The den Hartogs then left Lynden early the next week and made their way to Doon, Iowa. Sunday, January 18, Rev. den Hartog conducted the morning service. While in Doon the congregation arranged an evening for the purpose of greeting Rev. den Hartog and family, and at the same time to thank them for their seven years of labor in Singapore, as their missionary and family, and to bid them farewell. Rev. den Hartog planned to show a few slides and to talk about the present situation in Singapore and the future of our work of missions in that area.

Rev. and Mrs. den Hartog and their six children then left Doon and arrived in Randolph some time during the day Monday, January 19. An announcement in Randolph's bulletin advised the congregation that the den Hartogs were still in need of some items to begin housekeeping; furniture for the living room and bedrooms, and some winter clothing.

I just can't help but wonder how the den Hartogs are adjusting to winter in the Northern United States. The average year round temperature in Singapore is 80°. Right now the temperature in Michigan is hovering around zero, and in Wisconsin it's even colder. Welcome to winter, Rev. and Mrs. den Hartog, Sarah, Jonathon, Lisa, Amy, Timothy and Matthew!

Our congregations in Lynden and Doon are attempting to begin church choral societies, for the purpose of coming together to sing praises to God.

The Consistory of Lynden has appointed a committee to look into possible solutions for their overcrowding in church. This committee has been

researching various possibilities which include remodeling of the current building, purchasing another existing church, or buying property and building a new church. This committee has been talking with the Word of Life Church, which presently is for sale. The Word of Life Church has offered the congregation in Lynden the use of their building for one of their services. The Consistory is considering this offer.

And one more item from Lynden. The congregation decided to broadcast their sermons on radio station KNIR on Sunday mornings, although at the present time I have no information when this will start, or at what time.

Lynden congregation is not the only group trying to deal with over-crowding. Covenant Christian High School in Walker, Michigan is also facing the same "problem". A special society meeting was called to convene on January 29. The agenda included a petition and a proposal to approve Phase I of the master building plan. Although the master plan covers three phases, Phase I as proposed should serve the enrollment for approximately six years. According to the information I have received, Phase I would add four new classrooms and two restrooms to the west end of Covenant, as well as enlarge the office and staff areas.

The Evangelism Committee of South Holland has prepared their Pastors' recent series of sermons on Prayer in two boxed sets of cassette tapes. The first set of six sermons on three tapes consists of the introductory sermons on the necessity and requirements of prayer. The second set of eleven sermons on six tapes consists of sermons explicating the Lord's Prayer. The cost is \$15 for the first set and \$21 for the second set. This committee has also put together Rev. Engelsma's recent series on "The Biblical Doctrine of Election" in a set of cassette tapes. There are eight sermons on four tapes. The cost of this set is \$15. All of these sets are available by contacting Mr. Joe Postma in care of South Holland Protestant Reformed Church, 16511 South Park Ave., South Holland, Illinois 60473.

I was happy to learn that the Adams Street Mothers Club Soup Supper is still an annual event. It was scheduled for Thursday, February 12 in the basement of First Church. Over the years I wonder how many bowls of soup have been eaten at that annual culinary event.

The Ladies' Circle of Doon, Iowa also sponsored their Soup Supper the night of January 23.

Ben Wigger is an elder in the Protestant Reformed Church of Hudsonville, Michigan.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

REVEREND AND MRS. GISE VAN BAREN celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary on January 25, 1987. Their children and grandchildren are grateful to God for their love and covenant instruction in the years already past. It is our prayer that the Lord will preserve us in our generations to be faithful unto Him.

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

John and Valerie Van Baren
Jennifer, Jordan and Jill
Bob and Carolyn Prins
Kyle and Erik

Mike and Mary Van Overloop
Kevin and Denise Haan
Gerald, Daniel, Philip,
and Rachel Van Baren

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Council of Hope (Walker, Michigan) Protestant Reformed Church herewith extends its Christian sympathy to its fellow office bearer, Elder Alvin Rau in the death of his brother, GOTTLIEB RAU of Aberdeen, South Dakota on January 7, 1987.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." (Romans 8:28)

Rev. James Slopsema, Pres.
P. Koole, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The members of the Men's Society of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church of Walker, Michigan, wish to express their Christian sympathy to Alvin Rau in the death of his brother, GOTTLIEB RAU of Aberdeen, South Dakota.

"It is God that girdeth me with strength and maketh my way perfect." (Psalm 18:32)

Peter Koole, Pres.
Milo Dewald, Sec'y.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Men's Society of SouthWest Protestant Reformed Church hereby expresses sympathy to Mr. Basil Hafer and his family in the death of his father-in-law, MR. JAMES TIMMERMAN.

"The Lord knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be forever." (Psalm 37:18)

Phillip Lotterman, Pres.
Bill DeKraker, Sec'y.

LEAGUE MEETING NOTICE!!!

The Spring meeting of the League of Mr. and Mrs. Societies will be held, the Lord willing, on Tuesday, March 10, 1987, at 8 P.M. Hosted by the Byron Center Protestant Reformed Church it will be held at the Byron Center Christian Junior High School. Rev. J. Slopsema will speak on "Family Devotions, Activities and Interactions." All members and others interested in this topic are urged to attend.

John Streyle, Delegate of Society

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On February 14, 1987, our parents and grandparents, MR. AND MRS. ALVIN DE YOUNG celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary. We give thanks to our Heavenly Father for the love and covenant instruction they have given us. We pray that God will continue to bless and keep them in the years to come.

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

Dan and Laura Schipper
Bradley
Lisa De Young

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Priscilla Society of First Protestant Reformed Church mourns the loss of a dear, faithful member, MRS. BERTHA LOOYENGA, who passed away suddenly on January 12, 1987.

The Society also expresses its Christian sympathy to her two daughters-in-law and fellow members, Mrs. Stuart Looyenga and Mrs. Ted Looyenga. May God comfort them by His Word and Spirit, "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel and afterward receive me to Glory." (Psalm 73:24)

Mrs. Roselle Ezinga, President
Miss Elaine Rietema, Secretary

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Consistory of the Loveland Protestant Reformed Church, on behalf of the congregation, expresses its heartfelt sympathy to Mr. Clyde Campbell and family in the death of his beloved wife, VIOLA CAMPBELL. May the Lord comfort the bereaved and sustain them in their sorrow by the power of His grace. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." (Psalm 116:15)

Rev. Ron Cammenga, President
Mr. Larry Nelson, Clerk

NOTICE!!!

The South Holland Protestant Reformed Christian School seeks applications for an elementary school teacher for the 1987-1988 academic year. Please send resume' to Board Secretary, James Lanting, P.O. Box 156, South Holland, Illinois 60473.

NOTICE!!!

Classis West of the Protestant Reformed Churches will meet in Hull, Iowa on Wednesday, March 4, 1987, at 8:30 AM, the Lord willing.

Rev. David Engelsma, Stated Clerk

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.