

# The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

In turn, those who will have the kingdom and its salvation must sacrifice many things for the sake of this treasure. For one thing, they definitely must sacrifice the sinful lifestyle of this world, which is so pleasing to the flesh. They may be required to sacrifice earthly riches, a good job, friends, or social standing. To have and enjoy the kingdom may require the sacrifice of all things earthly, even one's earthly life. There is definitely a price to pay for the kingdom. And sometimes that price is extremely high.

*See Meditation, page 362*

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## The Great Worth Of The Kingdom

*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.**Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:**Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.*  
*Matthew 13:44-46*

These two parables are commonly designated the parable of the hidden treasure and the parable of the pearl of great price.

A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. In the parables, Jesus told stories of earthly events that commonly occurred or that could

very well have occurred. Through these stories Jesus very graphically illustrated the great realities of the kingdom of heaven. Jesus could do this, of course, because God formed the earthly creation to be an earthly picture of the great kingdom of heaven.

The parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price illustrate the same truth about the kingdom. Each parable tells us a different story. But each parable points us to the same reality — the kingdom of heaven is of tremendous worth and value, worth the sacrifice of all things earthly.

How this truth needs to be emphasized, especially in our day when the relative worth of earthly things is greatly exaggerated.

\* \* \* \* \*

How valuable the kingdom of heaven is!

The focal point of each parable is a treasure of great value and worth.

In the parable of the hidden treasure, this treasure is riches which someone had hid in a field. In Bible times men of wealth usually buried part of their wealth in the ground for safe-keeping. The treasure mentioned in the parable of the hidden treasure was just such a treasure, which evidently had been buried generations ago and long forgotten.

In the parable of the pearl of great price the treasure Jesus focuses our attention on is a pearl. In Bible times pearls were highly valued. There were different grades of pearls depending on their size, shape, tint, and smoothness. But a perfect pearl was worth a fortune. The pearl of great price in the parable was just such a pearl.

Both of these treasures represent the kingdom of heaven and serve to illustrate the great worth of the kingdom.

We must understand that the kingdom of heaven is both a present as well as a future reality.

The kingdom of heaven was established by Jesus at His ascension into heaven when He was seated at God's right hand and enthroned as King over all things. As the name suggests, this kingdom is for the present centered in heaven, although the kingdom is also represented here on the earth. It is represented, for example, in the Christian home, the Christian church, the Christian school, as well as institutions of Christian mercy.

There is a sense, however, in which the kingdom of heaven is still coming. For the kingdom is not yet complete. The kingdom will not be complete until

Christ comes again at the end of the ages. At that time He will destroy His and our enemies, the powers of darkness. He will also transform this present creation into a new creation into which He will also bring the church to live forever in perfect righteousness. Then the kingdom will be fully come.

By comparing the kingdom to this hidden treasure and the pearl of great price, Jesus teaches us that the kingdom is of tremendous value and worth.

The kingdom of heaven is a kingdom of many riches. These riches are not material riches of silver and gold. The riches of the kingdom are far greater. The riches of the kingdom are the great riches of salvation in Jesus Christ. These riches consist in the forgiveness of sin, the new life of Christ, fellowship and communion with the ever blessed God.

How rich and blessed are those who possess and enjoy the riches of the kingdom! These riches bring a joy and meaning to life that earthly riches can not.

These great riches are the possession of every born again believer in Jesus Christ who by His faith is made a conscious citizen of the kingdom.

\* \* \* \* \*

The kingdom and its riches are something that must be found.

In both the parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price the great treasure was found. In the parable of the hidden treasure a certain man, who was either a hired hand or a renter, suddenly and unexpectedly found a treasure hidden in a field. In the parable of the pearl of great price we have a merchant who traveled to the market place of the world looking for a perfect pearl. And finally, after much searching, he found the pearl for which he had been looking.

Although both of these men found their respective treasures in different ways, the finding of these treasures points to a very necessary reality of finding the kingdom and its great riches.

By nature man does not see or appreciate the great value of the kingdom. From the gospel he may learn about the kingdom. From the gospel he may even learn of the great riches of salvation which belong to the kingdom. But because of his depravity, he is blind to spiritual realities. For that reason he does not see the kingdom and its salvation as being of great worth. He scoffs at the gospel claims concerning the kingdom. The kingdom and its riches are to him a pipe dream of fools who do not have their feet on the ground. To the natural man the kingdom of heaven is indeed a treasure that is hidden.

If we will come to see the great worth of the kingdom, our eyes must be opened through a new birth in Jesus Christ. When a person is born again in Christ, he comes to see the kingdom as he never saw it before. The kingdom and its wealth become to him a great treasure that he very much wants to possess. As a result he strives to be a citizen of this kingdom that he may enjoy the riches of its salvation. In short, he finds the treasure of the kingdom.

Have you found the kingdom?

\* \* \* \* \*

Having found the great treasure of the kingdom, this great treasure must also be acquired.

The men in the two parables both acquired what they had discovered. The man who found the treasure hidden in the field proceeded to buy the field so that the treasure hidden in it might be his. In turn, the merchant who found the pearl of great price also purchased the pearl he had found.

In like manner, those who are led by the grace of God to discover the kingdom as a great treasure also acquire the kingdom with all its spiritual riches.

Now the kingdom of heaven and its salvation is not something that can be bought with money. Nor are we able to earn or merit them with our own works.

Indeed, the kingdom and its salvation must be earned. They exist only on the basis of merit. But that merit is not our merit; it is Christ's merit. The kingdom and its salvation is based exclusively on the perfect righteousness of the cross of Jesus Christ.

That which Christ has earned through His righteousness is given as a free gift to all those who are led by God to find and seek it.

This free gift of the kingdom is acquired by faith alone.

Faith is the God-given gift to place our trust in Jesus Christ, to cling to Him in all our needs and to find in Him all the blessings of salvation. We see faith primarily in prayer, as troubled souls lay their needs before the throne of grace and seek God's blessing for Christ's sake.

This faith God works in the hearts and lives of all His people. The beginnings of this faith are that God's people discover the kingdom as a treasure of great value. Having been led to the point by God through faith, they are also led to acquire this great treasure by clinging to Jesus Christ in their faith.

Have you made the kingdom and its great riches of salvation yours by faith?

\* \* \* \* \*

Although the kingdom and its salvation are God's free gift in Jesus, they nevertheless have a great price.

The man who discovered the treasure hid in the field sold all that he had to buy the field and acquire the treasure he had found. In like manner, the merchant who found the pearl he had been seeking sold all that he had to purchase this goodly pearl. In both instances, it cost these men all they had to acquire the treasure they had discovered. But because the treasures they had found were of such great worth, they both gladly paid the price.

Those who will acquire the kingdom and its salvation must also pay a price.

This is the price of sacrificing for the sake of the kingdom.

A young man who contemplates marriage must be willing to sacrifice many things to have a wife. There is a price he must pay. A couple who desires children also must be willing to sacrifice many things that otherwise they may be able to enjoy, were it not for children. There is a price to pay.

In turn, those who will have the kingdom and its salvation must sacrifice many things for the sake of this treasure. For one thing, they definitely must sacrifice the sinful lifestyle of this world, which is so pleasing to the flesh. They may be required to sacrifice earthly riches, a good job, friends, or social standing. To have and enjoy the kingdom may require the sacrifice of all things earthly, even one's earthly life. There is definitely a price to pay for the kingdom. And sometimes that price is extremely high.

For that reason there are many who lose interest in the kingdom and its riches.

The teaching of Jesus in these parables is that the kingdom and its salvation is worth whatever price they may cost us. The kingdom is of such great worth and value that even the supreme price is really nothing. There is absolutely no comparison possible between the cost to us of having the kingdom and the great joy the kingdom affords us through its fabulous wealth!

Let us by faith lay hold on these important truths.

And let us by that same faith lay hold on the kingdom and its wonderful salvation.

*Read and study  
the Standard Bearer!*

## EDITORIALS

# Dr. Harry Boer Is Right

In this editorial we interrupt our critique of Dr. Howard Van Till's *The Fourth Day* in order to comment on a related matter. The reader will recall that in one of my editorials on this subject, in which I called attention to the fact that Dr. Van Till is guilty of a higher critical approach to Scripture, I made the statement that the ghost of Dr. Ralph Janssen is stalking the halls of Calvin College. Dr. Janssen, you may recall, was deposed as seminary professor in 1922 because of his higher critical views of Scripture. This was a case which was inextricably connected, both historically and doctrinally, with the Common Grace Case of 1924.

Somewhat unexpectedly, though not to my surprise, Dr. Harry R. Boer, an Associate Editor of the *Reformed Journal*, (known to many of our readers because of his gravamen a few years ago against the Canons' doctrine of reprobation, but also himself an advocate of higher criticism) expresses the same evaluation, though from an opposite viewpoint. An article from Dr. Boer's pen appeared in the Religion Section of *The Grand Rapids Press* on Saturday, April 25. This article was occasioned by an earlier article in the *Sunday Press* of April 12 by the religion editor, as Dr. Boer notes:

The Press of Sunday, April 12, carried on its front page a report by the religion editor entitled, "Battle of the Bible at Calvin places three professors on spot." The three men concerned, all scientists (One of them is Dr. Van Till, HCH), have openly described the coming into being of the physical world quite differently than is done in the first two chapters of the Bible. They do not question God's creation of the world. They do ask about the manner in which God brought the universe into being.

After referring to the fact that many letters of complaint have been received and "have led the Calvin Board of Trustees to appoint an investigative panel to study the compatibility of the professors' views with the Reformed character of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC)," Dr. Boer writes as follows:

The year 1922 marks the absolute watershed determining the limits of freedom in CRC academia. In that year Prof. Ralph Janssen, a man of erudition and teaching competence, was dismissed from Calvin Seminary faculty. He had taught God's inspiration of the Bible as availing itself of historical, political, religious and general cultural influences in the composition of its several books.

The pall that this event cast over the freedom of academic discussion in the CRC as a whole has never been entirely dispelled. It is in the context of this history that the present unhappiness in the Board of Trustees of the college and the seminary must be seen. The Press correctly called it a "Battle of the Bible." The conflict does not arise out of the genius of the Reformed faith. It arises out of the impact of American Fundamentalism on the Reformed tradition.

Boer goes on to try to explain what he means by this alleged Fundamentalist tendency in the CRC by claiming that "In many parts of the church, however, there has been a loss of appreciation for the historic correlation between creation and redemption in the theology and message of the Scriptures." Having claimed that Fundamentalism has but one central theme, redemption, while the Reformed faith has two central but intimately related themes, creation and redemption, he claims that "The tragedy of Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary is that both schools have made and continue to make indirect but broad concessions to the Fundamentalistic impairment of the Reformed witness." And he claims that matters have stood thus for 65 years, i.e., ever since the Janssen Case.

But referring to the three professors whose teachings are under investigation (among whom is Dr. Van Till), he writes:

With a few notable exceptions, their professors have written nothing for lay consumption on the evolution versus creation controversy, and they have written nothing at all on the manner and history of the

coming into being of the Old and the New Testaments. Their failure to do so has never been a problem for either the Board of Trustees or for the respective administrations.

Now that this habit of silence is being breached by competent and courageous men their commitment to the Reformed tradition is on trial in the Board of Trustees itself.

From all this it is plain that Dr. Boer holds that

the three professors, among whom is Dr. Van Till, are returning to the position of the deposed Dr. Ralph Janssen. And he praises them for this, calling them "competent and courageous."

Aside from the question of their competence and courage, I agree with Dr. Boer. He is right. The spirit of Ralph Janssen is stalking the halls of Calvin College.  
HCH

## Dr. Harry Boer is Dead Wrong

Nevertheless, Dr. Boer is wrong and inaccurate in his characterization and assessment of the Janssen Case and of its impact upon the Christian Reformed Church and its College and Seminary.

In the first place, it is wholly inaccurate to characterize Janssen merely as teaching that "God's inspiration of the Bible (availed) itself of historical, political, religious and general cultural influences in the composition of the several books." Though I would not express things thus, a statement like this could possibly be given a good interpretation. And surely, Janssen would not have been deposed very easily if the above had been his only error. I took the trouble, in connection with this matter, to review once more the Janssen Case. All the Reports and Decisions in this case were published in the English language by the Synod of 1922 in a booklet of over 200 pages. In this booklet it becomes very clear that Dr. Janssen was guilty of higher criticism, of the documentary hypothesis, of naturalizing the miracles, of teaching evolutionism, of denying the infallibility of Scripture. And he was deposed not on some fundamentalistic basis, but on the grounds of Articles such as Articles 3, 5, and 7 of our Belgic Confession. The record proves this. And the Majority Report of the Study Committee

(by H. Danhof, H. Hoeksema, H.J. Kuiper, and J. Manni) is even more clear on these matters; Synod of 1922 was not strong enough to go along with the Majority Report, however. And, by the way, is it not almost humorous to suggest that men such as Hoeksema, Danhof, and H.J. Kuiper led the CRC in a Fundamentalist direction?

In the second place, it should be remembered that while Dr. Janssen was deposed, the leaven of his teachings remained in the CRC; and his supporters for the most part also remained.

Besides, in the third place, it should not be overlooked that in connection with the Janssen Case the Common Grace controversy swept the CRC in those years. And it was the elevation of Common Grace to the status of binding church dogma (still binding today!) that principally opened the door into the CRC and its college for the fruits of worldly, unbelieving science.

While Dr. Boer is right on the connection between the current teachings of men like Dr. Van Till and others and the Janssen teachings, he is dead wrong on his history and on his own fundamental stance. If he had been an officebearer in 1922, he himself would have been a Janssen supporter.  
HCH

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

## ALL AROUND US

Gise J. Van Baren

### Religious Liberty At Risk In Michigan Proposed Statement on "Sexuality" Reformed Pentecostals?

#### *Religious Liberty At Risk In Michigan*

It is worthy of note when a nationally recognized political commentator points out dangers to religious liberty — and especially when that is in a state where many of our schools and churches are located. There is very real reason for concern. James Kilpatrick, writing for Universal Press Syndicate, and appearing in the Grand Rapids' *Press* of April 16, 1987, speaks of court cases which deal with regulation of church schools. He writes:

How far may a state go in its regulation of church schools? That question was presented squarely to the U.S. Supreme Court last week in a petition for review of an ominous decision of the Supreme Court of Michigan. The Michigan court held that a church school may be shut down if it employs even one teacher not licensed by the state.

The case began almost eight years ago, when Michigan's state superintendent of public instruction decided to crack down on two fundamentalist schools. One school is operated by the Sheridan Road Baptist Church in Saginaw, the other by the First Baptist Church of Bridgeport. Each school enrolls about 350 pupils.

To understand the case, it is important that Michigan's law be quoted exactly. The law is brutally blunt.

The statute begins by giving the state superintendent "supervision" of all denominational schools in certain defined areas. The act says flatly that "No person shall teach or give instruction in any of the regular or elementary grade studies in any private, denominational or parochial school within this state who does not hold a certificate such as would qualify him or her to teach in like grades of the public schools of this state."

Suppose a church school employs a teacher who is not state-licensed? In that event, "the superintendent of public instruction may close said school." What of the children? The children who attend such a non-complying school "shall be compelled to attend the public schools or approved private, denominational or parochial schools." . . . .

The article goes on to point out how two Baptist church-schools fought this in the courts. The schools won their case on the trial level in 1982, but lost on appeal to the State Supreme Court in 1986. Now the matter is being appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. These schools meet all the requirements of the state regarding sanitation and safety — and are racially integrated. The commentator then points out the confusion in the Michigan law:

Parts of the state law were not clear at all. The Michigan act requires that courses of study in a denominational school "shall be of the same standard as provided by the general school laws of the state," but the state's own witnesses were in hopeless conflict on what this language might mean. Under the "general school laws," Michigan's public schools must serve a whole smorgasbord of courses. Among the mandated courses is a course in "sex education," to which the church schools especially objected. Other statutorily required courses include courses in health problems, communicable diseases, humane treatment of animals, the contributions of women, and instruction in the culture of racial minorities.

During the six-day trial, witnesses for the state were asked to prove any favorable correlation between the licensing of teachers and the quality of pupil achievement. They had no such evidence. Donald A. Erickson, a professor in UCLA's Graduate School of Education, testified for the plaintiffs that schools that employ only certified teachers are generally less effective than schools that employ only a few.

The case law in this constitutional field is that a state must prove a "compelling interest" in order to

justify encroachments on freedom of religion. One such compelling interest appeared in Bridgeport, where the local superintendent circulated a newsletter setting forth a "basic principle" to help in hard times. This principle was "to prevent loss of students to non-public schools," because "We lose \$2,000 for every student who leaves our school district."

The report presents a very disturbing trend. Increasingly, the state would seek to control parochial, denominational, or private schools. Already, the state appears to have laws on the books that could shut down any of these schools if it is so inclined to do so. We too shall face growing pressure to bow to the unscriptural demands of the state. We can only labor while we may, that our children are properly instructed. But we labor with the understanding that we might not have this privilege very long anymore.

### ***Proposed Statement on "Sexuality"***

One is constantly amazed at what comes out of the churches in the way of approval of homosexuality or adultery. While the Word of God is so utterly plain on the subject, churches continue to meddle with the teachings of Scripture, twisting these to mean the very opposite of what is taught. *Christianity Today*, March 20, 1987, reports:

Episcopal Church parishes in northern New Jersey have been asked to study a report that advocates church approval of sexual relationships among unmarried people, including homosexuals.

The 600-member convention of the Newark (NJ) Episcopal Diocese voted to receive a 15-page report titled "Changing Patterns of Sexuality and Family Life." The report will be the focus of a year-long study by parishes and other groups in the diocese.

"It is our conclusion that by suppressing our sexuality and by condemning all sex which occurs outside of traditional marriage, the church has thereby obstructed a vitally important means for persons to know and celebrate their relatedness to God," the report states. Newark Bishop John S. Sprong has urged an end to the church's opposition to sex outside of marriage, and some Episcopalians welcomed the

study as a long-overdue recognition of social reality. But others said church approval of sex outside of marriage goes against divine law and threatens to worsen the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.

Episcopal Church presiding bishop Edmond Lee Browning praised the Newark Diocese for being "at the cutting edge" of church issues. But he stopped short of endorsing the report.

### ***Reformed Pentecostals?***

One finds favorable reports of pentecostalism within the Reformed community. In a feature article appearing in *Calvinist Contact*, April 10, 1987, there are presented the common problems which arise within churches where charismatics assert themselves. At the same time, the article points out areas where charismatics have proved beneficial within the church: in the area of prayer, of evangelism, and of worship services. The writer goes on to advocate a certain "balancing act" within Reformed churches so that a church may be both "Reformed" and "charismatic" at the same time:

So there is much good that has come from the charismatic movement. The only problem is how to integrate it into the church and still stay Reformed. It can be difficult. It can be a real balancing act when part of the congregation is against anything that smells of pentecostalism, and some of the charismatics would be very happy to see the congregation go completely pentecostal.

In spite of this polarization and the resulting struggles, it is my experience that a combination of Reformed and charismatic principles is possible. Churches can be blessed by the charismatic renewal, but also stay true to a Reformed perspective on scripture, doctrine, baptism, the catechism and social justice.

Such claim is indeed sad. Anyone who knows anything of the teachings and practices of charismatics would understand that there is no possible harmony between that which is Reformed and that which is known as "charismatic". Pamphlets on this whole subject are available by writing to *The Standard Bearer*.

### **A CERTAIN FAILURE** *[continued from page 382]*

And Elimelech's attempt did fail. Man cannot live by bread alone; and Elimelech failed to keep his body alive, even though he was in a land flowing with milk and honey. We can have an abundance of food and nourish our bodies for threescore and ten, fourscore or even more years; but we will experience certain failure in our attempt to keep that body alive. Because it lies under the curse, it will as the years go by be unable to receive much of that bread and will require medicines. These also will certainly in a short time fail to keep the body

alive. Physical death is ahead for all men. No creature can halt it.

Now before we elevate ourselves above Elimelech, we had better count the many times that we were more concerned about what our earthly life needs than what we need spiritually. We do not need to live in a particular land; but we do have a calling to live where we and our children can find the truth preached in such a way that every word is a word that proceeds from God's mouth, and is not man's idea nor what his flesh likes.

*[continued on page 380]*



# “Good Morning, Alice” (20)

Gise J. Van Baren

Just before saying goodnight to Alice, we had noticed a very strange thing happening. Alice had not been able to move a muscle for several months, yet now her arms and legs definitely moved! It was an unusual sensation to see one move who was absolutely incapable of moving. One wondered if he had observed correctly — but there was no doubt about it. Alice herself seemed not even to notice — and we said nothing of it to her.

*Good Morning Alice:*

*Do you ever feel far from God, Alice? There are many times, for many reasons, that I do, and if I really think about it, it is because of something I've done, or more often something I have not done.*

*Hosea tells us: “Come and let us return unto the Lord.”*

*At times when we feel so far from God, that is difficult. But because the Spirit never leaves us, we can turn and return unto a closer relationship with Him.*

*“For He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten and He will bind us up.”*

*When I stray far from Him, He has to sometimes smite me spiritually to bring me closer to Him. Have you experienced that, Alice? But the text doesn't stop there. He heals us. He binds us up. And as verse three tells us, “We shall know (if we follow on) to know the Lord.” We shall know that God is our God.*

*Just as morning comes after darkness, He comes with His love radiating into our hearts at our times of trouble.*

*Just as rain refreshes and nourishes the land, so God comes to us to refresh us in our difficult times.*

*God has sent storm in your life, Alice, but He is with you, and He refreshes you, and nourishes you and fills you with joy in your heart when you remain close to Him in thought and prayer.*

*Remember today, Alice, He is NEAR. Lean on Him and realize His radiating love in you.*

*In His love, Your friend*

*Please read Psalm 51:17*

While nurse Jane continued to suction Alice's throat, we quietly bade her goodnight and went our

separate ways: Claire to her home, brother Gise to a bed in the basement at John's house. With the intercom turned on, the nurse could call him in any emergency.

*Good Morning Alice:*

*“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.”*

*Isn't that about the hardest thing for a person to do? To humble myself; to say, “I am guilty; I have sinned”, is very difficult. My pride is always in the way. And yet, that's what Scripture teaches us. The only sacrifice God accepts from us is a broken spirit and a broken and a contrite heart. And it all comes from God to begin with.*

*One who has a broken spirit is one who knows what God has done for him and in humility comes to God. One who has a contrite heart is one that is cut by his sins and truly sorry for them. This then is just what God requires of us. In whatever place or circumstance we find ourselves, God requires us to throw off our pride and be humble, and sorrow over the sins we have committed.*

*It is only then that we can truly experience the love that God gives unto us.*

*May we both, today, see our pride for what it is, and with broken spirit and contrite heart, experience His forgiveness.*

*With love, Your friend*

*Please read II Peter 1:10-11*

Although it had long been obvious that Alice was failing, still we fully expected her to live through the night. She had been so aware of everything that evening. She had responded to our remarks and questions. She had even indicated that her medication made her stomach upset that night — and asked that it not be given in her regular feeding. Clearly, all was not well. Yet she had gone through so many difficult times before, who would have thought . . . ?

*Good Morning, Alice:*

*“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”*

*I've often wondered about these verses: me? I can give diligence to make my calling and election sure?*

*But it's there, and it's God's Word. He has placed His Spirit in me and given me a new heart to do just that. As long as I keep my heart and eyes on my God, and on what He has done for me, and then actively do as He commands, I experience the sureness of that election. When I fail (and that is continually when I give in to my flesh), yet it is still my heart's desire to strive with diligence to obey.*

*And then? Then I know and am comforted that I shall enter into His everlasting Kingdom because He has given me that entrance. And I will desire to prepare myself, heart, mind and soul for that Kingdom.*

*In love, Your friend*

*Please read II Peter 3:18*

That evening of March 23rd was to be Alice's last on this earth. If one really knew these things in advance, would he not say more or do more than he has? Would it not be wonderful to have one last long conversation with Alice — to say all the things we always meant to say, but never did? "We're sorry, Alice, that we didn't help you more. We're sorry for those many times we were impatient with you or didn't understand you. We're sorry we couldn't make your difficult lot just a bit easier." Yet, this night had not seemed all that different from many others. But the opportune time was past.

*Good Morning Alice:*

*"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen."*

*Doesn't that seem like an impossible thing? How do we grow in grace when it is God who gives grace? I think we can look at it this way: God has given us grace, and knowledge of Himself. We are called to grow in that grace and knowledge.*

*Isn't that what we've been doing together with these notes, Alice? I certainly have gained knowledge of God in searching for verses to share with you, and I hope you have too. And in examining my life, I have had days where I really feel I've grown to know better that wonderful grace that God has given. It isn't an easy thing though, growing in grace. Often right after I write you, I have to get busy and my thoughts (and actions) just don't stay where I wish they could be, or rather, must be. But the wonderful comfort is that we are His, and our salvation is all of Him.*

*Yes, to Him be glory both now and forever. Amen — we know it is so.*

*With love, Your friend*

*Please read Luke 17:5*

It was only shortly after brother Gise retired that the nurse called, "Could you come up to help? I think Alice is gone!" Alice, gone!

*Good Morning Alice:*

*"And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith." I'm sure that seeing the life of Jesus as the apostles did, they realized just how weak their faith was. I am also sure that never in this life will we be able to have the steady, strong faith that we desire; that we even long after, and it's all because of our sins.*

*We should always be aware of things that we know make our faith weaker, and stay away from those things. Dwelling too much on self, worrying, reading the wrong books, watching T.V. programs that we know are against God's commands.*

*Oh, so many of our thoughts and deeds weaken our faith. The apostles saw that their faith was weak and asked the Lord to increase it. They knew it had to come from God.*

*May we make that our prayer today too as we face the trials, temptations, and suffering that comes our way — so difficult because they're so unknown — "Lord, increase our faith!"*

*With love, Your friend*

*Please read John 3:35-36*

While the nurse had been suctioning Alice's throat, she had simply stopped breathing. She had been conscious to the very end — when her heart stopped beating. Now all worries about possible hospitalization, about the continued use of a respirator, all these were gone. It had been a long two years — but upon reflection, such a very short time. Alice was gone — only the body remained. No, that frail, thin, helpless body was not Alice — Alice was gone.

*Good Morning Alice:*

*"The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."*

*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. What a clear verse. Believing, we have everlasting life. Believing not, one can not even fathom life, but the wrath of God abides on him.*

*How can we have everlasting life now already? We're experiencing sorrow, pain and trial, just how does that all fit in with everlasting life? The verse again gives us the answer. Believing means that the Holy Spirit is already in us or we couldn't believe. He is in us. We are not our own, but we belong to Him. It makes me think of a favorite verse of mine, "Be still and know that I am God." That's when we can experience the beginning of that everlasting life — when we shut out all thoughts of this world and concentrate on Him, on His riches, His love, His mercy, and the mansions He prepares for us — everlastingly.*

*With love, Your friend*

*Please read Ps. 119:49-50*

The rest of the family were called. Soon all arrived again — after having left only hours before. There is at such a time a deep consciousness of loss and the resulting sorrow — yet joy for deliverance from this vale of tears to eternal glory with our Lord Jesus Christ! Now hers was the joy and freedom, while we continued to walk in this vale of the shadow of death. How could we be sad for her?

*Good Morning Alice:*

*What a beautiful day it was yesterday. This morning it looks like it's going to rain all day, but yesterday was a first real touch of spring. I took the little ones out to a park and took some pictures, and although there were no spring blossoms or green trees, yet there was a bright look to the woods.*

*If my pictures turn out, I will send you one so you can share in my walk with me.*

*"Remember the Word unto thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction: for Thy word hath quickened me."*

*There it is again, Alice; we can have comfort in our affliction because God's Word quickens us — revives us. And in that, we have hope. The hope of living with Him everlastingly.*

*And you know, all of the beauty we see here now, will be nothing compared to the beauty and wonder and perfection of living with Him.*

*With love, Your friend*

*Please read Psalm 137:4-6*

That was the last letter from Alice's "friend", a letter she did not get to read. Nor could she read now the verse for the next day, Psalm 137:4-6, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." But Alice need no longer sing the "Lord's song in a strange

land." No more need the address be made here, "Good morning, Alice." For the family, it was a rather sad, "Good night, Alice" — a "good night" which had been expressed to her only a few moments before she had died. And yet, could one not almost hear in his heart the cry which must resound in heaven itself when His saints enter, "GOOD MORNING, ALICE" — a good morning indeed of everlasting bliss in the perfection of holiness. Truly, to be with the Lord is far better — good in the highest possible sense.

Thank you, our anonymous friend, for words of comfort and cheer for Alice not only, but also for the whole family. Our prayer is that the recording of these loving words of cheer you wrote to a fellow-saint may be of great comfort and assurance to others in like circumstances.

And thank you too, many other friends and relatives who sent so faithfully your cards, flowers, and who offered prayers and visited so faithfully. Thanks be to our gracious God Who has provided that there should be communion of saints — particularly through great trials.

Our thanks could be expressed simply as this was presented to the congregation of Alice's home church, South Holland Protestant Reformed: "We would hereby express our deep appreciation and heartfelt thanks for the kindnesses shown the past two years during the time of Alice's illness. She, and we, greatly rejoiced in cards, visits, thoughtful gifts, and your assurance of prayers uttered to our God on her, and our, behalf. Words can hardly express the wonderful communion of saints we have enjoyed through this difficult period. Though many have stated that they would have liked to do more, we discovered that the little each does surely 'adds up' to support and encouragement that can not be described. Thanks — and may God continue to lead you and us to support and encourage each member of Christ's body in his afflictions."

—The family of Alice Van Baren

**T**his, then, is the first and absolutely indispensable requirement of our salvation: we must be in Christ. Hence, we must be incorporated into Him; we must be united with Him. A spiritual union must be established between Christ and our soul, before we can receive any fruit of Christ's death and resurrection. This union is absolutely first. Unless that living connection is established between Christ and our inmost heart, we are outside of Him. And outside of Christ there is only guilt and damnation, corruption and death, darkness and desolation. Before there can be the faintest spark of new life in us, before there can appear even the faintest glimmer of light in our soul, before the simplest prayer

can be uttered from our lips, before even the slightest longing can arise in our soul for God and His Christ, that union must be accomplished. It is an absolute prerequisite for the reception of all salvation. For Christ is our all, and all our salvation is in Him. But we cannot begin to draw our life and light, our knowledge and wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification, from Him until our inmost heart is joined in spiritual unity with Him, Who is the revelation of the God of our salvation.

*But how is this union accomplished?*

H. Hoeksema, *The Wonder of Grace*, pages 36,37

## THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH

Ronald L. Cammenga

### Confession of Faith (6)

"Will you submit to church government, and in case you should become delinquent (which may God graciously forbid) to church discipline?"

This third question asked of those who make public confession of faith is closely related to the previous two questions. In the first question we acknowledge the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments as taught in the confessions of the church. By means of Christian discipline, purity of doctrine is preserved in the church. In the second question we resolve by the grace of God to lead a new, godly life. The purpose of Christian discipline is to maintain godly living among the members of the church. The objects of Christian discipline are those members of the church who err either in doctrine or in life. The purpose of the exercise of discipline is the maintenance of true doctrine and holy living in the church.

#### PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT

Three outstanding principles of church government are implied in this third question. Those who make confession of faith ought to understand these principles.

First of all, the Head and Supreme Ruler of the church is Jesus Christ. The form of government of the church is not democratic but monarchical. Christ alone rules in the church, and His rule is absolute and sovereign. He said that to His disciples at the time of His ascension: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Having ascended into heaven, Christ is seated at the right hand of God, the position of rule and authority.

In the second place, although Christ rules in the church, He exercises His rule through men whom He calls and appoints to office. The rule of Christ in

the church is the rule that He carries out through the office-bearers of the church. The authority that the office-bearers have is the authority that Christ has given to them.

The Scriptures are plain enough in teaching this truth. In Ephesians 4:11 we read: "And He (i.e., the ascended Lord Jesus Christ) gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." Repeatedly the Apostle Paul refers to himself as the servant or minister of Jesus Christ (Col. 1:17; Rom. 1:1). Hebrews 5:4 is relevant: "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."

In the third place, although Christ rules the church and although He rules the church through office-bearers, He exercises His rule through the church herself. The church as a whole is responsible for this rule and actually carries it out.

It is for this reason that the third question speaks of "church government" and "church discipline". The emphasis of the question is on the responsibility of the church as a whole for the proper government and discipline of the church.

That government and discipline are activities of the church as a whole is born out by several considerations. First, it is the church that administers the means of grace and exercises the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Contrary to the teaching of Rome, to no individual, but to the church, Christ has given the power of the keys. Second, the involvement of the church is seen in the fact that every member of the church is an office-bearer. Occupying the office of all believers, he is a prophet, priest, and king under Christ. And thirdly, the involvement of the church is seen in the teaching of Scripture that even those who are appointed to special office in the church are appointed by the

membership of the church herself. The first deacons were chosen and called by the church at Jerusalem, Acts 6:3-5. Paul was called and sent out by the church at Antioch, Acts 13:1-3. Timothy had been ordained and entrusted with the duties of his office by the presbytery (elders) of the congregation of Ephesus, I Tim. 4:14.

#### *CALLED TO SUBMIT TO CHURCH GOVERNMENT*

To the rule of Christ exercised through the office-bearers appointed by the congregation, we are called to submit. The person making public confession of faith vows to submit to church government. When he confesses his faith in Jesus Christ, he confesses faith in Jesus Christ not only as his Savior, but also as his Lord. Believing in Jesus Christ he also willingly places himself under the rule of Jesus Christ.

Many passages of Scripture lay before us the calling to be in submission to the office-bearers of the church. After carefully explaining the duty of the elders, the Apostle Peter exhorts in I Peter 5:5, "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder." In I Thessalonians 5:12, 13 we read: "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves." An especially powerful passage is Hebrews 13:17: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

We are called to be in submission to the office-bearers of the church. We are called to obey them because they "have the rule" over us. We are not to obey them merely because they are older or wiser than we are. We are not to obey them because of any kind of penalty or punishment that might result from our not being in submission to them. For no other reason are we to submit to them than that they have been given the rule over us. Christ has set them in authority, and us under their authority. Not for the sake of their person, because we happen to like or dislike the person of the office-bearer, but for the sake of his office and the authority of his office we are to submit to the office-bearer.

Here is an important test of our allegiance to Christ. Here is the proof that we are servants of Christ and that we honor Christ as our Lord and King. It is easy enough to say that Christ is our Lord. It is easy enough to speak of Christ as the King of our life. But then we must show that, by our submission to the authority of Christ where He

is pleased to manifest that authority. We must submit to the government and discipline of the church.

#### *IN CASE WE BECOME DELINQUENT*

Especially urgent is our submission to the government of the church if we should become delinquent. This may very well happen. This has happened in the past, and happens today. It is a very real possibility that we fall into sin, serious sin, sin that we do not immediately repent of, sin that becomes the occasion of the discipline of the church. When this happens, we promise to submit to that discipline of the church and to receive the correction of that discipline.

This certainly is an outstanding reason for church government and for office-bearers in the church. One purpose of church discipline is the recovery of the wayward. In II Timothy 2:25, 26, Paul calls the office-bearers to labor with those members of the church who have fallen into sin: "... if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

Sad to say, in many cases this vow is broken. Often it is the case that those who fall into sin will not submit to the government of the church. They will not receive the pastor or elders when they call on them to admonish them. If they receive the office-bearers, they will not be convinced by the teaching of the Word of God, but stubbornly persist in their sin. Often instead of submitting to government of the church, they simply "ask for their papers" and leave the church entirely, or go to a church which fails to manifest faithfully the marks of the true church of Christ in the world.

This is serious sin! Sin is a serious matter. Unrepented-of-sin is a serious matter. But stubbornly to persist in sin after the admonition and discipline of the church is still more serious. To do this in spite of the solemn promise we have made to submit to the government of the church is the worst sin of all.

#### *FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE*

This does not mean that every decision of the church is to be obeyed unquestioningly. Our obedience to the government of the church is our obedience to Jesus Christ and to the Word of Jesus Christ. If the church exercises authority apart from Jesus Christ, in contradiction to the Word of Christ, in good conscience the believer cannot obey. Our conscience is not bound to the church and the decrees of the church, but our conscience is bound to the Word of God. And no church may ever attempt to find the conscience of the members of the church. This, in fact, is a mark of the false church.

Two possibilities may be conceived of here. First, decisions are made by the church with which a member disagrees or is not satisfied, but these decisions do not concern matters of principle. The member may question the wisdom or the appropriateness of such decisions. Perhaps the decision concerns a building project, a change in the liturgy of the church, change of time of the Sunday worship services, or many similar matters. In this case, although the individual is personally opposed to the decision, because it does not involve a fundamental teaching of the Word of God, he acquiesces to the decision and abides by it. This is submission to church government.

The second possibility is that decisions are made by the church that are plainly contrary to the Word of God. Perhaps the church has decided to open the special offices to the women. In this case, the member cannot in good conscience before God obey the government of the church. To do so would be to obey men rather than God. Even then, he is called to submit. He cannot obey, but he must submit. It is possible for him not to obey, and at the same time to submit. The opposite of submission is rebellion, and no child of God under any cir-

cumstances may rebel against those in authority. Even when those in authority demand of us what is contrary to the Word of God, we may not rise up against those in authority, we may not be abusive of those in authority, we may not seek the overthrow of those in authority.

At the same time, involved in submission to church government when the government of the church demands of us what is contrary to the Word of God is our calling to bring our objections to the decisions of the church in the orderly way. A member does this by protest and appeal. This is the way of submission. In this way, the member hopes to convince the church of its wrong-doing. If, in the end, this fails, the member is left with no alternative but to leave his church for one that adheres faithfully to the truth, or institute the church anew with other like-minded Christians.

The Word of God to covenant young people is clear. Confess your faith in Christ! Hold to the sound doctrine! Live the new, godly life! Submit to the government of the church!

This is the straight and narrow way that leads to life everlasting.

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## **GUEST ARTICLE**

*Robert C. Harbach*

# **Jesus Protecting**

Continuing from where we left off in the first installment under the above heading, at John 18:6, we now go on with verse 7. "Then asked He them again, 'Whom seek ye?'" Putting this His second request to them, Jesus releases His holding them down where they had fallen on the ground and allows them to get to their feet. They had lost their dignity, but not Jesus His. What He is saying to them in effect now is, Does not My identity dawn on you yet as to what and who I am? You all fell to the ground at a breath from My mouth. With you, a wonder of My power avails nothing! This should have caused at least Judas to reflect, as Luther observed, "Man, quit defying Him who hurls us all back with one word!"

"And they said, 'Jesus, the Nazarene.'" But not even one of those Jews responded with anything like one sinner who witnessed no miracle of His, yet had exclaimed, "Is not this the Christ?" (4:29). The name they use in referring to Him was already "a proverb of reproach" among the people of the land. Their use of the name was to revile and deride Him. Later, men just like these, if not of the very same number, at the Lord's sepulchre experienced a mighty earthquake and saw the angel of glory roll away the stone from the mouth of the empty tomb. These awesome things made them fall down like dead men. Yet they could not honestly report the astounding event, but lied about it for bribes. Not even divine judgment will turn sinners from their

rebellion against God, and bring them to repentance. Rev. 16:10, 11.

"Jesus answered, 'I have told you that I am (He).'" These words of verse 8 may be taken as a pledge of the acquittal of God's elect through Christ's substituting Himself in their place to take their debt upon Himself, so discharging them from it. Sacrificing Himself, Jesus spreads His protection over His own. The disciples escape unharmed.

"If, therefore, ye seek Me, *let* these go their way." Jesus is still in control, with all things in His hands. Jn. 13:3. He is still in command of *them*. "Let these go," He commands. "Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm." This is Christ, the mighty Conqueror. As someone said, "They were about to tie His hands, but before doing so He first tied theirs."

The Lord then and there proved to them that He could have saved Himself, had He so desired. He had saved the others; He could have saved Himself. His command was to let the disciples go. If He had also commanded that they let *Him* go, in that case, what else could they have done? But Jesus must go on to the brazen altar of Calvary alone (Jn. 16:32). He must tread the winepress alone. As for the disciples, this is not their part in God's covenant (their part will come later). So at this point their enemies should, must and did let them go. Who could stop Jesus — Herod? No; go and tell that fox, said He, Behold, I cast out demons, and I do cures today and tomorrow! (Lk. 13:32). No one can prevent Me from finishing the work the Father has given Me to do.

So the Lord proved to His disciples that He is competent to protect and preserve all His own in and through the greatest dangers. Did not these Roman soldiers and Jewish officers intend to capture the apostles as well? Quite likely — see Mark 14:51, 52. But the word of power He issues, "Let these go their way," is effectual to deliver them without harm. Now we may believe that He has spoken this word of power many times when we were in places of danger. See Psalm 124.

"That the saying might be fulfilled, which He spake, 'Of them which Thou gavest Me have I lost none'" (v. 9). This saying is a quotation from His high priestly prayer, chapter 17, verse 12, which is now fulfilled in Jesus protecting His own when He was arrested. It would be natural to expect that "the saying" would be from the Old Testament. But that is not the case. It was only a short while before crossing over the Cedron into Gethsemane that Jesus had spoken these words. But now in

John's inspired Gospel these words forever become a part of the inspired Holy Scriptures. The seventeenth chapter of John contains what is, strictly, the Lord's Prayer. (In Matthew 6:9-12 we have the Disciples' Prayer.) Now at this point in time, at the arrest of Jesus, this petition in the Lord's Prayer, "Of them which Thou gavest Me have I lost none," is fulfilled. This makes the New Testament what the Old Testament is, namely, Holy Scripture. The New Testament, as well as the Old, is no less than infallibly, verbally, and plenary inspired Scripture. Also this word of Jesus is hardly uttered when it is already fulfilled. Now this prayer has become a promise. What the Lord prayed for is now guaranteed to His people, not only those with Him then, but also all who would believe on Him through His Word.

"Of them whom Thou gavest Me have I lost none." Jesus means here not Judas, nor reprobate sinners, but refers to His own elect. So also in chapter 6, verse 37, where He says, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." You find this clause, "given by the Father to Christ," in chapter 17 about seven times. God has a chosen people whom He has given to Christ; they are the eternal gift of the Father. The remainder of John 6:37 plainly states that these people Christ received from the Father must and shall come to Christ; none of them shall be rejected, for they have been accepted. They were chosen in and given to Christ before the foundation of the world. They are His possession; He keeps them. None of them shall be lost. They belong, body and soul to Him. For the Father gave their bodies as well as souls into Christ's charge. Both their bodies and souls He has redeemed from all the power of the devil by His precious blood. Both their bodies and souls shall be glorified by Him in the resurrection at the last day. God's promise to His church is that "your whole spirit and soul and body (shall) be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thess. 5:23). That is the great end predestined for all the saints. God has also ordained all the means He shall employ to bring them to that end.

Therefore, Jesus would protect and preserve these men because He intended that they remain alive to see Him after His death, to be witnesses of His resurrection from the dead; and that they might receive the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, thus qualifying them to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth. The Lord can and will protect His people from sickness and physical afflictions until they are advanced enough spiritually to bear them. Tradition has it that all the apostles except John became martyrs. But at this early stage, with their Lord's death impending, they were unfit to become martyrs.



They still very much revealed themselves to be spiritually immature and incompetent to bear the responsibilities of the calling to which they were called and in which they would valiantly serve the Lord. So, lest they should be put to shame, and Christ's whole cause exposed to ruin, He would protect them from themselves, and from a trial only a veteran soldier of the Cross could bear. God will give them strength for every trial arising, and He will keep them from any trial not suited to what little strength and little faith they at the moment possess. Also He will preserve us from death until our work is done.

"I have lost none of them" means that within the eternal divine decree of election they are for ever safe. Then they will be kept safe, too, throughout all the time of their pilgrimage. He *will* not lose so much as one. Jesus was the Substitute for His people. As such He took their place under the wrath of God, bearing their sin, and their punishment for their sins, the penalty demanded by divine justice for sin. Then that penalty which He suffered in the stead of His people cannot fall on them. The penalty God will not twice demand, once at my bleeding Substitute's hand, and then again at mine. If the Lord tarries we shall die; but since He died for us, death cannot hold us. At the resurrection Christ will exult over Death and the grave with, For these I died; let these go their way! Then shall be realized the redemption of our bodies. Then shall He

change the body of our humiliation and make it like unto His body of glory.

"Of them whom Thou gavest Me I have lost none." "Whom Thou gavest Me" puts Christ's whole church right in His possession from eternity in heaven. In our lifetime we go from one blessing on earth to another of higher degree. But here, in His mind, Jesus leaps up out of all this present life to that which is reserved in heaven for us. He sees Himself and all His own safe in heaven. So this is a prayer for the whole church. Jesus does not forget a single member. In His mind and heart He holds and protects each member individually, but not apart His concern and purpose to bring the corporate body of the whole infallibly to glory. Not one member of the Body of Christ shall be missing.

No, none of the elect can be lost. From the throne at God's right hand, Jesus, Lord of all, so protects, preserves and guards His own throughout every age to the end of the world, that at the last day He shall report triumphantly to the Father, Behold I and the children whom Thou, Jehovah, hast given Me — of them I have lost none! Christ protects and keeps His charges. No one can pluck them out of His hand. His power makes His own forever safe. Arminianism has the gall to deny this with its, "Yet a believer (one of Christ's sheep — rch) after all may be lost." But then he would perish, whereas Jesus says of all His sheep, "They shall NEVER perish!"

## WALKING IN THE LIGHT

Herman C. Hanko

# Moral Aspects of Medical Technology (15)

Before we get into the question of genetic engineering, I want to come back briefly to the question of surrogate motherhood, a subject we have been discussing in the past few articles.

In the course of our discussion of this subject, we had opportunity to notice a case which was pending in the New Jersey courts in which a mother,

Mary Beth Whitehead, agreed to bear a child for William and Elizabeth Stern for \$10,000. She was artificially impregnated with sperm from William Stern so that biologically the child was from William Stern and Mary Beth Whitehead. But after the child was born, Mary Whitehead refused to give it up, ran away with the child to Florida, and



claimed it as her own. The case went to the courts and, in a recent ruling, the judge awarded the baby, now a year old, to the Sterns, ruling that the contract was legal and binding.

The judge's ruling was, however, not simply a matter of a legal contract. As his decision showed, he took other matters into consideration: 1) the rights of a parent to her own child; 2) the welfare of the child. He granted that Mary Beth Whitehead had a certain claim on the child as its natural parent, but said in his decision: Given the need to choose between "a parent's rights and a child's welfare, the choice is and must be the child's welfare." Thus he ruled that the child would be better off with the Sterns than with the Whiteheads.

We could almost wish that the judge had ruled in favor of the Whiteheads, for that almost certainly would have put an end to the matter of surrogate motherhood once and for all. It would be extremely unlikely that a couple would contract with a surrogate mother if there was no assurance that the child would ultimately be their's. Nevertheless, the evils of this now court-approved practice remain regardless of what the judge's ruling was. But the battle will go on. The April 13, 1987 issue of *U.S. News and World Report* says:

The threshold question is whether the law should even recognize contract mothering. Infertile couples and those in the business of providing surrogacy services argue that widespread inability to conceive has created a legitimate demand. Meanwhile, an unusual coalition of religious organizations, civil libertarians, feminists and adoption advocates are pressuring lawmakers to outlaw it . . .

Few legislators are likely to want to prohibit private arrangements that do some social good. They may well enact guidelines, on the other hand, aimed at keeping other disputes from erupting after a child is born.

The last word has not yet been spoken on this matter, but we may be sure that this present world, with its contempt for the law of God and the standard of morality God has set for man, will pursue its own ends and allow this great evil also to afflict our society. *U.S. News and World Report* says that the chances for legislators to outlaw a practice which does some *social good* are small. The expression "social good" is an interesting one here. I presume that by "social good" the magazine means that a couple which cannot or will not (Elizabeth Stern could have children, but chose not to have any because she was afraid that a pregnancy would endanger her health since she has a mild case of multiple sclerosis) have their own children can now

have children by other means, by "renting the womb" of another. Is this a social good? And even if it can be argued that it is, what about the other "social" implications of such practices? What about the natural mother who loses her child? Is it a "social good" that Mary Beth Whitehead may never see her child again even though it was her own flesh and blood and she had developed a deep attachment to it? What about the child? Has any one ever given any thought to what that child is going to have to go through when she is told about the method used to bring her into the world? Are these "social goods" even by the world's standards?

When the law of God is defied, wicked men make colossal messes of their lives. And this is a case in point.

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In this and future articles we want to say something about genetic engineering, a term which is used as a sort of catch-all for a number of biological practices which are already in use in some areas, but which will become increasing common as medical technology advances.

While it lies entirely beyond our ability to understand the techniques which are involved in genetic engineering, and while it would be useless to burden our readers with long descriptions of the theory and procedures which scientists use, at least a few brief remarks ought to be made about this. We found a rather helpful description in the February 7, 1986 issue of *Christianity Today*, which we quote here.

The DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) molecule is "large" (for a molecule) and coiled in the shape of a spiral staircase, or double helix. This smallest denominator of life was linked together by only four chemical building blocks whose varied sequence provided a coded blueprint for all life forms on earth from bacteria to humankind. Their discovery, which enabled us to visualize growth and reproduction as a common link between all life, would enable us to change life at its most basic levels . . .

The DNA contained in every human cell is compacted and coiled in 23 pairs of tight bundles called chromosomes. If all the DNA in a single cell were uncoiled, it would stretch out about three meters. And in these three meters of human DNA there are about 5,000,000 genes, of which at least 100,000 define the human form. In every molecule of DNA there is the blueprint for eyes, brain, liver, heart, and bones.

Directly altering an organism by changing its genetic code requires that the gene (or set of instructions) along the DNA coil be modified and that this same set of instructions be changed in every cell of the organism. With single-cell organisms, such as bacteria, that is not too hard to accomplish. But the human organism is 100 trillion times as complicated . . .

Recombinant DNA technology, the most refined process of genetic engineering, came in 1974 when genetic researchers discovered they could clip off a known sequence of the DNA and replace it with DNA from other sources. This form of gene splicing quickly became the most important genetic engineering tool. Science was learning enough to make changes at will without relying on the slower random mutational techniques . . .

It is only a matter of time until the entire human DNA sequence is catalogued and computerized. With this information, the science of genetic engineering may be able to manipulate the human life form in ways we have not yet imagined.

A couple of remarks about this will perhaps help to make it a bit clearer.

In the first place, because the entire genetic code which determines the whole physical make-up in a living creature is locked up in the DNA, access to this DNA and its genetic code opens doors wide for modifying such living creatures in every conceivable way. While science has by no means succeeded in doing very much with these new processes, constant experimentation leads to major breakthroughs almost every month. Some scientists hail this field as the new frontier in the human enterprise and speak excitedly of the great things which this new technology will accomplish.

In the second place, this technique can be performed on any living organism from the smallest single-celled bacterium to man himself. Already a great deal of work has been done on single-celled creatures, on animals and on man. In fact, one big

reason why pro-abortionists want the right to experiment on aborted fetuses is to perfect the techniques of genetic experimentation on humans.

In the third place, not only will the *physical* characteristics of living creatures be modified when these techniques are perfected, but it is possible that the *psychological* characteristics of individual people will also be subject to modification. A couple of interesting examples of this have recently been reported in the news media. One is a study being carried on at the University of Minnesota of identical twins who have been separated shortly after birth and have only been reunited after many years. Amazing similarities in personality have been noted in these studies, and the conclusions are that personality is also in great measure due to genetic make-up. (We hope to discuss this more fully in a later article, for it has to do with the relation between body and soul. In the April 13, 1987 issue of *U.S. News & World Report* a feature article was carried on this subject.) Also, recent studies of criminal behavior have led some scientists to believe that genetic alterations can turn criminals into law-abiding citizens. This is an interesting development and brings up the question of the relation of the soul to the body not only, but also the question of total depravity and sin.

In the fourth place, from a Christian point of view, it hardly needs saying that the more scientists discover how man is formed, the more the words of the Psalmist ring in the ears of the child of God: "I am fearfully and wonderfully made!"

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## ***BIBLE STUDY GUIDE***

*Jason L. Kortering*

# **Numbers — The Wilderness Sojourn (3)**

We are dealing with the section of the book of Numbers that describes how God chastened His people during their wanderings in the wilderness for the forty years (15:1-19:22).

Instruction is given for the preparation of the water of purification. A red heifer, without blemish and never having worn a yoke, was to be killed (the blood sprinkled before the tabernacle) and the body

consumed in fire (the ashes mixed with water as a purification, 19:1-10). Mention is made as to the use of this water: whoever touches the body of a dead man is unclean, and he must be sprinkled with this water. (Imagine how many died during the 40 years' sojourn.) Anything associated with death is judged unclean. The righteousness of God is thus taught the people (death is due to their sins). Refusal to be sprinkled with this water indicated rejection of God, and such a one had to be cut off from the congregation (19:11-22).

3. Happenings on the journey from Kadesh-Barnea to the Plains of Moab (20:1-22:1). Mention is made of the death of Miriam just after leaving Kadesh (20:1). The people once again compare the advantages of Egypt over the wilderness and complain of lack of water (20:2-6). The Lord instructs Moses and Aaron to take the rod and gather the people before the rock and speak to the rock, and water will come forth. Moses in anger smites the rock twice (20:7-11). In answer the Lord informs Moses he will not lead the people into the promised land, and the place is called Meribah (20:12, 13). Word is sent to the King of Edom, requesting permission to pass through Moab unto the land of Canaan. Assurances are given that they will not interfere with their crops or water wells, and if they use any of it they will pay for it. A flat refusal is given (20:14-21). The congregation arrived at Mt. Hor. Details are given concerning the death of Aaron. Since he, with Moses rebelled at Meribah, he was forbidden entrance into Canaan. He was told to take Eleazar his son, walk up Mt. Hor, take his garments off and place them upon his son Eleazar. This he did in the presence of Moses and the congregation. Subsequently, he died upon Mt. Hor. The congregation mourned for him thirty days (20:22-29). King Arad, a Canaanite to the south, fought Israel and took some prisoners. Israel vowed to God that if He would deliver these prisoners and help defeat this enemy, they would destroy all the inhabitants in the land of Canaan. At Homah, the Lord gave them victory over Arad (21:1-3). As they began to travel from Mt. Hor around Edom, the people complained about the lack of food and water. In answer, the Lord sent fiery serpents that killed many of them. The people cried to Moses in admission of sin, and Moses in turn called to the Lord. The Lord instructed him to make a brazen serpent and hang it upon a pole. If any who are bitten by the poisonous serpents look to the brazen serpent, they shall be restored. The people experience the saving mercy of God (21:4-9). Account is given of the progress in their travel to the plains

of Moab. Various cities are cited. Specific mention is made of water provided at the Brooks of Arnon, the people sang as wells were dug (21:10-20). Sihon, King of the Amorites, is asked permission to pass through his country. He refuses and subsequently attacks Israel with an army. Israel wins a complete victory over all the cities. They express this joy in singing praise to God for victory over the Amorites (21:21-32). The same thing happened to Og, King of Bashan: complete destruction of their cities allowed Israel to possess the land (21:33-35). Finally the children of Israel arrived at the plains of Moab, on this side of Jordan, near Jericho (22:1).

The final section of the Book of Numbers covers the events that took place in the plains of Moab, prior to entrance into the land of Canaan (22:2-36:13).

1. Events connected with Balaam and Balak and consequent sins at Baal Peor (22:2-25:18). Fear is in the hearts of Moab as well as Midian. Balak, King of Moab, sent messengers to Balaam, son of Beor, a prophet of Moab. He is requested to pronounce a curse upon the children of Israel in order that he might defeat them in battle. Balaam requests time in order to inquire of Jehovah. God came to him that night and warned him not to go with the princes of Balak, for he would not be able to curse the people of God. He conveys this information to the princes of Moab whom Balak had sent (22:2-14). This, however, does not deter Balak. He sends yet another delegation to Balaam, and this time they offer honor and wealth if he will come. He tells them that he cannot go against the word of God, but he will inquire that night once again. This time God allows him to go along, but he warns him that he will only be able to speak the word he puts in his mouth (22:15-21). In anger, God put an angel with a sword drawn upon the pathway of Balaam as he travels to Balak. The ass turned aside into the field when it saw the angel. The second time the ass turned against the wall, crushing Balaam's foot. The third time the ass was forced to stop. It fell down under Balaam because the place was too narrow. Balaam's anger mounted and he hit the ass. In amazement the ass spoke to Balaam and asked why he smote him three times. His answer was that the ass mocked him, and if he had a sword, he would kill it. The Lord opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel with the drawn sword. The angel inquires why Balaam smote the ass for, in turning, it saved his life. Balaam admits his sin, offers to turn back, but is instructed to go on. He will only be allowed to speak whatever the word of the Lord is (22:22-35). Balak welcomes Balaam and inquires why he did not come sooner. Balaam warns him that he can speak only the word God puts in his mouth. The next day he takes him to the high

places of Baal where they could see Israel in the distance (22:36-41). Seven altars are built along with offerings. Balaam goes a distance away to inquire of God. God tells him to return to Balak and upon doing so pronounces a blessing upon Israel. Balak is angry and suggests they depart to another place (23:1-13). This time they arrive at the top of Pizgah, and again altars and burnt offerings are prepared. The word of God, through Balaam, this time includes a beautiful reminder that God is not a man that He should lie or repent. The people of Israel shall be like a lion. Balak replies, "If you can't curse them, why bless them?" (23:14-26) Now they depart to the top of Peor. Again altars are built and offerings prepared. Again Balaam speaks praise of Israel and describes what blessings God has given them. Balak displays his anger and commands Balaam to return to his place. Before doing so Balaam prophesies of the coming of Christ, "We shall see him, but not now . . . there shall come a Star out of Jacob and a Scepter out of Israel." Balak goes his way and Balaam returns to his place (23:27-24:25). There is more to Balaam's influence (Numbers 31:16 indicates that Balaam is responsible for the sin of fornication that now follows). The people commit terrible whoredom with Moab. They sacrifice with them at Baalpeor and commit sexual sins. God commanded Moses to order the death of all the leaders, and later a plague from God slew 24,000 of the people. Account is given of a man of Israel (Zimri by name, prince of the Simeonites) who publicly paraded a Midianitish woman (Cozbi, daughter of Zur, chief house in Midian) even after the plague of God had begun. Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, took his spear and killed both of them, and thus the plague was stopped (25:1-9). God established an everlasting covenant of peace with Phinehas (Aaron). The Midianites in turn are vexed by Jehovah's wrath and destruction comes upon them (25:10-18).

2. The second numbering of the people and associated events (26:1-31:54). God gives explicit instruction to Moses to take a census of the people, 21 years and older. A breakdown of each tribe is

then recorded: Reuben 43,730, Simeon 22,200, Gad 40,500, Judah 76,500, Issachar 64,300, Zebulun 60,500, Manasseh 52,700, Ephraim 32,500, Benjamin 45,600, Dan 64,000, Asher 53,400, Naphtali 45,400, giving us a total of 601,730 (26:1-51). We notice that even though everyone 21 years and older died in the wilderness during the 40 year sojourn, (see 26:63-65), the total of people is only slightly lower than the former census (Numbers 1:46 indicated a total of 603,550). One significant reason for the taking of this census is given: the land of Canaan is to be divided according to the size of the tribes. The exact portion was to be determined by the casting of lots (26:52-56). No specific inheritance of land was given to Levi. They were to dwell among the people. The total number of males of one month and older among the Levites was 23,000 (26:57-65). The five daughters of Zelophehad, of the tribe of Manasseh, came to Moses and asked for an inheritance in the land of Canaan, even though their father died in the wilderness in his sin without having a male heir (27:1-5). Moses brought this to the Lord and was told that they had a right to inherit their father's land. Further, if a man had no children at all the inheritance was to pass on through the generations through brother, uncles, on down the line (27:6-11). Moses is directed by God to ascend Mt. Abriam to see Canaan in the distance, but he will not be able to possess it because of his sin (27:12-14). Moses asks God to appoint a replacement leader, one who will care for the people (27:15-17). The Lord designates Joshua, who stood before Eleazar the priest and the congregation, and Moses laid his hands upon him and charged him (27:18-23). The Lord instructs Moses on the procedure for offering a continual burnt offering unto Him, a lamb in the morning and another in the evening (28:1-8). Added to this, sacrifices are prescribed weekly (on the Sabbath, 28:9, 10), monthly (28:11-15), the Passover (28:16-25), the Feast of Firstfruits (28:26-31), the Feast of Trumpets (29:1-6), the Day of Atonement (29:7-11), the Feast of Tabernacles, with specific offerings for each day (29:12-40).

#### **A CERTAIN FAILURE** *(continued from page 368)*

We may not accept a job where we are cut off from those words from God's mouth. Nor should we for even one Sabbath day go where there is pleasure for the flesh and worldly achievements, instead of going up to God's house to hear what He has to say to us.

Refuse any and every mark of the beast that there is today and is required by the world for you to get your daily bread. And take hold of those words from God's mouth that teach us that man

will never lift himself above the curse by medicines or medical procedures. Believe Him when He tells us that salvation is in Christ, and that He lifts us out of certain failure into certain victory and everlasting life.

*The Standard Bearer  
makes a thoughtful gift for  
the sick and shut-in!*

## THE DAY OF SHADOWS

John A. Heys

### A Certain Failure

Man, being an earthly creature, depends upon the creation wherein God placed him after making him out of the dust of the ground. And although Jesus said to Satan, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God", man does need bread for his earthly life. He may not try and cannot live by bread alone; but keep bread from him, and he is going to die.

It is not strange, then, when there is a shortage of bread that man becomes concerned. And we can understand what we read in Ruth 1:1 where it is stated: "Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons."

This man, Elimelech, did have mouths to feed. He had responsibility. And in the days of the judges every man did that which was right in his own eyes, Judges 21:25. Because of this the hand of God was upon the land, and He sent a sore famine. Elimelech therefore went to sojourn in the land of Moab where there was bread. His intention was not to make this his permanent place of living. He intended to come back when the famine was lifted.

Now his name reveals that he came from a line of generations who did live by the words that proceed from the mouth of God. He was given the name that means God is my King. The Eli in his name is the same as what Jesus cried out on the cross: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" In Matthew 27:46 the Hebrew form of His words is "Eli, Eli lama sabachthani." Here you have the same Eli as in the name Elimelech. Melech is the Hebrew word for king.

The names of his sons could be one reason for Elimelech's decision to go to Moab for bread. Mahlon could mean weakly, and Chilion can be translated as pining. These names they had before

they died, and it is doubtful that they were so named because they died at such an early age.

Naomi's return to the land of Canaan after the death of her husband and sons reveals that they were a believing couple. Likewise Ruth's faith in God, which she revealed when told by Naomi to stay in Moab, makes it plain that Naomi had taught her, and that she had seen that the family was a family who believed in God. Elimelech sinned by taking them out of Canaan, the promised land, and into Moab. But he was not an unbeliever. He went only to sojourn in Moab because of the bread question. And if his children were frail, as their names could mean, the need of bread seemed very great for him.

From Ruth 4:3-6 it becomes plain that Elimelech was not a poor man. He had a goodly piece of land. During the famine it brought forth no crops; but later on it was deemed valuable enough to buy from Naomi. He certainly had money to buy food; but there just was none to buy in sufficient amount there in Canaan.

His leaving of the land of promise was a sinful deed, and that for several reasons. First of all, as was already pointed out, he was trying to live by bread alone. He deliberately cut himself and his family off from every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. And that was no little sin, even though he intended to come back. What if Jesus had just for one time, and at a time when His body certainly needed bread, done what Satan suggested? There just would be no salvation for us. We would never be given any spiritual life. For that one sin would have disqualified Him from being our Saviour. Satan knew that. He knew that it took only one sin of Adam to get us all guilty and worthy of death and to bring us into the lake of everlasting fire. Could he get Jesus to sin but once, He would have to die for His own sin; and as the last Adam, our representative, He would have only underscored the reason why the everlasting wrath of God should fall on us.

Lest we minimize sin, let it be stated again that it took only ONE sin of Adam to plunge us into guilt and to call everlasting punishment upon us. The question is not how many sins we commit. The increase of sins increases the degree of punishment. But only one sin calls for everlasting punishment, for it is rebellion against the eternal God, Who created us as His servants. And in that light we should not try to defend Elimelech in his sin, or think that we have not done so badly! God said that in the day we ate of the forbidden fruit, we would die. He did not say that to sin several times would bring the death penalty. And Adam's sin hurt no one physically. He did not even steal one piece of fruit from its owner. If man lives by bread alone, Adam took what his physical life needed. Actually he tried to live by that which meant certain death! Only *one* sin calls for certain death.

Surely the sin of taking his family away from every word that proceeds from the mouth of God calls for certain death. In that day God spoke to His church through the types and shadows in the land of Canaan. Not only did Elimelech take his family away from the church of that day, but he took them into the world. And although he did not live long enough to see it, he prepared the way for his sons to marry into the world.

We must not overlook the fact that in the promised land was God's house, the tabernacle, out of which God spoke of salvation in Christ. Elimelech turned, and turned his family, away from Christ Who was typified in the priests and sacrifices. He turned his back upon the Passover feasts which taught salvation in the blood of Christ. He brought no thank-offerings to God. Bread and this earthly life was his concern. He was not living by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. And he ignored the fact that, even given bread in abundance, death is sure, because all are guilty in Adam. Try to live by bread alone, and you are sure to fail. Sin and guilt are here. The words that proceed from God's mouth are the only things that show us life and victory over death.

Elimelech was trying to escape punishment by seeking bread rather than by eating the words that proceed from God's mouth. By sinning, Elimelech was trying to get away from the punishment of sinning. In that man will always fail. Just read Deuteronomy 28:38-42. Here are words that proceed from the mouth of God. There God tells us that a blessing will rest upon Israel, if they hearken diligently to God's voice to "observe to do all the commandments" which He has given man. There God tells us also that a famine will come upon that promised land if they turn from Him. And in the famine that was there, and because of which Elimelech went to Moab, God was speaking. Words

proceeded out of His mouth. And Elimelech, by his leaving that land smitten by a famine, said that he did not want to hear God speak. He wanted bread for his family, and he was not going to listen to God speak in this famine. He was not going to go to His house and hear God speak of forgiveness. Spiritual bread he could leave behind. Like the devil he said, "Man shall not live by the words that proceed from the mouth of God, but by bread."

Elimelech acted as though that famine was not there because of *his* sins. He was going to separate from those who were to blame for the famine. He went where he would not hear God's prophets or priests rebuke the people for their sin. What God was saying in that famine he did not want to hear.

Neither was Elimelech walking in love to his neighbour. Instead of calling their attention to what God was saying in the famine, and instead of admonishing, that is, warning those who were doing what seemed right in their own eyes, he was more concerned about bread and physical existence than the glory and service of God. He was a believing child of God; but he was now walking in a very sinful way, one that brought certain failure to his endeavor to live by bread.

There is another serious error that Elimelech committed by taking his family to Moab. Elimelech taught his sons not to seek the kingdom of God and its righteousness but the world and its deceptive pleasures. He has no one else to blame than himself that Mahlon and Chilion married unbelievers. No, we may not say that he was preparing the conversion of Ruth. Naomi did not know that Ruth accepted the truth and believed in God, until she told her to remain in Moab. Surely Elimelech did not know this, for he died before Ruth's faith was revealed. And even then, we may not try to convert unbelievers by committing sin ourselves. We must preach and support preaching. We must teach and be thankful when there is the opportunity to teach children or strangers. But we may not steal money in order to be able to travel to where the unbelievers are for mission work among them. Elimelech might not bring his sons into idolatry nor among those who worship idols in order to reach Moabites who hate God.

Yes, a missionary may take his family along to the field; but if he goes there in order to live by bread, he is teaching his family to walk in sin, and the unbelievers will accept that teaching with open arms. He will not get them to live by the words that proceed from God's mouth. Elimelech cut his family off from those words that God spoke in His tabernacle. He cut them off from Christ. Do that on the mission field, and you teach the unbelievers to walk in the way of certain failure.

(continued on page 368)



# News From Our Churches

*Ben Wigger*

May 15, 1987

Our congregation in Holland, Michigan has formed the following trio: from Redlands, California — Rev. Ken Koole, from our North West Mission — Rev. Ron Van Overloop, and from South Holland, Illinois — Rev. David Engelsma. At a congregational meeting held April 21 a call was extended to Rev. Engelsma.

As some of you undoubtedly know, Mrs. Gertrude Hoeksema, the wife of Prof. H.C. Hoeksema, suffered a broken hip when she fell from a step-ladder while housecleaning. This broken hip was repaired surgically by inserting a pin in her hip. She recovered quickly and all seemed well until in mid-April Mrs. Hoeksema developed several blood clots in her leg. After another week in the hospital, Mrs. Hoeksema now appears to be making a good recovery, although she still experiences some swelling in that leg.

A couple of weeks ago there appeared an article in the *Grand Rapids Press* which I think you might find interesting. "In November Gwennan Kalsbeek, a student in the 9th grade at Adams Street Christian School, received a B on an essay she wrote about the United States Constitution for her English class. Three months later, the same essay took first place in a national contest commemorating the Constitution's 200th birthday. It just goes to show that teachers can't always be right.

"Gwennan, her father John, and her sister Erika visited Washington D.C. April 26-29 where Gwennan and other winners were honored in a special awards ceremony." To the above we can only add our congratulations. Perhaps some day there might be an opening for you on the *Beacon Lights* staff.

Byron Center's Building Committee invited their congregation to participate in some physical exercise at their new church property. Members were encouraged to bring chain saws, as plans on this Saturday included the removal of trees and brush. Also in April, Byron Center's Consistory passed out

information concerning the possibility of building a new church sanctuary to inform the congregation of progress being made in investigating costs and various aspects of a sanctuary.

Lynden's Consistory also appointed a committee with somewhat the same mandate as the above from Byron Center. They were mandated "to come with the exact dollar figure and financing for these three options: 1. building on the current property, 2. building elsewhere and 3. buying the Word of Life Church.

Lynden also sponsored a Spring Lecture, held April 9. Rev. Carl Haak was the speaker and he spoke on "The Covenant Family".

On April 30 the annual Spring Lecture in the Grand Rapids area was held at the East Leonard Chr. Ref. Church. Rev. J. Slopesma spoke on "The Necessity of Christian Discipline."

Fifty young adults from various churches met together on Friday and Saturday, April 24 & 25 at the Circle-R-Ranch in Rockford, Michigan for an Over-Night-Get-A-Way. Rev. R. Van Overloop spoke Friday night on the theme of Evangelism. He also led a workshop on the same subject late on Saturday morning. I say late, because one of the activities planned for this Get-A-Way was a midnight buffet Friday night. Everyone I spoke with agreed that Rev. Van Overloop knew his subject well. They said he did a great job, which helped make the entire event a success.

Randolph's Extension Committee planned a series of three lessons on the subject of personal evangelism. Pastor den Hartog led these three discussions which were held in April. April 14 — Our calling to be Engaged in Personal Evangelism, April 21 — What We are Called to Do, April 27 — How We are to Perform this Calling. These meetings will be followed by a special program to which members of the community will be invited.

Our congregation in Kalamazoo is sponsoring a series of discussion seminars, the first of which was held April 28. These will be led by Rev. Woudenberg and Mr. Clare Prince and will be on the subject of Christian motivation.

Spring seems to bring out all kinds of church and school programs. Many of our church Choral Societies presented Spring concerts. March 22 Loveland's Choral Society presented their program. March 29 Faith presented theirs. Doon and Hudsonville held their programs April 12, while the Hope Church and Radio Choirs gave two combined concerts. The first at Hope on April 26, the second at First Church in Grand Rapids on May 3.

Our schools also got into the act. April 24 both Heritage Christian School and Doon Protestant Reformed Christian School gave their yearly All School Programs.

### IN MEMORIAM

It pleased the Lord to take unto Himself on Monday, April 27, our beloved son and brother, JESS KEITH KORTERING.

As a special member of our family, we were taught humility and dependence upon God through him. We thank God for his child-like faith and are reminded that, "Many that are first shall be last and the last shall be first." (Matthew 19:30)

Justin Kortering  
Lafern Kortering  
Rev. and Mrs. Jay Kortering  
and family

Mr. and Mrs. Erv Kortering  
and family

### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On May 27, 1987, the Lord willing, our dear parents and grandparents, CHARLES AND LOIS KREGEL, will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary. We are thankful to our Covenant God who has preserved them for each other and for us for forty years. We are grateful for their Christian instruction by word and example, and we pray that God will continue to bless them in the years to come.

"The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel." (Psalm 128:5, 6)

Ken and Mary Velthouse  
Michael, Kristin, Matthew, Marc  
Joel and Ellen Bruinooge  
Heather, Derek, Kyle

Charles Kregel, Jr.  
David and Mary Kregel  
Lisa, Brent, Jason  
Laura Kregel

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The consistory and congregation of Grandville Protestant Reformed Church expresses its sincere sympathy to its pastor, Rev. Kortering, and his family in the death of his brother MR. JESS KORTERING who passed away April 27, 1987. May our heavenly Father comfort them during this time of sorrow.

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

John VanderWoude, Vice President  
Jon Engelsma, Clerk

### NOTICE!!!

According to the decision of Synod 1986, the Consistory of the Faith Protestant Reformed Church of Jenison, Michigan was appointed the calling church for the 1987 Synod. The Consistory hereby notifies our churches that the 1987 Synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches in America will convene, the Lord willing, on Tuesday, June 9, 1987 at 9:00 AM in the **Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church**, 5105 Beech Tree Ave., Hudsonville, Michigan. The Pre-Synodical Service will be held Monday evening, June 8, 1987 at 7:30 PM at **Faith Protestant Reformed Church**, 7194 20th Ave., Jenison, Michigan. Rev. David Engelsma, President of the 1986 Synod will preach the sermon. Synodical delegates are requested to meet with the Consistory before the service. Delegates in need of lodging should contact Mr. Harv Holstege, 7093 N. Bliss Ct., Grandville, MI 49418, Phone 616-457-5595. Or Mr. Irv Velthouse, 1701 Newcastle, Jenison, MI 49428, Phone 616-457-2468.

Irv Velthouse, Vice-Clerk

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The members of Priscilla Society of First Protestant Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan, extend heartfelt and sincere Christian sympathy to their member, Mrs. Jacob (Mary) Poortfliet, in the recent death of her mother, MRS. BERTHA NATTE.

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

Mrs. Ryven Ezinga, President  
Miss Elaine Rietema, Secretary

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Ladies Society of the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church would like to express its Christian sympathy to Mrs. Grace Medema and Mrs. Pat Haak in the loss of their sister, JEANNETTE TRIEZENBERG at the age of 62 years.

"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." (Psalm 23:1)

Rev. George Lanting, President  
Elaine Van Der Noord, Sec'y.

### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On May 9, 1987, our parents, HIB AND MARIAN KUIPER celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary.

We are thankful to our Heavenly Father for making these two Christian people our covenant parents. They have taught us the ways of God so we, with the help of God, may teach them to our children. We ask God for His continued blessing on them as they continue their lives together.

"Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in His ways.

Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel." (Psalm 128:1, 6)

their thankful generations

Len and Linda Brink  
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