

**A Reformed
Semi-Monthly
Magazine**

THE STANDARD BEARER

Moreover, when we look about us in the world, full of confusion and madness, of corruption and apostasy, is there any assurance anywhere except in the truth of God's sovereign election, that His work shall not fail, that His Church shall surely be gathered, and His kingdom shall be established and manifested in glory? Salvation is of the Lord: it shall surely be accomplished even unto the end! Let all the powers of darkness rave and rage, and rise up against the living God and His Anointed, we know that even their ravings and fury can only be subservient and conducive to the realization of God's sovereign purpose of salvation. The gates of all hell cannot overwhelm the Church! Nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!

(From: Herman Hoeksema, The Wonder of Grace, pp. 25, 26)

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Meditation

Cornelius Hanko

Prayer For Our Daily Bread

Cornelius Hanko is a minister emeritus in the Protestant Reformed Churches.

Ques. 125. Which is the fourth petition?

Ans. "Give us this day our daily bread"; that is, be pleased to provide us with all things necessary for the body, that we may thereby acknowledge thee to be the only fountain of all good, and that neither our care nor industry, nor even thy gifts, can profit us without thy blessing; and therefore that we may withdraw our trust from all creatures, and place it alone in thee.

Our Father!

Heaven is Thy throne and the earth is Thy foot stool. Sovereign Lord art Thou over all the earth, the starry heavens, the angels in Thy heavenly mansion, and even over the devils that rage against Thee.

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All things must, all things do, and all things will serve Thy purpose, and that without fail, even unto the day of the Lord's return.

Thy Name is and will be eternally hallowed, Thy kingdom is coming and will come, Thy will is being done and shall be unto all eternity, for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever!

It is in that confidence that we pray to Thee: Heavenly Father, give us this day our daily bread.

We acknowledge Thee as our Creator, our Sustainer, our Provider, and our Lord.

Thou hast in the very short period of a mere six days created the heavens and the earth and all that they contain. Since that, for almost six thousand years, Thou hast carried out Thy counsel in the history of this present world, and hast by way of His suffering and death on Calvary exalted Thy dear Son Jesus Christ as Lord over all in the heavens, whose coming we expect as the time of His arrival draws ever closer. In the meantime, Thou causest the sun to rise in the morning, and dost carry it through the heavens to let it sink in triumphant splendor on the western horizon. Thou dost paint its rainbow colors in brilliant display through the heavens. Thou gatherest the clouds together and dost pour out their rain, every drop in Thy appointed place. The cattle on a thousand hills are Thine, even as Thou feedest them and carest for them day by day. The lion goes out at night to seek its prey as Thou dost direct it. The lofty, towering mountains are held in their places by Thy Almighty hand. The lowly flower of the field tells Thy praises. For that thy Name is near Thy wondrous works declare!

Even the wicked, who refuse to recognize Thee, are still dependent upon Thee, employing

Thy gifts to their own condemnation. But Thou in sovereign mercy art our Father, who carest for us in eternal compassion. Thou appointest our food and drink and all our sustenance in infinite wisdom, almighty power, and loving kindness. Thou withholdest no good thing from those who fear Thee. Thou dost hold us by Thy hand to guide us with Thy counsel, afterward to receive us into Thy glory.

Father, in complete dependence upon Thee we ask for *bread*.

In a sense, we ask for so little. Though our tables are laden with food, even with choice delicacies, such as salads and desserts, pies and cakes, we still ask only for bread. With outstretched hands we ask of Thee at every meal anew, "Lord, give us bread".

Yet when we do so we ask for so very much. Bread represents the many necessities of life. We need food to sustain our bodies, but we also need so very much more. We need water to quench our thirst, pure air to breathe. We also need shelter, clothing to protect us from the heat and cold, from the rains of summer and the stormy blasts of winter. This earthly house of our tabernacle is very frail and needs constant care, medicines, and other means to relieve our pain and sufferings. We need doctors, hospitals, yea, and so very much more.

We need work for our hands and means to carry out the calling whereby Thou dost call us in this present time, such as transportation, tools, and many other things. We need so very much; the list continues to grow as we set our minds upon it.

Besides all that, we do not live as individuals on an island. We have our families, so that our homes are not merely places of

refuge, but dwelling places of intimate fellowship and love. Each of us has a place in his family and must daily consider the needs of his dear ones. We are members of Thy church, having a place and calling among our fellow saints. We need the preaching of the Word, the sacraments, the communion of saints, the instruction of the covenant youth of the church in the fear of Thy name, particularly in the church and in our Christian schools. We have a responsibility to our fellow believers, especially in time of need; yea, we even have a responsibility to Lazarus, whom Thou hast brought with his rags and ugly sores at our doorstep. We ask for bread, so very little, and yet so very much!

As Thou dost impress upon us our deep dependence upon Thee, wilt Thou also teach us to rely on Thee, to wait for Thee, so that we learn, not only to pray for bread, but to add to that, "our *daily bread*".

We need from Thee the grace to realize that we have here no abiding city. We tend always to make this life an end in itself, to seek our pleasures and our treasures here below, and to live for the moment, staring ourselves blind on the passing things of this world. We think, and will, and live as if we are staying here forever, so that at times Thou must forcefully make us aware of the realities of our lives, that we are pilgrims and strangers on the earth, only passing through on our way to our real, our eternal home. We must learn always anew that all that Thou sendest us in this vale of tears is to prepare us for our place in glory before Thy throne.

We have the example of Israel in the wilderness being supplied in that desert waste with manna from heaven, a new supply every day. We think of Elijah and the

widow of Zarephath, who received a new supply of oil and of meal every day anew for two years and a half. We wonder whether we would be content, we with our abundance, having a diet like that. Yet we also realize that we could live without the least concern, for while thousands were dying of starvation in Israel and round about them, their bread was certain every day anew. They could live by the day, every day receiving from Thy almighty hand their daily bread. But are we as Thy children actually any different? With all our worrying and complaining, with all our wrestling and concern, we know in the depths of our souls that we need not, we should not worry, for Thou, Father, carest for us as a father for his children. Thou who clothest the lily of the field and carest for the sparrow on the housetop, dost Thou not care much more for us, O we of little faith?

As we bow at Thy footstool, we pray that Thou wilt also teach us contentment, so that we may pray in sincerity and truth: Give us *this day* our daily bread.

Shamefacedly we admit that we often seem to know so very well what we need. We storm Thy throne with many requests, often as if our lives depended on the things we deem so important for our present existence. There are times in our lives when Thy hand weighs heavily upon us. To us it appears as if everything is all wrong, and will never be righted again. The night is so dark that we expect no new dawn; life will never be bright and pleasant again, as we complain: "Has God forgotten to be kind, will He show us His mercy

nevermore?" But these thoughts are our infirmity, our lack of faith. We allow ourselves to be tossed to and fro on waves of doubt and fear, as angry billows rage and roar within us, threatening to swallow us up. Cause us to realize that all things without exception, "herbs and grass, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, meat and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, yea, all things come, not by chance, but by Thy fatherly hand." (Heidelberg Cat., Lord's Day 10) Moreover, that our Father will make whatever evils he sends upon me, in this valley of tears turn to my advantage; for he is able to do it, being Almighty God, and willing, being a faithful Father." (Lord's Day 9)

Agur had "this day" in mind when he prayed: "Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with the food convenient for me: lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." (Proverbs 30:8, 9) David was aware of this when he sang his "shepherd psalm", "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside still waters. He restoreth my soul." May we, Father, also learn with the apostle Paul to live in true spiritual contentment, that we also may confess, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

One more word we must learn. Teach Thou us also to say: Give."

Our first reaction is that it hurts our pride to ask to be given something. We want to be independent, self-sufficient, so that we can care for our needs and the needs of our family without any outside help. O, how we hate to have to beg. How much rather we would boast of what our hands have accomplished, and

even that we have saved up enough for our old age, and stowed away something that our children can appreciate after we are gone.

Then I think of the child who without any inhibitions comes running into the house after school or after play and immediately asks: "Mom, may I have something to eat? I am starved." He makes no ceremony of it, he does not question mother's love or willingness to provide for his needs, nor does he seek to have his needs supplied elsewhere. No, he does not rush into the neighbor's house, thinking he might find something better there. He goes home to mother, casts himself upon her concern for him, and boldly asks to have all his needs supplied by mother.

What shall I render unto Thee, O Father, for all thy benefits Thou bestowest upon me? I will take up the cup of salvation, ever mindful that Thou art the overflowing Fountain of every good and perfect gift, bestowing all things upon us in the abundance of Thy mercy unto our salvation. Yea, more; I will call upon Thy Name, O Jehovah, making all my needs known in prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, with extended hands continually asking for more, even as in Thee we have our life and all our being. Thus:

My soul in silence waits for God.

My Savior He has proved;
He only is my Rock and Tower;

I never shall be moved.

Father, teach us to pray also this petition: "Give us this day our daily bread!" □

As To Dr. David Martyn Lloyd-Jones And Pentecostalism (2) An Interesting Letter

As To Dr. David Martyn Lloyd-Jones And Pentecostalism (2)

As we have already seen in our previous editorial on this subject, the *Free Presbyterian Magazine* (May, 1987) marshals considerable evidence to prove that Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones had strong pentecostalist leanings. In this installment we will cite more such evidence from the same magazine.

First of all, the article cites the Foreword to Lloyd-Jones's *Joy Unspeakable*, written by the Rev. Peter Lewis, as follows:

"The past 20 years have seen the widespread growth of two radical and potentially mighty movements in Great Britain. These are the reformed movement with its stress on doctrine, expository preaching and total loyalty to scripture; and the charismatic movement with its stress on the Holy Spirit's Baptism and Gifts, its strong sense of personal guidance and its bold inventiveness in worship.

"The weaknesses of the reformed churches have often been their traditionalism, their lack of evangelism and their contentment with sound doctrine sincerely approved. The weaknesses of the charismatics have tended to be their self-indulgent and sometimes uncritical enjoyment of experience, their lack of interest in doctrine and their naivety in church polity.

"Both of these groupings have known considerable blessing in recent years, but both may well expect an element of divine rebuke to enter their life if they do not now begin to learn from one another."

The *Free Presbyterian Magazine* then continues as follows:

"At the British Evangelical Council Meeting in Carlisle in November 1980, Lewis delivered a paper in which he advanced the idea of pulpit exchanges between non-ecumenical charismatics (in the Assemblies of God and Elim Churches) and Reformed Ministers, such that the pentecostalists would preach in Reformed pulpits and 'vice-versa'. This procedure would according to Mr. Lewis modify 'the Reformed peoples' timid and drab conservatism in worship'."

The article then continues as follows:

"When Dr. Lloyd-Jones died Lewis wrote an appreciation of him in the *Evangelical Times* that gives the following staggering information with respect to Lewis' B.E.C. paper. Mr. Lewis tells us that it was Dr. Lloyd-Jones who had driven him to a fresh and strenuous study of the whole Reformed/Charismatic issue. It was also to Dr. Lloyd-Jones that he went in the summer of 1980 full of excitement with his paper that he intended to deliver at the B.E.C. conference. After showing Lloyd-Jones the paper calling for a new 'rapprochement' between Reformed and Charismatic, Lewis tells us Lloyd-Jones gave him more than encouragement, he positively glowed. 'But,' said Lewis, 'is there nothing that you disagree with or disapprove of?' 'Nothing at all,' replied Dr. Lloyd-Jones emphatically, 'I am with you 100 per cent without reservation.' Mr. Lewis then adds, 'he followed up his encouragement with constant and fervent prayer. 'I am praying for this every single day — and it is a burden from the Holy Spirit'."

In rebuttal against the Rev. Iain Murray's assessment of Dr. Lloyd-Jones as being misunderstood the article states the following:

". . . Dr. Lloyd-Jones was a highly intelligent and articulate man and he does not need Mr.

Murray as his expositor. During his lifetime Dr. Lloyd-Jones knew quite well that his name as being linked with Charismatic Theology, and if he wished, he could have easily distinguished his position from that of the Charismatic Movement with its pretensions to tongue speaking.

"The plain fact is, that whilst he vigorously condemned non-experiential Calvinism as dead orthodoxy, there is no condemnation of the central tenets of the Charismatic position.

"A. Wesley Richards, a Pentecostal pastor, in a tribute to Dr. Lloyd-Jones after his death confirms this assessment. He writes, 'Some classical pentecostal leaders, who had recently returned from a high level dialogue in Rome, were in London. Would the Doctor care to meet them? Indeed he would. And so we gathered for a two hour discussion that was, to all of us, a revelation about this famous standard-bearer of evangelicalism.

"What the Doctor did not know about the Catholic Charismatic scene was, it soon transpired, not really worth knowing. He had followed its development with great interest and diligent study and was as keen as his brethren not to quench anything that was genuinely of the Holy Spirit. But he said he was concerned that subjective experience should not precede objective truth.

"That was all very well, one of the dialogue team replied forthrightly, but evangelicals, especially those among whom the Doctor was prominent, had in their fierce stand for truth been guilty of regularly quenching the spirit among people who may have needed instructing, but who were at least hungry for God. The pentecostals had bitter experience of this, now it was the turn of Catholics, it seemed.

"The Doctor listened patiently, but would not be smeared with an anti-charismatic brush. He had always dissociated himself from such extremism. He wanted no part of it, he said. Indeed no-one had spoken more consistently than he to stress the need for a movement of the Holy Spirit today. But he insisted everything must be decided by scripture. He welcomed 'truth on fire', wherever it might be.

"The Doctor's advocacy left his 'critic' demolished, but much impressed. 'You are one of us' he told the Doctor warmly."

The Free Presbyterian Magazine comments: "Hence at the very heart of the renewed interest in Calvinism in England and Wales was a teacher with a distinct pentecostal type theology that embraced both a second blessing concept, and belief in the continuance of the miraculous Charismatic Gifts."

The article cites from the December, 1986 issue of *Evangelicals Now* one more significant incident. It is from a footnote following a review of biography of two pentecostal Evangelists, George and Stephen Jeffreys. The quotation is as follows:

"George Jeffreys . . . at a later stage asked him (i.e. Dr. Lloyd-Jones) if he would consider being the Dean of his Bible College.

"The two men met again before Jeffreys' death in the early 1950s. (A note explains that the reference to Jeffreys' death in the early 1950s is incorrect, and that he died in January, 1962. HCH) Jeffreys, with a remnant of his revival party, turned up at Westminster Chapel on Whit Sunday morning. The doctor preached from Acts 2 on the Baptism of the Spirit. Later they talked together and Jeffreys was approving of the doctor's ministry.

'I always told you, you were one of us,' quipped Jeffreys. 'But I don't believe that speaking in tongues is an essential element of Spirit Baptism,' remarked Lloyd-Jones. 'Neither do I,' retorted Jeffreys."

It seems quite clear, therefore, from all the evidence that the late Dr. Lloyd-Jones's sympathies lay with pentecostalism.

There is one more remark that should be made in this connection. It is this, that this bit of history also underscores the danger of independentism in church government. Dr. Lloyd-Jones was, and his Westminster Chapel is, independent as far as church government is concerned. In the nature of the case, therefore, there were no "checks and balances" as far as the teaching and preaching of the doctor were concerned. Also in the nature of the case, it was Dr. Lloyd-Jones who, as the leading figure in Westminster Chapel, set the tone as far as the doctrinal stance of Westminster was concerned. If there was any opposition to his pentecostalism there — and I have no knowledge that there was — there was no court of appeal. Independentism is an ecclesiastical dead-end street. True, presbyterial church government does not furnish an *absolute* guarantee against doctrinal deviation; there is no such absolute guarantee. But it at least furnishes a safe-guard. □ HCH

An Interesting Letter

Now and then we receive letters (or occasionally just a note, along with a subscription renewal) expressing appreciation for our magazine. Recently I received such a letter from a reader in England. Partly because representatives of our Contact Committee only recently reported on their visit to the U.K. and about the situation there, and partly because another long-

time correspondent from England expressed to me the wish that our Contact Committee could have conducted a meeting in London, and partly simply to share with you the fact that *The Standard Bearer* serves as a witness in unexpected circumstances and places (often unbeknownst to us), I will share the following letter from a reader in London, England. I have edited the letter slightly and omitted some personal elements. Here is the letter, dated Dec. 9, 1987:

Dear Professor:

Some time ago I became acquainted with the Rev. Robert Harbach through correspondence, but for the life of me, I cannot recall how this came about. However, I believe nothing happens by chance and, on looking back, the Hand of God is not difficult to see in this matter. Mr. Harbach sent me a year's gift subscription to the "Standard Bearer" and I subsequently became a regular subscriber, for I quickly realised that this magazine really contains true gems of truth.

I am now in my 67th year and was brought up in a "Plymouth

Brethren" family. (The "Open Brethren" as distinct from the "Exclusive" kind.) In 1940, during service with the Royal Air Force, I became converted; but after various 'wanderings' I was accepted into the Church of England in 1962, remaining until unable to stay in this apostate body any longer; my wife and I finally leaving in 1978. We thought we had found a spiritual home in a small body which still claims adherence to the 39 Articles, and I was ordained in 1979 in a non-stipendiary ministry; but numbers are so small that this was not nearly as successful as I had hoped, and we have long been worshipping together at home, being joined by a few friends now and again. Most denominations in this country are now members of the British Council of Churches, affiliated to the infamous W.C.C. and we can, therefore, having nothing to do with them.

For most of my life, I had believed in 'the well-meant offer of salvation' and it was not until I began to read the "Standard Bearer" that I came into contact with the doctrine of 'limited atonement'. This may surprise

you, but it is true. Reading your excellent magazine has brought light into my soul . . . even into areas where I had, for years, thought I already had light. On going through past issues of the "Standard Bearer" I came across a little note from Mr. Harbach at the end of his article, "Jesus Left Alone", at the foot of Page 172, Vol. LXIII, No. 8, January 15th, 1987 in which he invited readers who stand in the truth to write and identify themselves. Somewhat belatedly, I am writing to say that my wife and I stand with you . . . tiny islets in a vast ocean of inky darkness around us, trying to keep our little lights going as we await the return of our blessed Lord and Master or until He calls us Home. Long may the "Standard Bearer" keep coming, bearing, as it were, 'glad tidings from afar'.

Well, space has almost gone and it is time I was gone, too, but I cannot go until I have taken the opportunity to send you our warmest greetings on the occasion of Christmas and our best wishes for the coming year.

The Lord bless you and all whom you love.

Sincerely yours, N.N. □ HCH

Walking In The Light

Herman C. Hanko

More On Abortion

Herman C. Hanko is professor of Church History and New Testament in the Protestant Reformed Seminary.

Sometime ago when I was discussing in this series of articles the evil of abortion, I mentioned the fact that in some places aborted fetuses were being used for experimental purposes. Some

called into question whether this was really being done. Just today I was reading an article which appeared in the October 12, 1987 issue of *World* (Vol. 2, No. 19) in which an aspect of this matter is

reported. I thought it worthwhile to interrupt our discussion of euthanasia to quote at length from this article. It carries the title: "Aborted Fetuses — Spare Parts for the Living?"

Sufferers from the brain disorders of Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, and Huntington's disease, as well as diabetes patients, may soon experience relief and in some cases complete cures from implants of cells taken from aborted fetuses, say medical researchers at Vanderbilt University's Medical Center in Nashville.

And neuroscientist Timothy Collier, who joined 500 medical researchers recently in a symposium at the University of Rochester in New York, said he hopes soon to freeze and store fetal brain tissue for such implants. Already the procedure has been used successfully in Sweden.

Though he admits it "opens up a Pandora's box," Dr. Antonin Scommegna, chairman of the department of obstetrics and gynecology at Michael Reese Hospital, Chicago, told the Chicago Tribune that he foresees "growing fetuses some day for spare parts." Scommegna could not be reached for further comment.

Arthur Caplan, Ph.D., director of the University of Minnesota Center for Bio-medical Ethics, is concerned that use of fetuses for medical purposes could generate an industry of selling unborn infants

Caplan commented in an interview . . . that he doesn't "feel any different about" using a fetus in a medical treatment than using an organ from a murder or suicide victim in a transplant

But Dr. Franklin E. Payne of the department of family medicine, Medical College of Georgia, argues that fetal transplants are not only wrong but unnecessary

Though Payne says that cell transplanting "isn't itself immoral," he pointed out in a World interview that the "main problem is that they're using tissue from aborted fetuses" which is "immoral to start with."

After a brief discussion of the possibilities of genetic engineering to obtain required "parts" for the cure of certain diseases, the article goes on to say:

Fetal cell transplants may already, however, be outdated technology — a fact which creates wonder that it is still being considered. Some research laboratories seem loath to admit that it is being carried on. For instance, though the Chicago Tribune reported that researchers at Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center in Chicago are "eager to collect tissue from the pancreases of aborted fetuses," spokesmen for Rush's obstetrics and gynecology department, as well as for its research laboratories, when contacted by World, denied knowledge of any such experiments or plans to experiment.

In the argument mentioned above, i.e., the argument of the analogy drawn between the use of organs from people murdered or from people who commit suicide and the use of organs from aborted fetuses, there is an enormous logical error. Whatever may now be the right or wrong of using organs from murdered people or people that commit suicide, and whatever may be the right or wrong of using cells or organs from fetuses which are naturally aborted, this is quite different from making use of the organs or cells of babies that are born through induced abortion. The wrong, of course, lies in the abortion first of all, as Dr. Payne points out.

Yet, from the viewpoint of worldly and unbelieving people, not much can be wrong with either induced abortion or the use of aborted fetuses if such features are simply nothing else but a blob of tissue. What is wrong with making use of blobs of tissue? The horror of it all rests upon one fundamental truth: a baby is a *person* from the moment of conception. To bring about an induced abortion is, therefore, to commit the sin of murder. The fact that it is done under the guise that this baby is only a blob of tissue is to give to the terrible sin of murder a certain cold calculation and deliberation that is frightening. If the life of a person can so easily be taken when the person is a help-

less unborn infant, and when this is done with a calculation and deliberation that is premeditated, life becomes very cheap, murder becomes very commonplace, and the future for any person who is no longer acceptable to society in general becomes filled with horror. If society approves of murdering unwanted children who are not yet born, society can easily approve of murdering other unwanted people. The step is small, the reasoning the same, the consequences equally frightening.

Add to this the fact that these fetuses are now made use of in medical experimentation, and the prospects are terrible. In this way does a sinful world develop in iniquity. And when such a shortage of organs exists that those who need them cannot obtain them, the temptation to find them in aborted infants is very great. And the temptation to encourage abortion for that end increases mightily.

* * * * *

Euthanasia (2)

To return now to our discussion of euthanasia, we remind our readers that in our last article we discussed the problem and tried to give it some broad outlines. Euthanasia is not really a very good title for what we intend to discuss, except in a very broad sense of the word. The term itself means, "good death" or "easy death," and can refer to any death which is without suffering and pain. But in common usage the term is the equivalent of "mercy killing" and is usually defined as "the act of putting to death painlessly a person suffering from an incurable and painful disease or condition" (The Random House Dictionary of the English Language). It refers to putting to death either by withholding or taking away what is necessary to prolong or continue life, or actually administering

something which will bring about death, such as the injection of an overdose of a narcotic.

In our discussion of this, it might be well first of all to examine what approximately the present state of thinking on this subject is.

In the July 20, 1987 issue of *U.S. News & World Report* a brief item appeared which reads as follows:

New court rulings — the latest from the New Jersey Supreme Court — are beginning to spark a new nationwide debate on euthanasia. The decisions come from the same court that issued the groundbreaking ruling in the Karen Ann Quinlan case in 1975, which established that life-support equipment may be withheld from people who are irreversibly ill. The latest ruling established that not only patients but also family or friends may make the life-or-death decision if the patient is unable to communicate. The decision also dropped an earlier proviso that certain people could be allowed to die only if they had a life expectancy of less than a year. Although the rulings apply only in New Jersey, they are expected to influence court decisions in other states. Altogether, there have been about 70 right-to-die cases in 20 states since the Quinlan case. Arizona's Supreme Court is now reviewing a lower-court order allowing a woman's nephew to stop her

spoon-feeding after she suffered strokes and brain damage. Critics of the lower-court ruling note the woman was not even terminally ill.

The February 9, 1987 issue of *Christian Renewal* reports:

In 1973, The Netherlands' Supreme Court ruled that euthanasia was justified under certain circumstances. Gifford-Jones writes that this "allowed Dutch physicians to carry out 20,000 mercy killings a year. The great majority of these deaths involved the simple removal of life sustaining technology." But it's estimated that 6,000 persons were actively helped toward the "pearly gates by lethal drugs."

In the July-August issue of *Right to Life of Michigan News* a report is given on a speech by Dr. C. Everett Koop, Surgeon General of the United States. The article reports:

Koop cited the rise of a "utilitarian" philosophy that values people according to their usefulness to society, and the demographic pressures caused by a higher proportion of retired persons, as the major factors fueling the euthanasia movement.

Citing the example of Holland where one-sixth of all deaths last year were a result of physician-administered lethal injections, Dr. Koop observed, "After World War II I would have said Holland would be the last nation to accept euthanasia (because of their opposition to Hitler)."

The Surgeon General noted that a bill following the "Dutch model" has been introduced in the legislatures of California, Florida and Arizona. The measure would allow doctors to administer lethal injections or take other actions to directly kill ailing patients . . .

In the April 16, 1986 issue of the *Presbyterian Journal*, Dr. Koop warns that "euthanasia has become the latest moral battlefield in the United States." In the same article, attorney E. R. Grant describes how the idea is spreading, how groups are being organized to promote the idea, and how polls show "an increased support for euthanasia," and that this changing attitude is "a social phenomenon on the scale of the abortion debate." He writes further:

Thirty-five states now have "Living Will" laws . . . and three states are planning to introduce voluntary euthanasia legislation: Arizona, Florida, and California. A Living Will is a declaration signed by a mentally competent person, authorizing a physician to end treatment in the event that the patient becomes incompetent. The treatment may be ended when it prolongs dying and is unnecessary to the patient's comfort.

So support for euthanasia is growing rapidly. □

The Day of Shadows

John A. Heys

A Nameless and Shoeless Kinsman

One of the striking things in the book of Ruth is not what we find written on its pages, but what we are not told, and what God does not want us to know. Apart from the groups of people — such as the women who met Naomi when she returned to

Bethlehem; the people who witnessed the fact that Boaz said that he would redeem the land of Elimelech by marrying Ruth; and the women who spoke so glowingly when the son, Obed, was born to Boaz and Ruth — the individuals whose words and ac-

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tions are recorded were identified by means of their names. We read of the words and works of Elimelech, Naomi, Mahlon, Chilion, Ruth, Orpah and Boaz. But the nearest of kin to Elimelech, although he is referred to no less than fifteen times in Ruth 4 — not now including what is written of him in Ruth 3 — does not have his name given to us even once. Amazingly enough, when Boaz met him in the city the morning after telling Ruth that he would take care of this matter, Boaz greets him with the words, "Ho, such a one!" Boaz did not even call him by his name.

This was not due to a slip on the part of the one who wrote this book. The Primary Author, the God of our salvation, Who moved the secondary author to write this book and guided him infallibly to write it exactly as God wanted it written, and so that he did not leave out of it as much as one word, or letter of a word that God wanted in it, He saw to it that the name of this kinsman is not written in this book. The simple fact is that he, because of his carnality and unspirituality, was not worthy of having his name given.

Yes, there are sinners, base, vile members of the human race, who are mentioned by name. Satan has his name written no less than fifty times; and so does Judas Iscariot, who betrayed the Son of God, have his name penned down in Holy Writ. But this nearest of kin to Elimelech and Mahlon is not mentioned even once by name. And God has His reason for this omission in our Bibles. The God of our salvation has the names of His elect children written in the Lamb's book of life. And He is the One Who will not reveal to us the name of this nearest of kin to Elimelech and Mahlon. Why?

What is His reason? We do well to look carefully at what we read about him, the things God does want us to know about his works.

Living in the land of Canaan was, since the day God brought the Israelites there through Joshua — whose name is the Old Testament form of the New Testament name Jesus — a type and picture of being a citizen in the kingdom of heaven that is coming in the day of Christ. (Incidentally, a better translation of Philippians 3:20 is, "For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." Our translation, that is, the King James Version, declares the truth: "our conversation is in heaven"; but that is exactly because our citizenship is there. And thus being a citizen of the kingdom of Israel was a picture and type of having one's name in the Lamb's book of life. The name Israel, which was given to Jacob after he wrestled with the angel, means Prince of God. And is Jesus not called the Prince of God in Isaiah 9:6 as well as Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father? The Israelites, then, in name, although not always in fact, were princes of God.

Having one's name in Israel had great significance; and that is also why Naomi is so concerned about having a grandson through Ruth who will continue the name of Elimelech on that piece of land that God had given to him.

Having a piece of land in Canaan in that day of types and shadows was a picture of having a place in the kingdom of God. Elimelech and Naomi left that land with the intent of coming back after the famine was over in the land. They left the kingdom of heaven for material advantages, although they did not sell the land and erase their name

from it. And we can understand that this nameless kinsman was eager to buy it now from Naomi and consider himself to have a bigger place in the kingdom of heaven. Plainly he had the wrong idea of what that kingdom of heaven is, and for him it was a kingdom of fleshly advantages.

Nor is this nameless kinsman the only one with a wrong idea of the kingdom that God has established for His people in Christ, Who is The King of all kings, and The Lord over all Lords. There is so much effort in some church circles to pray for healing of the body and of claiming that their prayers have been heard and answered. But where today do we have intensive and really spiritual prayers for deliverance from the love of sin, from carnality, and all the weaknesses of the flesh? Speaking in other tongues seems to be the sure sign of having received the Holy Spirit. The salvation that God promised in the Mother Promise of Genesis 3:15, namely, that He would make those He chose as citizens in the kingdom of heaven to hate sin and the devil, who is constantly causing us to walk in sin, rather than in love to God, they ignore or minimize. Love of God, to them, means talking but not doing. What one does with the mouth counts, and the rest of the body from the heart outward means far less to them. But no, walking in love to God, not merely talking about His love, reveals whether the Spirit of Christ has caused one to be born again and to have the life of that kingdom of heaven.

This nameless kinsman would gladly keep the letter of God's law, if it would enrich him in this earth's goods as they were found in the land of Canaan in that day.

Without hesitation he tells Boaz that he will redeem that land. He will keep the letter of the law that one of the same tribe and same family should buy that land from the widow, Naomi. He would get a bigger place in that shadow of the kingdom of heaven. But when a bit more of God's law is presented to him, he will not walk as a citizen of that kingdom. He will speak enthusiastically about redeeming that land; but he will not perform one act of heeding the word of God that he marry Ruth and raise up seed that will inherit that land and keep Elimelech's name upon it.

What shall we say about this nameless kin of Elimelech? Was he not correct in refusing to marry a Moabitess? Was he more sinful than Boaz, who is ready to keep his promise to marry such a Moabitess? Boaz' name is mentioned no less than sixteen times in this book of Ruth. What really is the difference between them?

As already pointed out in a previous article, he is not a Jew that is one outwardly, but he that is one inwardly, Romans 2:28. Boaz rightly saw Ruth as a Jew inwardly; and this nameless kinsman had an abundance of proof that this was the case, and that God looked down upon her as a citizen in His kingdom of heaven. Did Ruth not leave her father and mother and their idol, Chemosh, to come with Naomi here to Canaan to worship Jehovah, the one and only God? Did she not come to dwell with those who represented the citizens of that kingdom? What is more, did he not know what Boaz declared, when he praised Ruth for choosing widowhood rather than following after young men, whether rich or poor, for fleshly reasons?

There can be no doubt about it that Naomi had informed her relatives there in the region of Bethlehem why Ruth came with her, and why Orpah did not. We may believe that these women of Bethlehem asked her why Orpah had not come with her. We should not forget either those words of Boaz to Ruth, namely, "It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband; and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under Whose wings thou art come to truth," Ruth 2:11, 12. And Boaz had not yet seen her when he had heard all these things about her. He did not recognize her when she came to glean in his fields, and had to ask who she was. This nameless kinsman might never have seen her, either, before Boaz told him that he must marry her to buy that land. But it is hard to believe that he had never heard anything about her in such a small community as that little town of Bethlehem and the fields that were nearby.

The very answer of this man to Boaz, when he told him that he must marry Ruth to buy that land, reveals that he knew who she was. He does not ask, "Who is she?" He does not say, "Let me think it over and visit her before I make up my mind." He has his answer ready at once. And that very answer reveals that it was not because he was betrothed to another Israelite and had a strong natural love that would not let him set her aside. He states, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance." And we do well to take note of the fact that he says

that he cannot, not that he does not want to do so. It is also important to note that he presents his own inheritance as the reason for his quick decision, not some other person whom he planned to marry.

To keep his own inheritance he will go against the ordinance of God that he must remember and keep. His inheritance means more to him than God's will. The things of this earth mean more to him than the things of God's kingdom. When it comes down to it, he said that earthly things mean more to him than God and His sovereign will. God's name does not mean as much to him as his own name upon the land which God gave him. Is there anything strange, then, that God does not want his name mentioned in this account, and that God disapproves completely of his behavior and desires?

Why would this nameless kinsman lose his inheritance if he married Ruth? Would not that child born to them be his son and continue his name in that promised land? No, Elimelech's and Mahlon's names would be continued on that piece of land; and he would be marrying Ruth so that this would take place, if God gave them a son. But the money he would pay for that land he would lose. And he was not a rich man like Boaz. He might even have to borrow money to buy that land. This money he would never get back, because all the crops of this land would be his only in a small measure. It could support his earthly life, but the percentage of what it produced would not be his. He could, as he also said, lose his own inheritance which he got from his father, because he could not pay off the debt that became his because he borrowed to buy this inheritance. Serving God meant for him losing

material possessions; and that he would not do.

When we lose our respect for him and believe that we must label him as a sinner, we do well, and in fact, must look at ourselves. Let us remember the words of Jesus: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." We are so often quite ready to say of others that they should not and do not have their names in the Lamb's book of life, and are nameless kinsmen because they seek the things here below. That their citizenship is in the kingdom of heaven we may question. But what about ourselves? What means most to us? Do houses and land, clothing and sumptuous meals mean more to us than the cause of God's kingdom here below? Will we go against God's

law in order to keep our earthly possessions and add to them, while the cause of spreading the gospel and of striving to bring other Ruths, other Moabites into the kingdom of heaven, calls for more financial support?

What really are we seeking? The kingdom of heaven or of laying up treasures on this earth that we cannot take along when we die? This nameless kinsman does not have his personal name mentioned even once in Scripture; but the Word of God does give the name of the class to which he belonged. His name, as far as this act is concerned, was that of sinner, law breaker, and seeker of the things here below. But that is also our name so often; and this whole incident ought to teach us to seek first things first and be concerned with a place in heaven where we can have on our feet the shoes of the righteousness of Christ, and enjoy the blessedness of an everlasting life of keeping God's law, living in perfect love before Him. And be thankful for that grace of God that gives us a name free of

charge, a name which can be ours only because His own Son lost so much for us when He was nailed to His cross and was forsaken in the torments of hell. He married us, the spiritual Ruths, that have in ourselves no right in the land of promise. He took us as His bride and gives us an everlasting name and place in the kingdom of heaven.

That this nameless kinsman took off his shoe and gave it to Boaz was also significant. It symbolized the transfer of a possession. Here this kinsman gave Boaz the right to buy that inheritance. Giving him the ownership of that shoe symbolized giving him right to the ownership of that land of Elimelech. It means that he would not walk in that land and claim it to be his but recognizes the right for Boaz to walk there and say that it belongs to him. No name; but acting in spiritual shame. A man with only one shoe, and acting as though only outwardly is he a Jew. □

The "New Understanding" of Scripture Revised Hymnal for the United Methodists Evolution In The Christian High School

All Around Us
Gise J. Van Baren

Gise J. Van Baren is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church in Hudsonville, Michigan.

The "New Understanding" of Scripture

There is continued pressure within the Christian Reformed

Church to ordain women into the offices of elder and minister (the office of the diaconate is already opened to them). This open agita-

tion continues despite the clear decisions of the Synod against such ordination. In the *Calvinist Contact*, Sept. 18, 1987, there appears a letter to the editor which I quote in part:

In a recent pastoral letter, Rev. Leonard Schalkwyk wrote about "Balanced Christianity" He told of churches and people who emphasize the work of one person of the Trinity, but who minimize or ignore the work of the other two. Those who do this have an unbalanced form of Christianity. With that assessment I, and most readers, agree.

What troubles me, however, is the way Rev. Schalkwyk used his letter to charge seminary graduate, Laura Smit, with having an "unbalanced view," when she told synod that she felt called to the ministry because of the "leading of the Spirit." Miss Smit also told the all-male assembly that "the Spirit will continue to call women into the ministry." Because of her statements, Schalkwyk charged her with "a misuse of the Spirit."

Schalkwyk wrote that some delegates to synod "consider it unbiblical to have female preachers," while "others see women in office as a sign of apostasy in the church." Some say the texts mentioned previously are "exceptions to the norm." Others are so conditioned by their culture that they cannot conceive of anything other than male preachers in the pulpit.

I wish the majority of the seminary faculty, Board of Trustees, and the synodical delegates who thwarted Smit's desire to enter the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church had taken the time to read — or reread — the study committee report, "Women in Ecclesiastical Office" (Acts of Synod, 1973, pp. 514-588). That extensive report, written by Canadians, including two women, would have helped them gain a clear understanding of why women should be ordained to all the offices in the church

If these churchmen were imbued with a spirit of reformation, they would have told synod that the time has come for the Christian Reformed Church to ordain its first woman preacher. For Laura Smit does have the qualifications and gifts. And they could have followed up by recommending that the Church Order be changed as the synods of 1978 and 1984 did.

Is it too much to ask of church leaders that when they are asked to sit in judgment of what are sometimes called "concrete cases" — real, live, flesh-and-blood human beings — they display the qualities of compassion, leniency, and understanding? The Church Order is not

infallible. Its text is not divinely inspired. It reflects its own historical and cultural conditioning. As the Spirit leads the church to see things from a different perspective in these present times, then it follows that the Church Order be amended to reflect that new understanding. And in expressing these thoughts, I think I am presenting a balanced view.

No wonder that with this kind of agitation, there are those who predict that within five years also the C.R.C. will have its women ministers.

Revised Hymnal for the United Methodists

Christian Renewal, December 7, 1987, quotes from *Christianity Today*, concerning the new United Methodist Hymnal. It is called a "populist" hymnal, which will be submitted for approval to the denomination's general conference next April. The article states:

The United Methodist Hymnal is designed to replace the church's Book of Hymns, produced 21 years ago. Many of the new book's hymns contain changes to rid them of perceived sexism or racism. "Any time a new translation comes out that is this far-reaching in its potential, there's going to be close scrutiny," said hymnal editor Charlton Young. ". . . This hymnal is for more people than the other (hymn) book is."

Whenever possible, the committee replaced the words "man" and "mankind" with terms such as "us" or "friends." The committee also reduced the use of "his" or "him" when referring to God. And it injected alternative images for the deity — such as "Creator" and "Comforter" — to limit the number of masculine images such as "King" and "Father".

None of the hymns in the new book refer to God as "she," although a few refer to God's motherlike qualities. But the committee left unchanged such favorites as "Rise Up, O Men of God" and "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind."

Once again, the "new" theology of the day is being introduced into the hymnody of the churches. The question is not what Scripture teaches in this regard, but rather it is what the people want. And even then, it is

not so much what people of the church would want, but what is in agreement with the general presentation of the people of this age. Hymns must reflect not so much anymore the teachings of Scripture, but must show forth the "culture" of our day.

Evolution In The Christian High School

The Outlook, Dec. 1987, in an article by David A. Kloosterman, expresses concern that the idea of theistic evolution is being presented not only in the colleges but also in the parental Christian schools. What is taught in Calvin College will be taught by many of its graduates on the high school and grade school level. The article states:

. . . . There is much for us to learn from the evolutionists. As we express our concerns regarding the theistic evolutionary views of such men as Howard Van Til, Clarence Menninga, Davis Young, John Stek, and others who teach or have taught at our college and seminary, we may be tempted to think that if only we can win these "big court cases" that the war is won. Far from it.

The proponents of unbridled theistic evolution have already taken long strides toward accomplishing their expressed goal of introducing the teaching of theistic evolution (including man) into the Christian high school classroom.

This fact has recently been made painfully clear to me and to others who support Christian education in the city of Kalamazoo, Michigan. Readers of the science page of the June 2, 1987 Kalamazoo Gazette had their attention drawn by a two-column photo bearing the caption "Kalamazoo Christian Principal Roger Sikkenga and biology teacher Colleen Bode teach that mankind evolves under divine control." Moving to the article itself one reads such statements as the following:

"There's no uniform approach to teaching creation science among parochial schools. The treatments range from fundamentalism, in which the bible's version in the Book of Genesis is interpreted literally, to the versions taught at Kalamazoo Christian and Hackett Catholic Central — versions in which man evolves in an orderly way under the intimate care of God.

"Creationism versus evolution really isn't the issue at Kalamazoo Christian

High School,' says Bode. Sikkenga adds the issue is not so much the details of man's biological journey, but the author of that Journey.

"Kalamazoo Christian uses the same textbooks that the public high schools do, showing development of the species, genetic theory and the evidence for evolution through fossils. 'But in none of these texts does it ever actually relate the human species to apes,' Sikkenga points out. 'The actual jump as to man from the fossilized remains is left up to the readers.' The creation of man is 'completely separate' from the evolution of the rest of the world, they believe. 'We are evolving, but it is in an orderly way,' designed and controlled by God, Bode said."

The writer of the article tells of his approach to the board of the high school and of their response:

"The article that appeared certainly did not clearly state the school's position nor that of our principal or science teacher. Please rest assured that Kalamazoo Christian High's position on creation/evolution is in no wise different than the one with which you are historically familiar . . . We all stand firmly on the position that the universe was created by God and that the first man and woman were given an immortal soul upon creation. We further affirm that man fell into sin and that all of creation has been affected by this fall from perfection. Further, we affirm that Jesus Christ, the perfect Son of the Creator, has been sent to redeem the creation from sin, and we place our faith firmly in this risen Lord and Savior."

The writer was not satisfied and writes:

. . . To my mind, the personal letter which I received does not really clear things up either. If the position of the school was not well-represented in the Gazette article, why the reluctance of staff and board to publicly set the record straight? The statement affirming "that the first man and woman were given an immortal soul upon creation" clearly leaves room for the position that man's physical nature evolved from apes and falls short of affirming the historical Adam and Eve. Nor is the historical-event character of Genesis 1-11 affirmed.

The assurance of the board that their "position" on creation/evolution has not changed does not give me rest . . . The policy has not changed, but has the teaching in the classroom changed? This is where the rubber hits the road. □

In His Fear
Arie den Hartog

Exercise Thyself Unto Godliness

The inspired apostle of our Lord exhorts us unto this holy exercise in I Timothy 4:7. He is writing especially to the evangelist Timothy and to those like him with regard to work in the church. But what Paul writes certainly applies to all of us. We all need to exercise ourselves unto godliness. How little concern there is today in the church for such exercise. The world of Christendom is full of lazy, lethargic, and weak Christians because of this. There is no more shameful and evil laziness than spiritual laziness. Such laziness has very serious consequences. Because many who call them-

selves Christians do not exercise themselves unto godliness, many a spiritual battle with the devil is lost. Without this holy exercise there is little true godliness.

Paul compares the exercise unto godliness to bodily exercise. Of bodily exercise the apostle says that "it profiteth little." Yet in our day all the emphasis is on that. Hours of strenuous effort is spent on bodily exercise. Large sums of money are spent on gymnasiums and sports equipment. Much of this is carnal and vain. The motive for it all is the building of handsome physiques and shapely forms for the lust and glory of men. By bodily ex-

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ercise man vainly attempts to extend his life beyond the time which the Lord has appointed. Paul does not condemn all bodily exercise. There is value in maintaining healthy bodies. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. Therefore we must also take care of them. This must, however, all be subservient to the great purpose in our life to serve the Lord, and not for the glory of men. We may exercise our bodies if our purpose is to present our bodies living sacrifices unto the Lord. Also, we must never lose sight of the fact that in this life we must prepare ourselves for the life that is to come.

A far more important and profitable exercise is that exercise which trains us in godliness. What a tremendous thing it would be if Christians today would spend the same amount of time and effort on the holy exercise of which the apostle speaks. What a change there would be in the lives of the people of God and in the church.

In a number of places in his letters, Paul illustrates the Christian life with figures from the world of sports and games and the gymnasium. One of the main points in all of these illustrations is that a tremendous amount of discipline and personal exertion is required in the Christian life. When Paul emphasizes this, he of course does not mean thereby to suggest that our salvation is a matter of our own works and efforts. Our salvation is from beginning to end the work of the Lord. Our Lord Jesus Christ through His perfect work on the cross has merited and fully accomplished our salvation. Nothing that we can do or need do can in any way add to the basis of our righteousness in Christ. This is the blessed gospel which we must hold to without compromise. Furthermore without the power of the grace and Spirit

of God we can do nothing at all. If ever a man on earth stressed these great truths, it was the inspired apostle of our Lord. By no means, however, does this mean to imply that the Christian has no calling to perform and obligation to fulfill. It is a miserable and wretched teaching that suggests that the Christian life is entirely passive. We must simply sit back and do nothing lest we contradict the grace of God in our life. The Scriptures exhort us rather to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. In the light of this, Scripture gives us such great exhortations as: "strive to enter in at the strait gate and the narrow way;" "run with patience the race that is set before you, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith;" "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;" "fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life;" "let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the example of unbelief." At the end of his life the apostle Paul can testify: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing," II Timothy 4:7 and 8.

The exhortation to exercise ourselves unto godliness falls into the same class as the above quoted passages. The apostle sets forth in this exhortation a very vivid illustration. The good athlete must exercise. This takes effort, discipline, training, and exertion. The gymnasium smells of the sweat of hard work-outs. In

order to compete in the games, one must be well trained and exercised. The athlete must have his body in subjection. He must be careful to eat the proper diet. He must always be in training to build up muscle tone and skill. At no time can he let up on this, for then he will become lazy and his muscles will become flabby. All of this, then, must be applied to the realm of the spiritual.

Godliness must be the great goal of the Christian life. This is a high and lofty goal that no one can even begin to attain to except by the grace of God. All our strength in the holy exercise of which we speak must come from God. Godliness is God-centeredness in all our life. It is reverence and fear and love for God. It implies the knowledge of God and His sovereignty, holiness, and truth. Godliness is the life of gratitude of the child of God who knows the exceeding greatness of his salvation. We are godly when in all our life we desire to serve the Lord and live unto Him and for His glory. We are godly when we earnestly seek to avoid in our life all those things which are displeasing to the Lord and bring dishonor to His name. We are godly in our life when we fight in God's name against the devil, the great enemy of God, and against the temptations of sin in the world. We are godly in our life when we are seriously interested in the things of God, His truth and righteousness, His church and kingdom, the glory of His name in the world.

To live a life of godliness requires great effort and discipline. It does not come easy. It takes much serious training and practice and application of ourselves. One will never be godly if he does nothing or is spiritually lazy and careless. The lazy and careless Christian will fall in the battle, He will not be able to stand.

He will become shamefully and miserably ungodly.

There is something very concrete to all of this. God Himself must by His Word and Spirit make us godly. The Lord is pleased to use the means which He Himself has ordained. We become godly and exercise ourselves unto godliness when we sincerely apply ourselves unto the use of these means. Many Christians today must be condemned for their failure to do this. God uses first of all the preaching of the Word for the working and strengthening of our faith and for teaching us the truth of God. We exercise ourselves unto godliness when we seriously apply ourselves to hear and receive the preached word. The church may be called God's gymnasium. There we must exercise ourselves unto godliness. We certainly do not do this when in church we sit back with a callous attitude of disinterest and inattentiveness. Shame on any of us who does that in the house of the Lord.

We exercise ourselves unto godliness through constant, diligent, and careful study of God's word. Though the message of the gospel is simple and plain, and can be understood by every child of God who has the mind and Spirit of Christ Jesus, this does not mean that the Word of God is in every part easy to understand. There are great and deep doctrines of the Word of God, such as the sovereignty of God, predestination, and justification by faith. Our age is one of superficiality. Any truth that does not come easily is discarded as unimportant and not worth the effort. We are raising a genera-

tion that knows very little of the great doctrines of the Bible because they are not exercised unto godliness. Therefore false doctrines engulf many a church, and many Christians are led astray by the wiles and temptations of the devil. Let none of us vainly imagine that this cannot happen to us and to our own churches. There is in our day little understanding and wisdom and discernment because few are exercised in godliness. Few can really grasp the great issues of life and the great truths of the Word of God. Let us all judge ourselves how much time and effort we spend in the study of God's Word. When is the last time you have read a solid doctrinal book to help you understand Reformed doctrine and to equip yourself to join, by God's grace, in the defense of the truth against all the modern day heresies?

We become godly in the way of prayer. How much time and effort do we spend in prayer in our Christian life? Prayer is a strenuous spiritual exercise. Surely those who every day rattle off a purely formal and routine prayer ought not to imagine that they have finished their exercise for the day. It is a great shame if we spend more time and effort daily on routine bodily exercise than we spend on the holy exercise of the worship of God. To

exercise ourselves unto godliness we need to wrestle with God in prayer, in tears and pains and struggles, that we may obtain from Him the strength and blessing we need to live the Christian life.

Exercising ourselves unto godliness means that we are serious about constantly putting into practice the principles of the Word of God in our life. We must do this with conscious effort and dependence upon the grace of God. Daily practical Christian living does not come easy. We have the devil and our own flesh to fight against. There is much we must know about the implications of the Word of God for every area of our life.

We are called to give a living and personal witness in the world of the blessed truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In order to do that we must sanctify the Lord God in our hearts. Many say that they find it very difficult to speak of their faith to others and to communicate to others the doctrines which we believe. The chief reason is that we do not practice. We are not exercised unto godliness.

Our space is filled. "But godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." □

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The Strength of Youth

Barrett L. Gritters

Hard Questions For Young People:

"Should I Go To College?"

Dear Christian parents and young people,

This section of the Standard Bearer has always been written for the Young People. The Title "The Strength of Youth" emphasizes the unique strength that young people have in their teens and later.

Although there is a unique strength in young people that needs to be capitalized on, in their lives there are many difficult questions to face and answer. My purpose in this rubric this year is to address some of those questions and try to give guidelines for answering them, so that their strengths may be used to the fullest.

If you have questions you would like to see addressed here, please write to me directly, 8360 Clyde Park SW, Byron Center, MI 49315.

God lead you and bless you as you face your many "hard questions."

I ended last time showing the differences between the decisions the young men and young women make regarding what to do after high school. To summarize, we could say that the decision of what to do after high school has to be made in the light of these questions: First, what abilities has God given me? What are my God-given skills? Second, what does God tell me in His Word as to what is proper and what not? And third, what can I do that best serves God's kingdom?

Now there still may be large question marks in your mind even though you have tried to answer those questions. These guide questions do not guarantee that you will know what you

ought to do after high school. Required is much prayer mixed with hard work, a good dose of sanctified wisdom, and a multitude of counsellors. There is no easy answer concerning what to do after high school. In fact, I would be so brave as to say that if the answer for you has been *easy*, you might do well to re-think your decision.

Since the decision is difficult for many to make, the time after high school can become an uncomfortable time, either wandering around from one unsatisfactory job to another, or going to college because "I don't know what else to do."

Barrett L. Gritters is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Byron Center, Michigan.

THE QUESTION IS, "SHOULD I GO TO COLLEGE?"

For some, that might not be so difficult. You may already know there is no question about that in your mind. You *are* going to college because you believe that will best prepare you for life. Others might say, "I am just as convinced that college is *not* for me. I know what I want to do for my life's work; and it doesn't require learning about Shakespeare or logarithms." Or, you might be on the fence, not convinced yet either way.

In this article, I would like to speak to two of these groups — those who are not sure, and those who are convinced they will not go to college — and ask that they (at least) hear the evidence in support of college.

COLLEGE IS NOT FOR EVERYONE

Lest the impression be left that everyone ought to go to college, let it be said first that college is not for everyone.

For some it simply is not affordable. College is expensive. Tuition, room and board can run into the thousands of dollars. But that ought not stop you from going if you desire to go. For the young person who would like to go to college, who believes he ought to go to college, a lack of immediate funds does not mean he ought to abandon the thought. Financial aid (grants, loans) is available to students whose parents are in a low income bracket. Students who do well in high-school can bag an academic scholarship or two. In some states, college is virtually free. (In California, I obtained my first two years of college, compliments of the state.) But it still might be true that, for some, college is out of reach.

Another reason you might not go to college (a better one, perhaps) is that you simply are

not able. Here, too, we must be governed by the guideline — do what God has given us the ability to do. If there simply is not the intellectual ability to go to college, your life is not less pleasing to God than someone who does attend. The Lord determined that for you. It is good.

(My fear is that some will use these two *reasons* for not going as *excuses* that they not go to college. Is it possible that you don't *want* to study and don't *want* to go to college, so that you don't seek out financial means and don't try in high school?)

And last, you might not go to college because you simply do not need to go. Your job is waiting for you. Your future in that job is fairly secure. Or, you have a business that you would like to start, which business requires no college. Or, your father can get you a job in his business which has a good future and requires no further education. There is abundant proof (living and walking) that this can be the case. Some simply don't need to go to college. And the church needs young men and young women who work in those occupations that require no college.

COLLEGE OUGHT TO BE CONSIDERED SERIOUSLY

But I hope and pray that all young people will seriously consider attending college for at least a couple of years, keeping in mind the following:

FIRST, but not necessarily most important, every good business teacher in college knows that the statistics given by the SBA (Small Business Administration) show that, of all the businesses that fail, 90% fail because of poor management, especially management of money. A good education gives you the ability to manage your

business, communicate with customers, study new methods of your particular field, etc. This could be critical. (Besides, going to college itself is a lesson in careful money management — there usually isn't very much of it!)

SECOND, I read once that high school education today is equivalent to an eighth grade education 50 years ago. In some instances this might just be true. Then a college education would only lift one up to a level that most high school students were 50 years ago.

Some claim, though, that the education which most of the young people get at a good quality Christian school *IS* good — even at a par with those of many years ago (I hope this is the case in your high school). Yet there is evidence that the education is *not* what it used to be. Consider the pressure high schools feel to offer classes in computer science, typing, auto mechanics, wood-working, metal shop, sports, band, choir, library science, art, home economics, and more (none of which is bad in itself). Is it any wonder the basics are sometimes not given the proper attention they used to receive? There are only so many hours every day. What used to be spent with the fundamentals is not spent when these (*sometimes* necessary) additions are in the curriculum.

College fills in the gaps inevitably left in high school education, which gaps need to be filled to live in this world.

THIRD, without a college education, there are few jobs available that will pay sufficiently to support a family — what with Christian school tuition and all the other expenses of a family. Unless you have the ability and diligence to run your own business, you will have to work for someone else (most of you

will). And the simple fact is, unless you are highly skilled or well educated, that "someone else" does not very often pay sufficiently to support a family. If the parent (or parents) have had a college education, their families generally have fewer financial struggles. More often, a family must struggle to make ends meet, wishing that their wage-earner had the ability to get a better job.

Today, *even highly skilled workers* are finding that their skills are not sufficient for them to keep pace with the changes in technology. There are radical changes in the workplace that affect your *need* to be educated. Jobs that formerly required little education now call for much more than common sense and strong arms. In *Newsweek* magazine, September 21, 1987, an article entitled "Back to The Basics" warned about this very thing. Please read this carefully.

"The information age isn't coming to the workplace, it's here. The traditional lowskill auto jobs don't exist anymore," says David Cole, director of the University of Michigan's office for the Study of Automotive Transportation. 'No longer is an individual just going to put a screw in an opening.' To master the statistical control methods now used in the auto and other industries, workers will require sophisticated math skills. If production goes awry, old-fashioned mechanical aptitude won't count for much. On Polaroid's old machinery, 'you know where to kick,' says Linda Stoker, director of technology-readiness programs at company headquarters in Cambridge, Mass. 'But the new technology is robotic and electronic. You have to have a sophisticated technological background to understand the implications of a read-out.'

"Workers are also starting to see basic education as a matter of self-interest. At General Motors, new technology has forced retraining every three to five years — and employees without the basic skills quickly fall behind . . ." (Emphasis mine: BG).

"Employees without the basic skills quickly fall behind." Think of the old-fashioned auto mechanic, who formerly could train for and do well in his oc-

cupation in a short time, now needs advanced training and skills to do well. But it doesn't stop there; every year technology changes and new skills need to be learned. The point is: in order to be re-trained, *you need to be able to study and understand new concepts.*

I do not write this to scare you. I write this only to add some weight to my plea to you: please try hard in high school; and to go to college if you possibly can.

FOURTH, all young people ought to *consider* college, because it is after high school that young people really begin to mature and, therefore, are more willing to learn. And what a golden opportunity to learn!

College is a maturing experience. Learning is done in an open atmosphere, apart from the pressure of parents. You're on your own. You learn because you *want* to learn. You learn to study because you want to study. For many, it is the years of college that transform a young person to an adult.

FIFTH, I make a plea to *consider* college because young people are called to develop their God-given skills to the best of their ability.

AGAIN, WHAT ABOUT THE GIRLS?

College is not for all of you either, for some of the same reasons as the young men.

And again, for girls the decision may be even more difficult. I sympathize with you. There are so many options and so many uncertainties, that the young women need to pray for wisdom, and work just as hard to make a decision. Will you marry? (And what adds to this difficulty is that you're a girl! And you know what I mean.) Is marriage even on the distant horizon? Are you dating a young man seriously? Is

a decent job available immediately? Is college useful if you don't graduate?

Let me only say this: I have not talked to any young woman (or old) who says she regrets having gone to college. (I would suggest that you talk to godly women who have faced the same decisions you are facing.) A college education is a learning, maturing experience. At college you gain experiences you gain nowhere else, which will even help you in your home as a wife and mother of children.

But suppose you decide that college is not for you this year and you work for a year. That does not preclude going to college *next* year, or the next, especially if marriage is still not in the picture. Only pray that God will give you the job that will utilize your abilities to serve Him best.

* * * * *

Let us be cautioned at this point. Our perspective is spiritual. Our concern is serving our God in His world. How can we do that best? By developing our God-given bodies and minds the better to serve Him.

My prayer for you? That you will "pray and work" for God's guidance for your life after high school. God bless as you face your hard questions. □

Taking Heed To The Two Natures The Doctrine of Christ

Ronald H. Hanko

The Humanity Of Christ

1. The testimony of Scripture.

There seems little need of demonstrating the humanity of Christ from Scripture when there are few, even as far removed from orthodox Christianity as the sects, the Jews, or the Muslims, who do not believe that there was a real man named Jesus. Especially when one remembers that, if anything, there is today the tendency to emphasize the humanity of Christ to the detriment of His deity, it would seem superfluous to try to prove from Scripture that He is indeed a man.

Nevertheless, both history and experience show that there is as great a danger of the church's straying from this truth as from the truth of His divinity, and this is one reason for presenting the testimony of Scripture to this truth. Another reason is to be found in the importance of this doctrine. John indicates its importance when he says that the denial of it is the beginning of antichrist (1 Jn. 4:2). It is as critical to our faith and hope of salvation as the deity of Christ. Thus a study of Scripture's testimony is necessary not only in defense of the faith, but to strengthen the faith of God's people.

That Jesus is truly man is explicitly stated in Scripture, first of all by Jesus Himself. He calls Himself a man (Jn. 8:40) and is also called such by the inspired apostles (Acts 2:22) who knew Him and "handled" Him (1 Jn. 1:1). So real was His humanity that Scripture at times even calls Him a man without any reference at all to His divinity (Rom. 5:15; 1 Cor. 15:21; 1 Tim. 2:5).

This testimony is supported by the further testimony of Scripture that He was born a part of the human race and experienced all that belongs to our life. He was born of a woman (Gal. 4:4), was fed at the breast (Lk. 11:27), was circumcised (Lk. 2:21), lived with

brothers and sisters (Matt. 13:55, 56), was subject to parents (Lk. 2:51), grew up and matured as we do (Lk. 2:40), so that He was infant, child, youth, and adult. What is more, His growth was not only physical growth but also growth in knowledge and wisdom, that is: intellectual and spiritual growth (Lk. 2:40). Scripture even makes the amazing statement that He had to learn obedience as part of His spiritual growth (Heb. 5:8), something which seems incomprehensible to us when we remember His glory as God. Nevertheless, it is just such things as these that Scripture uses to teach the mystery and miracle of the incarnation. So also, at maturity He was subject to civil and religious authorities (Lk. 5:14; 1 Pet. 2:23), paid taxes (Matt. 17:24-27), worked and rested, ate and drank, worshipped in the synagogues, prayed, and in all these things proved to us that He is like us at all points (Heb. 2:17).

That He is really a man is stated in Scripture in different ways, i.e., that He was made flesh (Jn. 1:14), came in the flesh (1 Jn. 4:2, 3), bore the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8:3), and partook of the flesh and blood of the children (Heb. 2:14); but all add up to one unmistakable testimony that He was really man as we are, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh (Eph. 5:30).

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That these passages refer especially to the fact that He had a real human body, does not exclude His having also a human soul (Matt. 26:38), spirit (Jn. 13:21), mind (Phil. 2:5), will (Lk. 22:42), and heart (Matt. 11:29). Nonetheless, the emphasis of Scripture lies exactly at that point where the reality of His humanity has often been denied, that He is our flesh and blood, a true son of man.

Christ Himself stresses His humanity by constantly referring to Himself as the Son of Man. Indeed, this is the name He preferred for Himself, using this name more than any other, some forty times in all. So exactly does it describe His humanity that its repeated use in the Gospel of Luke is an indication of the theme of that gospel. This name corresponds to the Old Testament references to Him as the great Seed; of the woman, of Abraham, and of David (Gen. 3:15; 17:7; II Sam. 7:12). That this seed is ultimately Christ is clear from Galatians 3:16; but the point is that in all the references to Christ as the Seed, the word has first of all literal meaning: "offspring." Nor is its profound spiritual sense at all obscured by this recognition of its literal meaning. This meaning of the name Son of Man is further confirmed by Scripture's use of it in connection with Christ's activity as a man: coming, going, seeking, finding, eating, drinking, being betrayed, delivered over to enemies, lifted up, buried, and risen.

His own use of this name reminds us that His humanity is not abstract church doctrine, but a revelation of His love for His own, and of His willingness to suffer all things for our sakes. That He preferred this name ought never be forgotten by those who desire to come to Him and who seek in Him all joy.

Especially telling proof of His humanity is the testimony of Scripture to His limitations as a man. That He had to grow in knowledge reminds us that His knowledge as a man was limited. Christ Himself acknowledges this in several instances. He told His disciples that He did not know the day or hour of His coming (Mk. 13:32), and showed surprise at the faith of the centurion who requested healing for his servant (Matt. 8:10). As difficult as it is for us to reconcile this with His divine omniscience (cf. Jn. 2:24, 25), it is nevertheless an undeniable evidence of the reality of His humanity.

Likewise we find from Scripture that His strength was limited, dependent on food, drink, and rest as ours also is. Nor could He be in more than one place at one time (omnipresence), but was subject to the same limitations of space and place as we are. This is part of the reality of the ascension, for to deny that Christ *went* to heaven when He ascended in the sight of His disciples is to make the ascension a mere illusion. That He had to grow from infant to adult reminds us that He as a man was subject to time and change as we are, and is not, as man, eternally and unchangeably the same. To this the Athanasian Creed bears witness when it says that He was not only "God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds," but also "man of the substance of His mother, born in the world." And all of these limitations are implied in the further statement of the Athanasian Creed that He is "inferior to the Father as touching His manhood."

Most striking of all in respect to His limitations as a man is the fact that He needed God, just as we do. This we see in His great need for prayer (Mk. 1:35; Matt. 26:38; Heb. 5:7), in His worshipping God, even to the extent of speaking of God as His God, and not just His Father (Matt. 27:46). We certainly see in this what the Athanasian Creed calls His inferiority to the Father in respect of His humanity, for it is impossible from the viewpoint of His deity that He should have God or need God.

When we add to all this the testimony of Scripture concerning His suffering and weakness, then indeed there can be no doubt that He was like us, for He did not take on Himself the human nature as it was first created, perfect in strength and knowledge, but our human nature as it is debilitated and weakened by the power and dominion of sin. Thus Scripture also speaks of His hunger, thirst, weariness, poverty, and pain (Jn. 4:6; 19:28; II Cor. 8:9). But even His suffering was more than physical, and in that also He was entirely like us. He knew sorrow, anxiety, agony of soul, and disappointment in the face of suffering (Matt. 26:37, 40; Lk. 22:44; Jn. 11:35; 12:27). And, most striking of all, He was able to suffer temptation and was tempted at every point with us. Nor may the temptations of Christ be dismissed as anything less than the real spiritual struggle which we ourselves endure in temptation. Scripture speaks clearly of His need for the ministration of angels after His struggle with Satan in the wilderness (Matt. 4:11), and of the agony of His soul in the garden, where the proof of His temptation and struggle is His own bloody sweat.

Directory, Protestant Reformed Churches

Covenant Prot. Ref. Church
454 Pulis Ave.
Franklin Lakes, N.J.
(Meeting in United Meth. Church)
Services: 11:30 & 7:00
Phone: (201) 790-4732

Byron Center Prot. Ref. Church
8840 Byron Center Ave.
Byron Center, MI
(Meeting in Byron Center Chr. Jr.
High School)
Services: 9:30 & 5:00
Phone: (616) 878-3255, 534-1927

Hope Prot. Ref. Church
1580 Ferndale, SW
(Corner of Riverbend & Ferndale)
Walker, MI
Services: 9:30 & 7:00
Phone: (616) 453-3253, 453-2524

Kalamazoo Prot. Ref. Church
4515 Green Acre Dr.
Kalamazoo, MI
Services: 9:30 & 6:00
Phone: (616) 381-3385, 349-4420

Randolph Prot. Ref. Church
229 Hammond St.
Randolph, WI
Services: 9:30 & 2:00
Phone: (414) 326-5642

Hull Prot. Ref. Church
1204 Third St.
Hull, IA
Services: 9:30 & 7:00 (May to
Sept.) 9:30 & 1:30 (Oct. to
April)
Phone: (712) 439-1326, 439-1283

Hope Prot. Ref. Church
Isabel, SD
Services: 9:30 & 2:00
Phone: (605) 466-2450

Hope Prot. Ref. Church
1307 E. Brockton Ave.
Redlands, CA
Services: 10:00 & 7:00
Phone: (714) 792-0307, 792-4923

First Prot. Ref. Church
2800 Michigan St., NE
(1/2 Mi. SW of I96/M44 inter-
change)
Grand Rapids, MI
Services: 9:30 & 6:00
Phone: (616) 247-0638, 245-4339

Southwest Prot. Ref. Church
4875 Ivanrest Ave., SW
Grandville, MI
Services: 9:30 & 7:00
Phone: (616) 532-6876, 532-4846

Faith Prot. Ref. Church
7194 20th Ave.
Jenison, MI
Services: 9:30 & 7:00
Phone: (616) 457-5848

First Prot. Ref. Church
290 E. 18th St.
Holland, MI
Services: 9:30 & 6:30
Phone: (616) 396-8303

Pella Prot. Ref. Church
410 Franklin St.
Pella, IA
Services: 9:30 & 7:00
Phone: (515) 628-4747

Doon Prot. Ref. Church
6th Ave. & N. 2nd St.
Doon, IA
Services: 9:30 & 2:00
Phone: (712) 726-3382

Loveland Prot. Ref. Church
709 E. 57th St.
Loveland, CO
Services: 9:30 & 6:00 (Oct. to
May) 9:30 & 7:00 (June to Sept.)
Phone: (303) 667-1347

Lynden Prot. Ref. Church
108 Beernink Lane
Lynden, WA
Services: 10:00 & 8:00 (summer)
10:00 & 2:00 (winter)
Phone: (206) 354-4337

Southeast Prot. Ref. Church
1536 Cambridge, SE
Grand Rapids, MI
Services: 9:30 & 5:00
Phone: (616) 452-7047

Grandville Prot. Ref. Church
Wilson Ave., SW
Grandville, MI
(Meeting in Grandville High
School)
Services: 9:30 & 7:00
Phone: (616) 538-2575

Hudsonville Prot. Ref. Church
5101 Beechtree Ave.
(1 Blk. East of Public High
School, 32nd Ave.)
Hudsonville, MI
Services: 9:30 & 7:00
Phone: (616) 669-0755

South Holland Prot. Ref. Church
16511 South Park Ave.
South Holland, IL
Services: 9:30 & 6:00
Phone: (312) 333-1314, 596-3113

Trinity Prot. Ref. Church
214 Barker-Clodine Rd.
Houston, TX
Services: 9:30 & 6:00
Phone: (713) 492-0844

Edgerton Prot. Ref. Church
3rd & Maple St.
Edgerton, MN
Services: 9:30 & 7:30 (March to
Nov.) 9:30 & 2:00 (Dec. to Feb.)
Phone: (507) 442-4441

First Prot. Ref. Church
11533 135th St.
(Mt. Zion Lutheran Church)
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
Services: 11:15 & 3:00
Phone: (403) 455-9803

Immanuel Prot. Ref. Church
C & E Trail and 50th Ave.
(St. Cyprian's Anglican Church)
Lacombe, Alberta, Canada
Services: 12:00 & 4:00
Phone: (403) 782-4089

Only at one point was He different from us in suffering and in temptation: He was without sin. But sinlessness is not essential to our humanity, as is clear in the creation of Adam: that is to say, it is possible to be a real man and yet be without sin. So the sinlessness of Christ does not make Him in any way at all less of man than we are.

It ought to be evident, then, that Scripture pays as much attention to the humanity of Christ as to His divinity, as also ought we, for both are necessary for

our salvation. The church must not neglect the truth of Christ's true humanity by over-reacting against those who believe that He is only a man and who in one way or another deny His Godhead.

Nor may this doctrine ever be mere doctrine, for it is for us personally the foundation of our assurance of salvation and the truth which draws us to Christ as Redeemer, Intercessor, and sympathetic High Priest, especially

now that He has in our flesh obtained glory and honor with the Father. As our Belgic Confession says:

But this Mediator, whom the Father has appointed between him and us, ought in no wise to affright us by his majesty, or cause us to seek another according to our fancy. For there is no creature in heaven or on earth who loveth us more than Jesus Christ; who, though he was in the form of God, yet made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a man, and of a servant for us, and was made like unto his brethren in all things (Art. XXVI). □

News From Our Churches

Ben Wigger

January 15, 1988

From the trio of the Reverends Kenneth Hanko, Gise Van Baren, and Bernard Woudenberg, the congregation in Holland has extended a call to Rev. G. Van Baren, presently pastor of Hudsonville, to become their under-shepherd.

On Monday, December 21, First Church in Grand Rapids held their annual congregational

meeting. The first item of business that night was to call a second missionary for the island of Jamaica from a trio of the Reverends De Vries, Gritters, and Koole. From that trio Rev. De Vries was chosen.

The Lord willing, on January 8 Rev. Rodney Miersma and his family will have begun their long trip to New Zealand. The New Zealand government has granted the Miersmas permission to immigrate. However, that permission is only for a six month period. It is hoped that once they are there the time period can be extended. This of course will have to be left to the will of our heavenly Father. Rev. and Mrs. Heys hope to be able to arrange a flight to New Zealand sometime in early February, with the purpose of installing Rev. Miersma

as pastor of our sister church in Wellington, New Zealand.

From Faith Church's November 22nd bulletin we learn that Pastor Bekkering has been working the past several weeks with two area pastors with a view to resuming his work in the congregation in the future. Although Pastor Bekkering has made some good progress, he is still unable to handle the pressures of the work, especially of preaching. Pastor Bekkering and his family are extremely appreciative for the support the congregation has shown through their cards, letters, and prayers. Let us all continue to pray for Pastor Bekkering and his family.

December 14 the Heritage Christian School Society in Hudsonville met in a special session to consider a proposal from their School Board to add an addition of four classrooms to the south

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THE STANDARD BEARER

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wing of the school. The school presently has ten permanent classrooms and two portable classrooms. Although the present need is thirteen classrooms, they have been able to operate with the existing twelve by using the library, lounge, a storage area, and a split room, because their ninth grade class has only twelve students. They anticipate approximately forty students in next year's kindergarten class which will increase their classroom needs to fourteen rooms next year. Heritage presently has an enrollment of just about 300 students. The proposal passed by a unanimous vote.

Did you know that the Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore publishes a bi-monthly magazine entitled *The Pillar and Ground of Truth*? Their latest issue contained, among other things, an editorial by Pastor Lau, the text of a speech by Rev. G. Van Baren on the Reformation, which he gave while visiting Singapore in the Fall of 1986. There is also an article by Rev. Dale Kuiper on "Knowing God." This fine magazine is free to anyone who requests it, but I might add that gifts to help defray the expenses of this publication are greatly appreciated. You can get on the E.R.C.S.'s mailing list by writing their business office:

The P.G.T.
Apt. Blk. 307, 10-106
Bukit Batok St. 31
Singapore 2365

Pastor Mahtani also informs us that the Lord willing, starting January 10, the Covenant

Evangelical Reformed Church, the second congregation in Singapore, will be holding a second service each Lord's Day. Pastor Mahtani asks us to continue praying that God will continue to bless this work.

Now that the holidays are past, it becomes clear through all our church bulletins that our congregations are *singing* congregations. This is true during the entire year, but it seems to reach a climactic point around Christmas. Just about everyone of our churches has a Sunday School Program this time of the year. Besides that, there are Choral Societies.

The Doon Choral Society presented a Thanksgiving Program November 29. Faith Choral Society presented their Christmas Program on the same night. And Hope and Hudsonville's Choral Societies each gave a Christmas program on December 6. Christmas Singspirations were also sponsored by the Federation Board in Hudsonville's Church, by the Christian Fellowship Society in Hull, by Edgerton's Young People, and by South Holland's Mr. and Mrs. Society.

Covenant Christian High School gave their band and choir concert at First Church in Grand Rapids on December 13.

Faith's Sr. Young Peoples Society planned a pancake breakfast for Dec. 12. All donations from the breakfast, which was held at Hope School, were to go towards the 1988 Young Peoples' Convention.

Hudsonville's societies held a combined Christmas meeting

Dec. 8. Discussion was from Matt. 2, particularly the events involving Jesus' flight to Egypt. Afterwards Rev. G. Van Baren showed slides from their recent trip to England.

Contemplation from Randolph: "Humility — a quality that disappears the moment you think you have it." E.D. Hulse □

NOTICE!

Classis West of the Protestant Reformed Churches will meet in Redlands, CA on Wednesday, March 2, 1988, at 8:30 AM, the Lord willing. All material for the Agenda is to be in the hands of the Stated Clerk 30 days before Classis convenes. All delegates in need of lodging or of transportation from the airport should notify the Clerk of the Redlands Consistory.

Rev. David Engelsma, Stated Clerk

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

We, the children and grandchildren of MR. AND MRS. ANDREW VAN DEN TOP, thank our God for giving them the gift of forty years of marriage.

We rejoice with them for the covenantal instruction they have given us, their children and grandchildren.

It is our prayer that God will continue to bless them as He has so faithfully done!

Vernon and Viney Maas
Jeff and Peggy Van Den Top
Mike and Marilyn Forslof
Loren and Caroly Van Den Top
Ernie and Kimberly Tjoelker
17 grandchildren
1 great-grandchild