

# THE STANDARD BEARER

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A Reformed  
Semi-Monthly  
Magazine

*Having learned of God these truths in God's sanctuary, Asaph became content in his suffering.*

*Trusting the Lord's leading, we too can find peace in the midst of our sufferings, so that we confess with Asaph, "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart."*

*See: Meditation, p. 242*

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## Meditation

James D. Slopsema

# Led By God's Counsel

*Thou shalt guide me with  
thy counsel, and afterward  
receive me to glory.*

Psalm 73:24

James D. Slopsema is pastor of Hope  
Protestant Reformed Church, Walker,  
Michigan.

God's people often have difficulty reconciling themselves to the sufferings God sends them.

That was true of Asaph, one of the chief musicians of King David.

It was Asaph's observation that often the wicked prospered while the way of the righteous was filled with suffering. This Asaph could not comprehend. It appeared that God was not fair in His dealings with men. Asaph concluded that it didn't pay to serve the Lord. Asaph even became envious of the wicked and bitter.

Perhaps we have observed the same things Asaph did, and struggle with them as he did. These questions and doubts arise especially when God allows suffering to touch our own lives.

With his troubled soul, Asaph went to the house of God and there all was made plain. Asaph saw the end of the Lord. He saw the purpose of God in His deal-

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ings both with the righteous and the wicked.

Yes, the Lord sends prosperity to the wicked. But this is to put the wicked on slippery places that they may be brought to desolation in a moment.

But the righteous God leads to glory, even by the sufferings He places on their pathway.

Hence, Asaph confessed, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."

What peace this brought to Asaph's troubled soul.

What peace it brings to every righteous soul that tastes the bitterness of suffering.

\* \* \* \* \*

The lives of God's people are often filled with suffering.

This was Asaph's experience.

By his own confession Asaph was a righteous child of God. He was a man of a clean heart. For he had cleansed his heart and washed his hands with the blood of the Lamb.

Nevertheless, he was plagued all the day long. Every morning anew was he chastened. Asaph knew what it meant to suffer. He was a man of sorrows.

This was difficult for Asaph to understand and accept.

Why, if he served God with a clean heart, did he suffer so?

And what about the wicked he observed around him? Pride compassed them about as a chain; violence covered them as a garment. They set their mouth against heaven and their tongue walked through the earth. How unbelievably wicked they were. Yet they prospered. They were not in trouble as other men were; neither were they plagued like other men. Their eyes stood out with fatness: they had more than heart could wish.

After much soul searching, Asaph concluded that he had cleansed his heart in vain. It really did not pay to serve the Lord. He might just as well live with the wicked that he might enjoy the prosperity of the wicked.

Neither is it any different today.

Also today the righteous suffer while the wicked prosper.

Certainly the wicked are those who prosper today. That is not true, of course, of all the wicked. Many of the wicked in today's world suffer horribly as they come under the just judgment of God for their sin. Nevertheless, it is also true that prosperity is found chiefly among the wicked of today's world. The rich, the powerful, the famous, the noble, the high and mighty of our day are not found as a rule among the righteous, but among the wicked. It is the wicked who find great prosperity. And often their prosperity is the direct result of their willingness to trample underfoot the holy law of God.

But the lot of the righteous is often that of suffering. Again there are exceptions. Sometimes the righteous also find earthly prosperity. But more often they find suffering. And their suffering is often the direct result of their righteousness. How often, for example, do not the righteous suffer poverty because with a clean heart they honor the command of God to be honest in business, to be in subjection to their employer, to seek first the kingdom of God? And how often are not the righteous also hated and opposed of all men exactly because they serve the Lord their God?

Yes, also today the righteous suffer while the wicked prosper.

And often we struggle as did Asaph. Why must these things be? Does it really pay to serve the Lord? Perhaps it would be

better to walk with the wicked that we may prosper with them? In bitterness of soul the child of God often struggles with these questions.

\* \* \* \* \*

Asaph went to the sanctuary of God in the temple. And there all was made plain to him.

We do well to go with Asaph into God's sanctuary, that we too may learn.

In the sanctuary of God Asaph learned about God's counsel. Asaph learned that nothing happens by chance. All things take place only as God has eternally predetermined them in His counsel. This includes not only the prosperity of the wicked but also the sufferings of the righteous. Prosperity and suffering do not just happen. God has predetermined them. And according to this sovereign predetermination God brings prosperity to the wicked and suffering to the righteous.

Moreover, Asaph learned in God's sanctuary that God was leading him through the sufferings God brought to him.

God was also leading the wicked through the prosperity He sent to them. Through the prosperity of the wicked God was setting the wicked on slippery places, that they might be cast down into eternal destruction.

But through the sufferings God sent to Asaph, God was leading him to glory.

This glory is the glory of heaven. It is the great glory that Christ has earned for all His people through His suffering and death on the cross. It is the glory which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has yet entered into the heart of man to conceive. It is the glory so great that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with it.



To this glory God leads all His beloved people to Christ.

And he leads them there even through the sufferings He has ordained for them in His eternal counsel!

\* \* \* \* \*

Suffering leads to glory!

How strange this may seem to us!

But what an important reality to understand!

Never must we forget that the only way to glory is the way of righteousness.

Many deceive themselves at this point. Many think that they can live like the devil and one day be received by God into His glory. Asaph found this was not true. In God's sanctuary he learned that the way of wickedness leads to destruction.

No, the only way to glory is the way of faithful obedience to God.

This does not mean, of course, that our faithfulness to God earns or merits this glory. The only

thing that earns for us the glory of heaven is the faithful obedience of Jesus Christ on the cross.

However, having earned for us the glory that is to come through Jesus Christ, His Son, God also leads us to that glory. And the way that He leads His people to glory is the way of faithful obedience to Him.

That His people may walk in this way God often sends them suffering.

We may long for prosperity. But we must understand that prosperity is not always good for us. How easy it is in the time of prosperity to forget about the Lord our God. How easily we are lifted up in pride. How quickly we find ourselves not living in conscious dependence upon God. How soon we forget God's commandments in prosperity, and walk in our own ways. No, we can not always handle prosperity. Prosperous times can be very dangerous for the child of God.

And so God often sends adversity and suffering. Through suffering we are humbled before God. Through adversity we learn to live in conscious dependence upon God. When we hurt, we are inclined to seek the things above rather than the things below. Through suffering we are kept faithful to our heavenly Father.

And so into the life of every saint, beloved of God, there is suffering. Through that suffering God is leading His own. He is leading them in the paths of righteousness so that after this life He may receive them into glory.

Having learned of God these truths in God's sanctuary, Asaph became content in his suffering.

Trusting the Lord's leading, we too can find peace in the midst of our sufferings so that we confess with Asaph, "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart." □

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## *Editorials*

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# **As To Evolution At Dordt College (5) Calvin Professors Cleared "The Good Old Days"**

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### **As To Evolution At Dordt College (5)**

It is characteristic of a theory such as "old earth creationism" (or, as it is also called: "progressive creationism"), which is the position that Prof. Hodgson

claims to occupy, that it can adopt virtually all the hypotheses of evolutionism (and they are precisely that, *hypotheses*, not scientific data), but here and there inject some elements of creation, sufficient — at least in



the minds of its proponents — to justify the claim that they are creationists. This struck me again in connection with the concluding statements by Prof. Hodgson in his speech at the Hillsdale College Debate when he said: "The possibility, however, of divine creation of some basic life forms, particularly at the higher taxonomic levels, over widely spaced intervals of time — not just a few thousand years now — is a possibility which cannot be ruled out on the basis of present scientific observational evidence." With a position like this, of course, one can say that he holds to both creation and evolution. It makes no difference to me whether this evolution is what is called "micro-evolution" or "macro-evolution" or "mega-evolution;" it is evolution, and it provides room for all the alleged data (hypotheses) of evolution. But the tidbits of creation which are injected into this evolutionary process will never satisfy one who holds to the Biblical truth of creation; and what is worse, they do not do justice to the Word of God concerning creation.

Dr. Hodgson's position in the Hillsdale College Debate comes out more clearly in a syllabus which he has published in connection with his instruction at Dordt College. This syllabus is entitled *HISTORICAL GEOLOGY, Supplementary Papers for Students of Geology, Paleoanthropology, and the Planetary Sciences*. This is the Fourth Edition, "Revised and Enlarged in the Light of Recent Discoveries," and published in April, 1987. I will limit myself to the material on Paleoanthropology in this syllabus. [In popular language, Paleoanthropology is the study of so-called "prehistoric man."]

On page 90 he begins a treatment of "Genus Homo" (Genus Man, HCH). The first of the three species belonging to this genus is *Homo habilis*. This is said to be "the first of the three species which are now recognized as distinctively human by paleoanthropologists. We are informed that "A number of specimens (although no complete skeletons) have been recovered in eastern Africa in the past two decades. *Homo habilis* appeared (by act of divine creation, or by evolution from some australopithecene, depending upon one's point of view) approximately 2.2 million years ago, and flourished until about 1.6 million years ago, when it probably became extinct." Further, it is stated that remains have only been found in Africa, and that quite possibly Africa was its only home.

After a paragraph about the brain capacity of this species and about an alleged important find of a specimen by Richard Leakey in 1972, we are told: 1) That *Homo habilis* was bipedal, and walked upright. 2) That he was a toolmaker, making and using simple stone tools. 3) That thus far no evidence regarding any burial or religious practices has been found. 4) That at a recent conference arguments were presented that *Homo habilis* was capable of speech (in light of the size of his brain and the enlargement of Broca's and Wernicke's areas, which are associated with language in modern humans).

Keep the above data in mind with a view to our discussion a bit later.

Next comes *Homo erectus*. We mention the following alleged data about this species, without going into all the details furnished by Dr. Hodgson: 1) He appeared about 1.6 million years ago, probably descended from *Homo habilis*. 2) The first human species known to have migrated

out of Africa. 3) He was a tool maker and user, having more advanced type tools than *H. habilis*. 4) There is evidence of his controlled use of fire for heating and cooking. 5) He made shelters of wood and stone, lived in groups with others. 6) Spoken communication skills may have been fairly well developed. 7) No information at present about burial or religious practices.

That brings us to *Homo sapiens*, our own species. Again I will not reproduce all the details offered by Dr. Hodgson. Let me call attention to a few salient allegations (I will not call them facts): 1) There is much evidence to suggest that *H. sapiens* indeed evolved out of *H. erectus*. 2) This species can be subdivided into at least four major sub-species: a) *H. sapiens rhodesiensis*, found in Zambia (formerly Rhodesia) in 1921. b) *Homo sapiens steinheimensis*, found in Germany. c) *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*. (Neanderthal man, HCH), who flourished in Europe from about 130,000 to 30,000 years ago. Not dull witted. Buried their dead, with religious artifacts, which testify to their belief, however imperfect their theology, in life after death. No reason to doubt his full humanity and capacity for abstract and religious thought. Disappeared quickly, in a few thousand years' time, at the same time that *Homo sapiens sapiens* (our supposed sub-species) appeared in the form of the *Cro-Magnons*. d) *Homo sapiens sapiens*, about which Dr. Hodgson states the following:

*This sub-species is well known to us, and the history of its activities fills libraries. [How far back in time does the history in libraries go? HCH] Quite possibly H. sapiens sapiens may go back as much as 100,000 years in southern Africa as a recent find suggests, but this is debated. In Europe the race was Cro-Magnon, and appeared about 30,000 to 35,000 years ago. In spite of differences of skin color and other body features, all of the presently living human beings belong to this subspecies. We are all of*



one flesh and blood, and even one subspecies. The indications are also that only this subspecies ever made its way to the New World via the Siberia-Alaska land bridge, the initial migration of which occurred at least 25,000 years ago, but more probably as long as 40,000 years ago. (p. 97)

Now the reader should bear in mind that Dr. Hodgson has already established, as we have seen in the beginning of this critique, that *Homo habilis* is the first species of Genus *Homo* recognized as "distinctively human." He has also stated that *Homo habilis* appeared, either by an act of divine creation, or by evolution from some australopithecene (the next lower genus, HCH), "depending upon one's point of view," approximately 2.2 million years ago.

Before we proceed to the next stage of this critique, we should also note that in connection with his discussion of *Homo sapiens* (see above) Dr. Hodgson also inserted the following note:

An interesting theological problem is posed by "Bodo Man" found at Bodo, Ethiopia in 1982. Dated about 300,000 years of age, and intermediate in skeletal form between *H. erectus* and *H. sapiens*, the Bodo Man specimen appears to have been scalped at or shortly before death. Scalping is a peculiarly human activity, and probably most Christians, upon reflection, would agree it is the result of sin — an offense against the sixth commandment. If so, sin came into the world a long time ago. (p. 93)

All of the above leads, of course, to the question: where do Adam and Eve fit into all of this scheme? And how is all this to be harmonized with the Biblical account of creation and the fall?

Dr. Hodgson, being a professed "progressive creationist," recognized this problem, and he writes about it in a chapter entitled, "Adam, Eve, and the Hominids," (pp. 101-106).

In what may be called preliminary remarks on this subject, Dr. Hodgson makes the following points:

1) "First, one can begin an answer by asserting that the hominid fossils discussed in the earlier paper are all quite genuine," p. 101. And again, on p. 102 he writes: "... we must conclude that the several species of the genus *Australopithecus*, and the three known species of genus *Homo*, really lived."

2) "Secondly, one should acknowledge that the earlier hominids were significantly similar to modern humankind," p. 102.

3) "A third point to remember is that we do not really have a good description in the Bible of Adam and Eve and their offspring." In this connection he states, p. 103:

We must therefore be very careful not to carry stereotypes in our minds about how Adam and Eve looked. Not only should we guard against presuming they looked like modern Europeans, we must not assume that they were necessarily the same subspecies that we are — *Homo sapiens sapiens*. After all, as indicated in our earlier paper, the Neanderthal (a different subspecies, *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*) did bury their dead with religious artifacts, indicating some kind of belief in life after death. Theirs may not have been a reformed theology, but at least some of them were religious, and therefore must be regarded as truly human. Therefore it follows, to express it in Christian terms, that Neanderthal was a descendent (sic) of Adam and Eve.

After this, Dr. Hodgson concedes that "the impression one gets from reading the Bible would make Adam and Eve much more recent than 300,000 years ago," and that "a few hundred thousand years is a very long time in the family tree, and does seem to strain belief concerning the Genesis account." But, he states, "belief has been strained before, and perhaps that is not all bad; it may be God's desire to strain our imaginations," (p. 104). In addition, appealing to the alleged fact that also the age of the Earth and of the Cosmos is much, much greater than we might believe at first impression, he suggests that

the same may be true of the antiquity of Adam and Eve. And he concludes, "It is hard for us to think of them as being so removed in time, and perhaps even looking rather unlike us, but that may be our problem, and not a problem with the Bible or with the fossil evidence," (p. 105).

At this point the author makes some significant concluding statements.

The first is as follows, p. 105:

Fossil evidence indicates development from *Homo habilis* to *Homo erectus* to *Homo sapiens* is a fairly gradual, connected one of small transitions which may well represent a case of micro-evolution. (The question arises: how "micro" is "micro"? Or: how many "micros" make a "macro" or a "mega"? HCH) This is true especially in the transition from *H. erectus* to *H. sapiens*. It is generally agreed among paleoanthropologists that *H. erectus*, in the latter part of his career on Earth, did make controlled use of fire, which does suggest his being truly human. Of course religious artifacts would be better evidence, but our knowledge of their artifacts is very limited thus far.

Here, therefore, the author is maintaining evolution, based on the alleged discoveries of paleo-anthropology, from the earliest human species, *Homo habilis*, to the latest, *Homo sapiens*, which also includes our own subspecies, *Homo sapiens sapiens*.

The next statement is this:

The Christian might intelligently argue that Adam and Eve were the beginning of genus *Homo*, perhaps even *Homo habilis*. If so, that puts human origins more than two million years in time, a real challenge to our imagination! That means perhaps 100,000 generations omitted between Adam and Abraham — a rather large number to accept. Knowing something of the scale of God's operations in the rest of the universe, however, makes us realize that such very large numbers are not without precedent.

Here we may notice, in the first place, that Dr. Hodgson does not state in so many words that this is his own position. He only says that "The Christian might intelligently argue . . ." as above. Yet in his earlier discussion of *Homo habilis* he has already



stated that this is the first of three species which are now recognized as distinctively human by paleoanthropologists, he has argued that the fossils "are all quite genuine," and he has stated that from a creationist's viewpoint *Homo habilis* appeared by act of divine creation. Keep this in mind, please, as we proceed to the next statement:

*The Bible indicates that whenever human beings first appeared, it was because they were created by God, out of non-living material. If we are really willing to be honest, we must admit that the Biblical account of Adam and Eve cannot be interpreted as supporting a doctrine of human evolution from other creatures much as some might wish otherwise.*

From all of the above material it follows:

1. Either that Dr. Hodgson believes that Adam and Eve were *Homo habilis* and were created some 2.2 million years ago — even as he says that Christians might intelligently argue;

2. Or that he leaves the door open for an even earlier alleged species of *Genus Homo* to be discovered. And indeed, in the concluding paragraphs of this chapter he becomes vague and reminds the reader that there is much we do not know on this subject; and he suggests that further Biblical scholarship can shed more light on how we should understand the Biblical accounts of creation and early human history better. He also suggests that there may in the future be many more important finds involving hominid fossils.

Can anyone doubt that Prof. Hodgson teaches evolution? He may try to call it "micro," and he may try to insert a kind of creation here and there. The fact is that he adopts the whole evolutionistic hypothesis and he attempts to rescue himself by inserting a little creation here and there.

But now turn to your Bible.

Read the simple, beautiful account of the creation of Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:26, 27. Read the account of God's blessing upon them in Genesis 1:28-30. Read that God "saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good." vs. 31. Then read about God's placing them in paradise, of the fact that man's calling was to dress and to keep the garden; read of the naming of the animals, of the formation of the woman. Read of God's commands in connection with the two special trees.

Or read in Psalm 8 of man: "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet."

Or think of the fact that according to our Confession, Article 14, man had originally many excellent gifts of which he retained only some remnants.

Then go back earlier in this editorial to what is stated by Prof. Hodgson about *Homo habilis*.

And then ask yourself the question: was Adam *Homo habilis*?

And also ask: what happens when you attempt to mix a so-called progressive creationism with the evolutionistic hypothesis?

May God give us grace to hold fast to the Scripture truth of creation, with rejection of all that is repugnant thereto! □ HCH

## Calvin Professors Cleared

Our readers will recall that in our columns it was reported earlier that the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary had appointed a committee to investigate the teachings of three college professors. One of these was Prof. Howard Van Till, whose book, *The Fourth Day*, I criticized in earlier issues. The other two were Profs. Clarence Menninga and Davis Young, both geology professors. The secular press — both the *Detroit Free Press* and the *Grand Rapids Press* — has been reporting on this matter from time to time. On the front page of both its February 12 and February 13 issues, the *Grand Rapids Press* reported on the outcome of the investigation, namely, that the three professors were cleared. The February 12 edition did this under the headline, "Calvin profs criticized, but not penalized." The February 13 edition carried the headline, "Calvin students applaud ruling absolving profs."

It is not my purpose to report all that was stated in these articles. I will try to cull from them what the *Press* reported concerning the findings of the Board of Trustees and its committee, as well as a few statements shedding light on the matter.

First of all, the following excerpts from the *Press* of February 12:

**\*\* Calvin College's Board of Trustees approved a report Thursday night that was "very critical" of three science professors accused of teaching a form of evolution that conflicted with a literal interpretation of the Bible.**

**But the report called for no sanctions against Clarence Menninga, Howard Van Till or Davis Young.**

**A statement issued by the college today said their teachings "fall within the limits set by the Christian Reformed Church's guidelines for how to interpret the Bible."**

**\*\* "The committee report was very critical in a careful, pastoral and studied way," said the Rev. Charles De Ridder, president of the Calvin College Board of Trustees.**



**\*\* Van Till, whose book on creation was the focus of much of the inquiry, said the report contains both "criticism and praise and speaks of both caution and encouragement."**

With regard to his book, "The Fourth Day," Van Till said, the report "urges me to refine my interpretative methods in such a way that neither 'the event character nor the revelational meaning of biblical history will be called into question.'"

**\*\* Asked if the board's action meant the professors could teach whatever they wanted, college provost Gordon Van Haarn responded, "The answer, very simply, is yes."**

**\*\* Members of the committee who wrote the report said they hope the matter is resolved.**

"I'm pleased with the direction of the report. It reminds the professors of their responsibility to the church," said the Rev. Henry Vanden Heuvel, chairman of the subcommittee that prepared the report.

"I hope our report will serve as a kind of position for the entire college and church community."

Vanden Heuvel said he doesn't think the three professors will "be watched very carefully" as a result of this report. "I feel the air has been cleared. I hope the cloud has been lifted, and the professors can go back about their work without further scrutiny of the board."

From the Press of February 13, we quote the following:

**\*\* At issue were the writings and teachings of the professors, all of whom hailed the report for supporting them in their research.**

"By their recognizing the need for academic freedom . . . and by their encouraging us to perform our scholarship with intellectual integrity, the Board of Trustees have become the real heroes in this story," said Van Till.

**\*\* A subcommittee report, which was received by the full board, found little fault with the writings of Menninga and Young and had only a few words of caution for Van Till, said the Rev. Charles De Ridder, president of the Board of Trustees.**

On Friday, De Ridder said the subcommittee report was "very critical in a careful, pastoral and studied way."

The report, however, was not especially critical of the professors and their work. It was "critical" only in that it took a hard look at the scientist's work, he said.

"This report was collegial and well-balanced," he said. "It takes issue with one professor (Van Till) and that I believe is rightfully so."

**\*\* The professors said they are ready to get on with their work without the cloud of criticism hanging over their heads.**

**\*\* After studying the matter for a year, the board's five-man subcommittee submitted the report Thursday.**

While it detailed a few differences in approach and interpretation, the report concluded all three men are teaching and writing in a manner that is within the tradition of the church.

The committee cleared Menninga and Young of any deviation from the CRC's bedrock beliefs and had only minor complaints about Van Till — mainly that his theological definitions and arguments were not as clear as they could be.

**\*\* Even some of the harshest critics of the three professors said Friday that they are pleased with the report.**

Before the investigation, the Rev. Henry Vanden Heuvel, pastor of First Christian Reformed Church in Zeeland, said he was concerned the professors, especially Van Till, weren't "adhering to the principals (sic) of the Reformed faith."

After serving as chairman of the subcommittee, the minister has come to believe the professors are not veering far afield from the traditional doctrines of the faith.

"We have pointed out that there are some limitations that they must follow, but I'm pleased with the direction of our report," he said.

He said he hopes the "church can now renew its trust in the faculty at Calvin College."

It is plain, therefore, that the professors are in the clear.

This outcome is not surprising. For this is not the first time that this same fundamental issue has confronted the Christian Reformed Church. One who has followed these matters will recall that similar issues confronted the CRC as far back as the 1960s, and were even before the Synod itself.

Nor does the main significance of this judgment lie in the fact that the Board of Trustees has given its approval to evolutionism as such, though that is also significant.

The deepest significance lies in the fact that by this decision the Board of Trustees has given its approval to a certain view of and approach to Holy Scripture. I pointed this out when I was criticizing Dr. Van Till's *The Fourth*

*Day*. I limited my criticism, in fact, to his view of Scripture.

It is this view of Scripture which is the common denominator in the teachings of all three professors.

And it is this view of Scripture which has now, apparently, received the approval of the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary.

Further, if you inquire how this was possible, I suggest that the answer is simple. All involved were supported or stymied by a position adopted earlier by the CRC, namely, the position of Report 36/44 on the Nature and Extent of the Authority of Scripture.

That explains why even a reputed conservative such as the Rev. Henry Vanden Heuvel was compelled to go along with the approval of the three professors' teachings. □ HCH

### "The Good Old Days"

In *Time* (February 1, 1988), in connection with a feature article about the "tough" principal of a Paterson, N.J. school, Joe Clark, there was a chart entitled "The Good Old Days." It is described as "Leading school discipline problems: a California study compares today with a more innocent age." This study was conducted by the Fullerton, Calif., police department and the California department of education. The results were published in *Junior League Review*. The chart makes a comparison between the 1940s and the 1980s, as follows:

1940s	1980s
Talking	Drug abuse
Chewing gum	Alcohol abuse
Making noise	Pregnancy
Running in the hallways	Suicide
Getting out of place in line	Rape
Wearing improper clothing	Robbery
Not putting paper in wastebaskets	Assault
	Burglary
	Arson
	Bombings



Now I can relate to the items listed under the 1940s. I substituted as a teacher for one semester on a half-day basis in Baxter Christian School during my senior year at Calvin College. And I can attest that the items listed are accurate, though the matter of improper clothing was not a problem. At that time no one even thought of wearing

"jeans" to school. Besides, what is listed under the 1940s is a rather accurate picture of whatever problems there were in my own grade school days and even, with few exceptions, in my high school days. Perhaps there are teachers among our readers who still remember the picture under 1940s as rather accurate.

But what about the 1980s?

The picture in the chart above

is of the public schools in California.

What could or would teachers, principals, or parents list under the 1980s for Junior or Senior high school students in our schools?

Would it match the 1940s column?

Or might there be some items from the 1980s column above? ☐

HCH

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*Contribution*  
Bruce Van Solkema

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## Perspective From The Pew (continued)

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But can we stop there by saying it is enough for us to know the doctrines taught us by God's Word and leave it at that? By no means. The verse goes on to say that Scripture is profitable for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." The preacher must preach the word so that we are reproved, corrected, and instructed in righteousness. We must hear how to apply those doctrines to our lives as we live and walk in the midst of this wicked world. That is what we call practical, doctrinal, applicatory preaching, or simply sermons that proclaim: 1) the doctrines of Scripture, 2) how they are personally applied to our lives, 3) how I can put those doctrines into practice.

Remember this fact, based on the above text, that we cannot or should not in preaching separate the doctrines of Scripture from the practical application and in-

struction, which is on every page of Holy Writ.

Why not? The answer is given in verse 17: "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." That is our goal, and the command of God which we referred to in the beginning of this article: to be holy as God is holy — to be Christ-like. He is the perfect one, who carried out God's perfect plan of salvation. The plan of salvation that comforts me that my "burdens are lifted at Calvary, and that Jesus is very near" assures me that I am and forever shall remain a living member of the church of Christ. Those good works, even though I have only a small beginning of the new obedience in Christ, are the evidence I need to prove to me that I have that true faith which Christ has implanted into my heart by His Holy Spirit.

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The assurance and joy of salvation — how sweet it is!

So you see how essential it is for us to view the preaching in this way. If preaching is done in the proper way, then we can say as the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 58:13 and 14, that we can call the sabbath a delight and delight ourselves in the Lord. May we all prepare ourselves to hear Christ speak to us through His servant, so that when our desires and needs have been fulfilled, we proclaim, "Amen, praise the Lord."

In closing, I wish to make a plea to all of us involved in the preaching of the gospel. First of all, to the professor: to teach young men how to preach the gospel according to the guidelines set down in Scripture, and to feed the flock of Jesus Christ by fulfilling the needs of the congregation. To the ordained preachers: to follow the instruction given in the seminary to

preach Jesus Christ crucified as the central theme of every sermon. To the consistory members, especially the elders: to watch over the preaching, to encourage, instruct and admonish, if necessary, but make sure the church is being edified, uplifted, and comforted. Last of all, but certainly not the least, to the parishioners sitting in the pews, as members of the office of all believers, as prophets, priests and kings: you have the greatest responsibility of all to watch over the seminary professors, ministers, elders and deacons, fellow members and, yes, even yourselves. You must ask yourselves the questions: Am I being fed with the true milk and meat of the Word of God? Am I being convicted of my sin, led to the cross of Christ, and shown how to live a life of gratitude? If not, then I ask you wherein lies

the problem: Is it you or someone else? You have the responsibility to answer that question and, to the utmost of your power, to correct the situation through the means God has set forth in His Word. Let us all take heed to the Apostle Paul's charge to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with His own blood."

Now, then, before you come to the conclusion that this article is a matter of personal criticism, let me end by saying that we have deep reason to be thankful. Thankful that in the past and present, the cause of the Scriptures is faithfully being preached in our churches. May our prayer be that this truth continue and that the Lord not remove His candlestick from our churches. □

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# Crisis In Religious Freedom

## "Free" Speech

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*All Around Us*  
Gise J. Van Baren

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### Crisis In Religious Freedom

We rejoice that we live in a "free" land — a land in which we can attend church without interference from government authority. But there are evidences that this "freedom" is eroding — eroding because of government action against churches. While insisting on separation of church and state, the state in many in-

stances has interfered with the activity of the churches or hindered and prevented such activity. We tell ourselves sometimes that such government activity is against only far-out sects or rebellious groups. Yet one wonders when also we might be affected by the zeal of state authorities to regulate our worship as well. A reader sent a

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copy of an article published by the "Coalition for Religious Freedom" which contains some chilling accounts:

*The last 15 years have seen more religious freedom cases than any time since the American Revolution. Bureaucracy at every level — federal, state and local — is no longer hesitant about regulating church ministries, imposing stiff fines and even padlocking church properties.*

*Responsibility for this rapid erosion of First Amendment freedoms can be traced to two fundamental causes: the vast increase in bureaucratic regulation of American life, and, more importantly, the philosophically untenable notion that the First Amendment mandates a "high and impregnable" wall of separation between church and state. The revolutionary idea that protected the first pastors of Carmel Baptist Church (a church whose ministers were arrested and imprisoned in 1771 for preaching without a license — G.V.B.) was that civil government has no authority to regulate religious expression and belief. Today, however, America's historic tradition of freedom of religion has been eroded by the growing influence of anti-religious concepts arising out of the French Revolution . . . .*

*Today . . . the primary threats to religious liberty come not from churches, but from the bureaucratic secular state. The "wall of separation" metaphor is used to quarantine religion, isolating it from the vital processes of society . . . .*

**Instances of this "quarantine" of religion are given:**

*Churches do much more than hold worship services on Sunday: they reach out to their own members and to the community through numerous ministries. One by one these ministries of the church have been subject to an insidious attack in the form of state licensing and regulation.*

*In Santa Monica, California, police officers (with gun holsters unbuttoned) were among the 30 state and local government officials who descended on the Lighthouse Foursquare Church to "investigate" the unlicensed "Weekday Sunday School." The educational ministry had been operated by the church as an outreach to children of the community for over two and one half years. The directors of the school and pastors of the church . . . were charged with 31 violations of Title 22 of the California Child Care Act, an ambiguous law which by broad language requires the licensing of all Sunday Schools as child care facilities. Among the 30 charges were allegations of the use of sleeping mats of less than*

*three-quarters of an inch. For this violation alone the Norrises face six months in jail and fines of \$1,000 each.*

*Community Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas objected to state licensure of its boys' home ministry which required compliance with 240 "minimum standards," many of which were openly at odds with the church's Biblical beliefs. For refusing to submit the church's ministry (primarily with young men having problems with alcohol and drug abuse) to state control, the pastor of the church was fined over \$97,000 and the church property was scheduled to be sold at public auction.*

*In Idaho, a Christian boys' ranch was shut down after state authorities launched a helicopter raid on the home. Although the operators of the ranch were legal guardians of the young men and had dutifully complied with all state health and safety requirements, the boys were removed because the facility was not licensed. Residents of the home, aged seven to fourteen, were forcibly removed, some in handcuffs, and sent to a state mental hospital for "safekeeping."*

*Zoning laws often single out otherwise legal activities and subject them to burdensome regulations due to their religious content. In many neighborhoods, zoning officials allow regular gatherings for a bridge club or a football game, but try to require advance permission for a Bible study or prayer meeting.*

*The Faith Bible Fellowship of Colorado Springs, Colorado held services in their pastor's home while saving money to purchase a church building. Consequently, the pastor . . . was cited seven times, fined \$32,000 and ordered to perform eighty hours of community service by the city for alleged zoning violations.*

*William Nichols held regular prayer meetings at his house in Stratford, Connecticut three times a week. The two informed him that further meetings would not be permitted unless a permit to license his home as a church building was obtained. Standing on principles of religious liberty, he chose to face fines and imprisonment rather than obtain a license . . . .*

*Former members of newer religious movements have been awarded millions of dollars by civil courts for complaining that the religions they voluntarily joined failed to deliver promised spiritual and temporal benefits and that being subjected to certain religious doctrines caused "serious emotional distress." The precedents set by these cases are easily transferable to more traditional religions.*

*For instance, if a pastor preaches that sinners will spend eternity in fire and brimstone, he could be sued in a multi-million dollar lawsuit for intentional infliction of emotional distress.*

*These examples, and several thousand more like them, indicate that government has gone beyond its constitutional boundaries. The rights of religious individuals, whatever their particular beliefs or practices, to exercise their religion free of excessive and unnecessary government entanglement are under direct attack.*

*Under the guise of "separation of church and state," religious individuals and organizations are prohibited from influencing public policy or receiving state aid, while government entities are given a free hand in regulating the expression and activities of religious individuals and church ministries . . . .*

The above lengthy account gives somewhat of an idea of the growing threat to religious freedom and worship in this land. It would seem, even with present laws already on the books, the government could close down virtually every church in the land. One wonders how soon that time might be!

## **"Free" Speech**

*The Covenanter Witness*, December 1987, gives an instance where "free speech" is such only when there is no reference to the religious. Pornography, cursing, vile speech are condoned in the land because of "freedom of speech". But such freedom does not extend, it seems, to graduation speeches in public high schools when there is a reference to the religious:

*A Louisiana high school graduate has filed suit against local school officials for censoring the valedictory speech she had planned to give at her commencement.*

*Angela Kaye Guidry, who graduated in May from Sam Houston High School in Moss Bluff, alleges that the principal's refusal to let her speak unless she deleted all religious references violated her free speech and religious exercise rights.*

*Guidry is represented by attorneys with the Rutherford Institute, a Virginia-based nonprofit civil liberties organization that specializes in the defense of free speech and religious liberty.*

*According to the lawsuit complaint, on May 15 Guidry submitted a copy of her*



speech to Sam Houston principal Kerry Durr for his review. The student began her talk by thanking "my Lord Jesus, who has allowed me to be in this position tonight." Following other introductory remarks, Guidry added, "I'd like to share what's on my heart," and explained her personal source of motivation and

fulfillment, the Lord Jesus Christ, challenging others to commit their lives to Him.

According to the complaint, Durr finished reading the transcript and said, "You can't argue with that" — a remark that Guidry interpreted as his approval of her speech.

Guidry claims that after the graduation rehearsal, Durr told her that since someone might be "offended" by the religious content of her speech, he wanted her to delete all references to her personal religious views. When Guidry refused, Durr told her she would not be allowed to speak. □

# The Two Natures of Christ — The Humanity of Christ

## Taking Heed To The Doctrine

Ronald H. Hanko

2. The characteristics of Christ's human nature (continued).

c. A sinless human nature. That Christ was sinless is, of course, the foundation of our faith in Him as Saviour. But there are several things that need emphasis at this point.

First of all, that Christ had a sinless human nature does not only mean that He had no actual sin, but also that it was not possible for Him to sin. That He actually committed no sin is clearly taught in a passage like I Peter 2:22, 23. That He could not sin is sometimes denied, especially in connection with those passages

that speak of Christ's being tempted. That He was really and truly tempted at all points like we are (Heb. 4:15) would seem to imply the possibility of sin, and, indeed, it is difficult for us to think of temptation except in terms of the possibility of falling into temptation by actually doing evil, or at least by desiring the evil with which we are faced in temptation. But it is exactly this that Scripture and the creeds deny in the case of Christ.

Edersheim is a good example of those who teach that it was possible in some sense for Christ to sin. In connection with Christ's temptations in the wilderness, Edersheim points to the difficulty:

*A still more difficult and solemn question is this: in what respect could Christ, the Perfect Sinless Man, the Son of God, have been tempted of the Devil? That He was so tempted is of the very essence of this narrative, confirmed throughout His after-life, and laid down as a fundamental principle in the teaching and faith of the Church. On the other hand, temptation without the inward correspondence of existent sin is not only unthinkable, so far as man is concerned, but temptation without the possibility of sin seems*

*unreal — a kind of Docetism (a denial of the reality of Christ's humanity, R.H.) (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Book III, p. 297).*

Edersheim solves the problem along these lines:

*Jesus voluntarily took upon Himself human nature with all its infirmities and weaknesses — but without the moral taint of the Fall: without sin. It was human nature, in itself capable of sinning, but not having sinned . . . To sum up: The Second Adam, morally unfallen, though voluntarily subject to all the conditions of our Nature, was, with a peccable Human Nature, absolutely impeccable as being also the Son of God — a peccable Nature, yet a impeccable Person: the God-Man, 'tempted in respect to all (things) in like manner (as we), without (excepting) sin' (emphasis mine, R.H.) (pp. 298, 299).*

Now, apart from the fact that this is very abstract, it is obviously a denial of the truth that Christ had a *sinless human nature*. It only says that as the incarnate Son of God He was personally without the possibility of sin, and though this represents an honest attempt on the part of Edersheim to maintain the reality of Christ's temptations in the wilderness, it is nevertheless unacceptable.

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The problem exists, however, not only in connection with those three temptations by Satan, but also in connection with His struggles in the Garden of Gethsemane. There also the tendency is to conceive of Christ's agony in terms of His actually wanting to do something else than what the Father required of Him, which would admit not only the possibility of sin, but would be sin on the part of Christ.

Scripture, however, insists on the sinlessness (holiness) of Christ by showing that it was not possible for Him to sin. II Corinthians 5:21 certainly teaches this by the statement that "He knew no sin," and I John 3:5 also teaches it, at least by implication. John says in the verses that follow that our sinlessness in Christ is not just the absence of actual evil, but the *impossibility* of it, thus by implication teaching the same about Christ Himself (cf. vss. 6, 9). In this respect also Christ is "separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26).

When we say, then, that Christ had a weakened human nature, we mean only that He was liable to all the results of sin, suffering, pain, and sorrow, but not to sin itself.

This is not to deny the reality of His temptation, either in the wilderness or in Gethsemane. Nor do we need to teach that Christ, at least according to His human nature, was able to sin in order to maintain the reality of those temptations. Scripture's testimony is clear enough. Both in the wilderness and in Gethsemane the reality of His temptations was such, even apart from the possibility of sin, that He needed the ministry of angels to strengthen Him when once they were over. The book of Hebrews reminds us, too, that He *suffered*, being tempted (Heb. 2:18).

We should remember that the reality of temptation does not necessarily imply the possibility of sin, though that is the case with us in our present condition. Even we, by the grace of God, find this to be true, when we are able to resist temptation and turn our backs on sin, as Christ did always. Nor may we forget that this matter of the reality of Christ's temptations is of great comfort to us. It is not difficult to see that without confidence in the reality of those temptations, the reality of His humanity would also be suspect for us. Thus Hebrews says that His ability to help us in temptation, depends on the fact that He Himself suffered when tempted (Heb. 2:18).

Even more important, though, is the impossibility of His sinning, whether we speak now just of His human nature or of Him as the incarnate Son. If there is in Christ even the abstract possibility of sin, all our confidence in Him is shaken to the foundations, for it is His perfect sinlessness that stands forever as the guarantee of our righteousness before God. And as Rev. Hoeksema points out in his *Reformed Dogmatics*, to admit even the possibility of sin with respect to Christ, is to deny the immutability of God's decree that He should be made perfect as the captain of our salvation (p. 358).

The second thing that needs emphasis is the fact that His sinlessness does not only mean that He was without actual sin, but also that He was without original sin, both original depravity and original guilt.

That He was without original depravity is guaranteed by His divine conception by the Holy Ghost. It is not enough simply to say at this point that He had no human father, for the fact is that He had a human mother, who was a sinner and who was born of sinful flesh. Christ's holiness,

therefore, the holiness which makes it possible for Him to be our Saviour, is the direct result of the power and presence of the Holy Ghost in His conception. That is the significance of Luke 1:35. That the Holy Ghost would come upon Mary, and through the Holy Ghost the power of God most high, is the reason why Christ would be "that holy thing" Who would be called the Son of God. Our confession, then, is that He was born not "in sinful flesh" but "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3).

The Roman Catholic Church has tried to explain Christ's holiness by the doctrine of the immaculate conception and perpetual virginity of Mary, i.e., that Mary herself was pure and holy by the same kind of holy conception as Christ. But this is both unBiblical and unnecessary, since the work of the Holy Spirit in the conception is a sufficient and Biblical explanation. The Anabaptists also went beyond the teaching of Scripture at this point by teaching at the time of the Reformation that the human nature of Christ was specially created in the womb of Mary, so that Jesus was not actually Mary's (and our) flesh and blood. There were other reasons why they taught this (to which we will come later), but one reason was their desire to preserve the sanctity and innocence of Christ, itself a commendable motive.

That Christ was also without original guilt is also taught by Scripture and has two reasons. It is due in the first place to the fact that He had no human father. Since guilt is a matter of legal representation, and not of heredity (as depravity is), guilt is transmitted only from Adam as father and representative, and so Christ's lack of a human father means that He does not stand in any legal relationship to Adam, by virtue of which the guilt of



Adam's sin would be imputed to Him. Rather than being represented by Adam, Christ actually stands in Adam's place as the new representative of the human race, the second Adam.

Also, because Christ is personally the Son of God, it is impossible that He be charged with original guilt. Guilt is something changed or imputed to the *person*, and it is blasphemy even to suggest that it should be charged to Him, Who is personally the second Person of the Godhead.

That Christ has no original guilt is clear from His name, the Just One (Acts 7:52, 22:14). The Heidelberg Catechism also teaches this by insisting that Christ must not only be a real man, but a real *righteous* man (V, 15 and VI, 16).

All this is of the greatest possible importance for our salvation. That He might remove both the guilt and corruption of sin, it was necessary that He be without both, i.e., that He be holy and innocent in the sight of God. When we remember, for example, that guilt is spiritual debt, then it ought to be obvious to us that one who is himself a debtor can-

not take our debt upon himself, at least with any hope of payment. Thus Christ, to be our deliverer, must have no debt, either original or actual, of His own. He must, of course, also have something with which to pay that debt, but that is another matter entirely, especially a matter of His divinity. And so, in conclusion, let us make the confession of the Heidelberg Catechism our own, that "with His innocence and perfect holiness, (He) covers in the sight of God, my sins, wherein I was conceived and brought forth" (XIV, 36). □

## *The Day of Shadows*

John A. Heys

# A Shadow Of Things To Come (1)

A shadow gives visible evidence of the existence of an object upon which light of one kind or another falls. Take that object away and there will be no shadow. Turn off that light, or place something between that object and the source of light, and the shadow of that object will disappear. A shadow gives proof of the existence of the object, even when the object itself cannot be seen. Someone may be walking closely behind you, while you are looking forward. But the shadow of that person makes it very plain to you that someone is there. You may even have undeniable evidence that

this person is swiftly walking toward you, because the shadow moves and reaches a point farther ahead of you than at first.

We must not, however, confuse a shadow with a reflection. When the water is calm and the sun is in a position that it falls on the side of the snow-capped mountain with its trees and colored rocks and flowers, you will have a reflection in that water of the lake, which is at the foot of the mountain. That reflection, however, will have the color of the snow, of the mountain and rocks, of the trees and of the flowers. A shadow does not show the color of the object that it

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casts before you. What is more, a shadow does not always show the exact shape and size of the parts of that object. When the sun is setting in the west, the length of the shadow of the tree, or of the man, will be much longer than the actual height of the tree and man. It makes a difference where the source of light is in relation to the object. But always, as already pointed out, the shadows gives undeniable evidence of an object, and is there because light falls upon that object.

Now in both the Old Testament and in the New Testament we come across that word shadow and find objects whose reality we know, because the light of God's word falls on that object in Holy Writ. Perhaps the best known text that speaks of a shadow is Psalm 23:4. There David writes: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." And even as the title of this department states it, the whole Old Testament dispensation was the day of shadows. That whole dispensation was filled with shadows of things that are very real, even though we cannot see them yet with our fleshly eye, or enter into them with our bodies, and which are not yet here on this earth. The kingdom of heaven is a very real entity, even though we see but a shadow of it. In Matthew 3:2 we read of John the Baptist saying, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Paul writes in Ephesians 5:5: "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolator, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." And in Colossians 1:13 he writes: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and

hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." That kingdom is an undeniable fact, even though, as Paul writes in I Corinthians 15:50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." Plainly there is such a kingdom, and God's people will inherit it. Surely they see it by faith and see the shadow of it, as the light of God's Word shines down upon them and upon that kingdom.

We also read in Hebrews 10:1: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which were offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." Here we clearly have set forth the fact that the shadow is not the thing, and that we must never be satisfied with the shadow. The law is not the image of the things; but it has a shadow of good things to come. In the day of shadows Israel saw only a shadow of the good things that Christ has prepared for us. Eternally those things are real in God's mind, and shadows of them were and could be in the Old Testament dispensation. God's people looked forward to that of which the shadows spoke, and they hoped for salvation and all its blessings. They had a shadow of Christ's cross in the temple. They had the land of Canaan as a shadow of the new Jerusalem that is coming. And we could go on in the list of shadows, for it was indeed the day of shadows actually from the moment of the creation of the heavens and the earth. And that day was full of shadows; a shadow of this detail in that coming kingdom and a shadow of that detail. And we do well to look at some of these shadows, so that we may be strengthened in our hope for that blessed reality of whose ex-

istence we are sure, because the light of God's Word falls on it, and we by God's grace are given eyes to see that shadow as caused by a very real thing.

Just listen to what we read in Isaiah 64:4: "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides Thee, what He hath prepared for Him that waiteth for Him." Or as we have it quoted in I Corinthians 2:9: "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

Now, as we begin to consider that very first work of God, outside Himself, namely, that of creating the whole universe consisting of heaven and earth, with all their animate and inanimate and rational and irrational creatures, we do well to take note of the fact that Isaiah writes that since the beginning of the world men did not see, hear, perceive by the ear what He has prepared for us, and that means that which God prepared in Christ. Adam did not see it in his state of righteousness. No eye sees, Isaiah writes, besides God's eye what He intends to make. And the point is that the creation God brought into being in six successive days, of twenty-four hours each, is a shadow of the kingdom of heaven when it comes in the day when Christ returns and, as we read in Revelation 21:1, when heaven and earth will be united. For when we read there that there will be no more sea in that new heaven and earth, the idea is that there will not be the separation between heaven and earth that exists today, even as the sea now separates continents and islands.



As Hebrews 10:1 has it, the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, so that first creation in all its bliss, glory, and blessedness was only a shadow of what is very real, and is coming in the day of Christ. The kingdom of heaven that is coming is not the fruit of repair work which God had to perform after Satan got man to turn against God and call for the curse to come upon this earth. Satan did NOT get even a temporary victory. He knew nothing of this coming kingdom and creation that is eternally in the mind of God. He surely did not see it as a shadow of a very real new kingdom that in God's time would be seen and enjoyed by those whom He chose in Christ. Salvation is no repair work in any sense of the word. Salvation is that work of God whereby He, using the devil and all that which He had brought into being, brings that kingdom of heaven into being.

Do we not in Genesis 2 and 3 read of the tree of life? And do we not in Revelation 22:2 again read of a tree of life of which the one in the garden of Eden was a shadow? The whole first creation is a shadow of the coming glorious kingdom of Christ. That beautiful garden of Eden was not a reflection of the kingdom of heaven, for a reflection manifests an exact picture of that which it reflects. And no matter how beautiful that first paradise was, it does not reflect what is coming in the day of Christ. It is a shadow of it and gives the child of God the assurance that a more wonderful paradise is coming. And did Jesus not say to the penitent thief on the cross that he would that day be in paradise with Him? There is a paradise coming, and it is not the repair

work, the restoration and elevation of that first one. It is the reality that God had eternally in His mind and of which He gives us a shadow, when He sends forth the light of His Word upon it. Let us not set our eyes upon that shadow as the goal we wish to reach. Let us appreciate the fact that God shows us this shadow. But let us see it as a shadow and hope for that more wonderful covenant fellowship with Him in Christ in the coming Kingdom of Heaven.

The very way in which God created the heavens and the earth and all that they contain we must see as a shadow of what He will do when Christ returns. The ungodly, ridiculous evolutionistic theory not only rules God out entirely but reverses things completely. God, it claims, did not bring forth this creation, but this creation is going to bring forth god. As things evolve, and have evolved from a gaseous vapor upon which heat and cold worked, the inanimate brings forth the animate, the irrational brings forth the rational. And ultimately it all brings forth god. Do we not read in II Thessalonians 2:3, 4 that the man of sin will be revealed soon, the son of perdition, "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that He is God?" And in Revelation 13:14 we read of the antichrist: "And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." Man will think that man has evolved into becoming a god.

Of course the ridiculous and wicked theory of evolution does

not explain where the gaseous vapor, the heat and cold came from and Who made them. It is true that the theistic evolution theory does maintain that God brought forth this gaseous vapor and the heat and cold; but it does not deal honestly with what God Himself declares about the creation of the universe. Very plainly God speaks in Genesis 1 of six days that each had one evening and one morning. He tells us that He *called* things into being and did not set in order or begin a process that would take billions of years. Did He not even create time, so that then a day was as long our day is at present?

It indirectly teaches by implication that God, about 2,000 years after creating the world, forgot what He did. When He called Moses up to the top of Mt. Sinai and then cut deeply into the stone His law, He said that He created the world in six days, not over a period of billions of years. And then using the same word He tells us that we must keep the sabbath day holy. Did He mean keep a billion years holy? Is that seventh day in the law different in length than the six days? And is God so foolish (perish the evil thought!) that He slipped up and failed to use the words "six periods?" Much, much later He moved the psalmist to write in Psalm 33:6-9? "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made . . . For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." Did God speak over a billion years to get into being what He wanted? Genesis, using the word day, means billions of years? The law means twenty four hours. Psalm 33 means then that the moment God calls, the



light comes and so do all other creatures. Is God's mind so confused that He cannot remember what word He used?

If we are going to take the word day in Genesis 1 as a long period of time, a day of billions of years, we have to do that also with verse 2 of Genesis 2. And then God rested a billion years before the second week of time came to pass. But then God slipped up again (perish the thought!) in Genesis 5:5. Adam could not be 930 years old when he died. Before that creation week with its billion year seventh day Adam was already much more than 930 years old.

If we cannot and must not believe that God means the same thing when He uses the word day in Genesis 1 and 2 that He uses

when He speaks of it in His law, how can we be sure that He means the same thing every time that He uses the word love and says that Jesus is His Son? Paul calls Timothy his son in I Timothy 1:2. Does God mean that Christ is His son in that sense? No, God does not use words loosely. He knows exactly what word to give us.

And what about the fourth day of creation? The sun, moon, and stars were created over billions of years, so the theistic evolutionist says. But remember that on the third day God had created the plants. What happened to these plants during the billions of years of bringing into being the sun, moon, and stars? And

remember that the fourth day had *one* evening and *one* morning. So then half a billion years the sun shone and burned up all the vegetation, or during half a billion years it all froze to death! And when did the sun begin to orbit as exactly as it has done for almost 6,000 years? And when did the earth begin to rotate on its axis at such an exact speed as now?

No, this creation as a shadow of the coming new heaven and earth was brought forth in the moment that God called it into being; even as that new creation comes forth in a moment — not over billions of years — when Christ returns on the clouds of heaven. □

*Decency  
And Order*  
Ronald L. Cammenga

## The Lawful Calling (2)

### EXAMINATION

The second part of the lawful call, as outlined by Article 4 of the *Church Order*, consists of examination.

There are actually two examinations referred to in this article. There is, first of all, the "classical" examination. This is called the "peremptoir examination." It is the decisive examination by which one is actually admitted to the ministry.

There is also what is called the "praeparatoir examination." We usually refer to this as the

"synodical" examination. This is a preparatory examination because it precedes the actual calling of a man to the ministry. Passage of this examination results only in a man's being declared eligible for the ministry and made a candidate for the ministry.

We will reserve a discussion of the contents of these two examinations for our consideration of the decisions that have been appended to Article 4. In these decisions these examinations are dealt with in more detail.

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Ronald L. Cammenga is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Loveland, Colorado.



What must be emphasized is that the classical or *peremptoir* examination is decisive. Without the passing of this examination no consistory may ordain a candidate into the sacred ministry. This examination is administered by the classis in which the calling church resides. The examination is usually conducted by the ministers in the classis. The possibility for re-examination of a candidate who has not satisfactorily passed a certain part of the classical examination is provided for in the decisions appended to this article.

Article 4 prescribes that the classical examination take place in the presence of three delegates of synod from the neighboring classis. The reference is to the delegates *ad examina*. These delegates are elected annually by each classis and approved by the synod. The delegates *ad examina* do not actually participate in the examination, but witness the examination, although they certainly have the right to question a candidate with respect to any answers he has given. The approval of the examination by the delegates *ad examina* is necessary. At the end of the examination, the delegates *ad examina* formulate a written statement either approving or disapproving the examination. This is read to the classis and entered into the minutes of the classis. After this the classis itself votes on the examination. If the delegates *ad examina* disapprove of the examination, the candidate may not be ordained into office. If a difference of opinion exists between the delegates *ad examina* and the classis, the matter must go to the next synod for adjudication.

## APPROBATION

The third aspect of the lawful call is approbation by the congregation.

Approbation by the congregation is required by Article 4. Here especially the principle of congregational participation in the calling of its officebearers is protected. Officebearers may never simply be foisted on a Reformed church. The members of the church have the right of a voice in the election of their officebearers.

Approbation takes two different forms, depending on the specific method of election that is used. When the election of the minister takes place in the consistory, approbation *follows* election. When the election is placed in the hands of the members of the church, as is usually done in our churches, approbation takes place *before* election. In this case, the slate of nominees (usually two or three) is announced to the congregation on at least two successive Sundays prior to the election. The approbation is a silent approbation, so that if no one appears before the consistory with a lawful objection, it is understood that the congregation has tacitly approved the nomination, and therefore approves the individual who is then elected from that nomination.

When a candidate has been elected and has successfully passed his classical examination, the calling church is wise to announce his name again for final approval by the congregation. This announcement should state that unless valid objections are brought to the attention of the consistory, he will be ordained into the ministry of the gospel on such and such a date. The *Form Of Ordination Of Ministers Of God's Word* presupposes this final approbation by the congregation:

*Beloved brethren, it is known unto you, that we have, at three different times, published the name of our brother N., here present, to learn whether any person had aught to offer concerning his doctrine or life, why he might not be ordained to the ministry of the Word.*

## ORDINATION

The final stage in the lawful call is ordination. By means of ordination a man is actually inducted into office. By virtue of ordination he possesses the office with all of the responsibilities and duties, as well as rights and privileges that belong to the office.

Concerning ordination, the article prescribes that this shall be a public ceremony, in the presence of the congregation. This means that ordination shall take place at an official worship service of the church. The article also prescribes that the *Form* that has been adopted by the churches for this purpose shall be used at the ordination service. The "appropriate stipulations and interrogations, admonitions and prayers" referred to at this point in Article 4 are those contained in this *Form*.

Both Article 4 and the *Form Of Ordination* make reference to the imposition of hands as a part of ordination. This ceremony has Biblical warrant and is referred to in the following passages: Num. 27:18; Deut. 34:9; Acts 13:3; I Tim. 4:14; 5:22; and II Tim. 1:6.

Because of the superstitions that became associated with the laying on of hands and because this ceremony was associated with Rome's teaching that ordination was a sacrament, the Reformers made the laying on of hands optional. The original draft of the *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* of the church of Geneva, composed in large part by John Calvin, stated:



As for the manner of inducting him, the practice of the imposition of hands is approved — a ceremony which was observed by the apostles and then in the ancient Church — provided that it is used without the superstition and without offense. But, because there has been a great deal of superstition in former times, and it may be the occasion of scandal, the practice may be omitted because of the infirmity of the times.

The Articles of Wesel, 1568, stated:

*We judge that when the ministers have been examined and along with the vote of the people have been approved, they shall be ordained either with solemn prayers only, or also with the laying on of hands (which we leave optional) in the presence of the whole church, according to the custom of the apostles.*

The Synod of Emden, 1571, ruled:

*The ministers of the Word shall be examined, that is questioned, by those who have chosen them. When their doctrine and life is acknowledged to be acceptable, they shall be installed with appropriate prayers and the laying on of hands (but without superstition and as a requirement).*

The Synod of Dordt, 1574, decided:

*In view of the fact that the church is only in its beginning, the laying on of hands may lead to superstition and*

*ridicule by some, the brothers have decided that the laying on of hands shall be left out . . . .*

The Synod of Dordt, 1578, ruled that a man “. . . will be accepted into the ministry of the churches with laying on of hands where this can be done with edification or else with the right hand of fellowship . . . .” Also the Synod of Middelburg, 1581, made the laying on of hands an optional practice.

In our own churches the ceremony of laying on of hands is used only in the case of a candidate who is being ordained into the ministry for the first time.

Strictly speaking, our practice of laying on of hands is not in harmony with the Biblical model. In the first place, the presbytery, that is, the elders, ought to take part in the laying on of hands, and not just the ministers who happen to be present. This is the example of the Scriptures in Acts 13:3 and I Tim. 4:14. The reason why the elders ought to lay hands on the minister being ordained is that his office resides in the local congregation and is under the supervision of the elders of the local congregation.

Secondly, the laying on of hands should not be reserved exclusively for ministers, but should also take place over those being ordained into the office of elder and deacon. There is a disparity in our practice of laying hands only on those being installed into the office of the ministry.

The laying on of hands is a fitting ceremony. It symbolizes the two fundamental truths with respect to call to special office in the church: ordination and qualification. The laying on of hands symbolizes ordination, that the one called to office has been set apart by God. After all, not everyone has had hands laid on him. And this ceremony symbolizes qualification for office, the ability to function in the office. A man's hand is the symbol of his strength. In the Bible, God's right hand represents God's strength. By means of the laying on of hands the truth is emphasized, both to the one being ordained and to the congregation witnessing the ordination, that God will give the strength to this man to function in the office. □

*From Holy Writ*  
George C. Lubbers

## Exegetical Sketches On Micah 6:1-8 (4)

It is well that we have the words of Micah 6:8 clearly before our mind. The text reads as follows: “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mer-

cy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

We should notice that the text contains one positive, strong assertion: “He hath shewed thee what is good.” The text ends with asking three things which show us really what are the par-

*George C. Lubbers is a minister emeritus in the Protestant Reformed Churches.*



ticulars of the "good" which the LORD has showed to Israel.

In our former article we reflected just a bit concerning the term "good." We saw that it is spiritual grace which has been *shown* to Israel. We now stand before the important question: *what is this good?*

Striking it is that the text does not define the term "good" here at all. However, it evidently refers to that "good" which we as believers are called from God to perform, since we are washed and cleansed in the blood of the Lamb. It is a word which refers to God's sanctified people, to whom God says, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." (Lev. 11:44; I Peter 1:16) We are to be holy in all manner of conversation, since we have been powerfully called out of darkness into God's marvelous light (I Peter 2:6-10). Then we walk in the Spirit, as we live by the Spirit (Gal. 5:25). Truly, we have here no legalistic walking according to the law, a mere natural religion of a humanist. Gleason L. Archer makes the very apt observation in his expository notes on Micah 6:8: "It would be a gross misinterpretation of this verse, a violent wrenching of the text out of its context, to construe this as a mere pronouncement that the whole point of religion is a virtuous life, without the need of atonement and of faith in God's revealed word. On the contrary, it is a reminder to those, who are under the covenant, that God requires a true living faith, which manifests itself in obedience and love." (*New Bible Commentary*, page 759)

Well said, methinks!

This is a far cry from the exegesis which I heard in a sermon recently in the Dutch language, which stressed that the covenant was merely promise and commandment. In this sermon the "righteousness" required was

simply "justice" in society; there was not one inkling that this righteousness was the new obedience of the reborn children of God.

We hold that the Lord has showed us that there shall be good fruit in our life. They are the good works which we must manifest in our life, that men may see these good works and glorify our Father Who is in heaven (Matt. 5:16). This *good* is the light-life of the children of God, who have been enlightened by the Spirit of grace. Yes, this requirement is truly a precept of the covenant in which there are "two parts." Nay, here are not two parties, as is so often presupposed and alleged when preaching on this text. Nor do we have here a certain rule of philosophical morality. For this is a word in which Jehovah has a controversy with his people concerning the very nature of this covenant relationship with them, to wit, to be a God unto them and to their seed forever! And Israel must walk in her part. Such is the divine requirement. This good walk is not a prerequisite to enter into the covenant relationship. Here is no promise upon condition of faith. However, here is a requirement to walk *in* faith, to walk with a joyful heart in the good works which God has before prepared in order that we should walk in them as new creatures. In this walk circumcision avails nothing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. Such a walk is the fruit of the Spirit of life (Rom. 8:1-4; Gal. 5:15, 16; Eph. 2:10).

I trust that the reader will bear with me if I become a bit technical in interpreting the terms in this text. We need it.

First, we must notice that there are three elements which are well-known to Israel. They are: *to do righteousness*, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy

God. We believe that there is a certain climax here in this triad of graces. No doubt the last element, to walk humbly with thy God, is sounding the depths of this mystery of a godly life. Hence, in our interpretation we begin with this element: to walk humbly with thy God.

We notice that this term is very basic. We should notice that the LORD speaks of Himself as "*thy* God." We should not overlook the singular "*thy*." This makes the admonition very personal. Although the LORD has here in His controversy a word to all "my people," yet he also singles out the individual believer. None need ask: does God speak here to me? The Lord here employs the same language which he uses in the covenantal prologue of the Decalogue in Exodus 20:1. Says he, "I am the Lord, thy God." Fact is that this "I am thy God" is repeated in Exodus 20:5, 7, 10, 12. Let us give heed to this repeated self-identification of the LORD.

With this God we are to walk humbly. We are to humble ourselves before the LORD our Maker. This is not the same as to be humbled by the Lord. That is what God did to David after he had committed the sin of adultery with Bathsheba and had murdered Uriah by the hand of the Philistines. However, when David humbled himself lowly as expressed in Psalm 51, then the LORD lifted him up. There is a spiritual axiom in Scripture, which is expressed in James 4:5-7: "Do you think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace."



Therefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God." This basic truth we also read in Job 22:29; Proverbs 3:34; Psalm 138:6, and Matthew 23:12. There Jesus says, "Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased. And he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Small wonder that Micah 6:8 asks: and what doth the LORD require of thee but . . . to walk humbly with thy God? The truth is that we are saved by sovereign grace and mercy as the unfolding of the elective love of God. We have profound reasons to humble ourselves before God. Our fathers of the Synod of Dordt expressed this in Head I, Article 13, "The sense and certainty of this election afford the children of God additional matter for daily humiliation before him, for adoring the depths of his mercies, for cleansing themselves, and rendering grateful return of ardent love to him, who first manifested so great love towards them . . ."

With this electing God we are to walk humbly. We are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. All sinful pride of thinking to be able to contribute something, to do some good work toward ransoming our souls, must forever be gone! Never must we attempt to be a "party" in the covenant of God, but always we must know our place before the high God, to walk humbly with him in fellowship of love. That is the place of the justified sinner, who has learned to confess with the mouth what he believes in his heart: I am righteous before God and an heir of everlasting life by faith only. Yes, then I walk humbly with my God in Jesus Christ; and I have fellowship with the Father and with the Son. We read of both Enoch and Noah that "they walked with God."

Also our text here speaks of such a "walk." The Hebrew text employs the present infinitive construct. Ever in the present, each moment, we are to walk humbly with our God. In the book of Genesis we read repeatedly of the saints who walk with God or who are instructed to walk with God, or before his face. The form of the verb is such in all these cases that it refers to *habitually going in and out* before the face of the LORD. Thus we read that Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years. Thus was his constant and ever increasing walk. The form of this walking with God was in part that he was a preacher, calling the ungodly to repentance, telling them of the coming of the Lord to judge all ungodly men (Jude 14, 15). Noah also walked with God. Such was the basic habit of his life. He too was a preacher of righteousness. He walked in faith. He believed, therefore did he speak. God says to Abraham, when He established His covenant with him and with his seed, "Walk before me and be thou perfect . . ." (Gen. 17:1) Jacob says to Joseph, when he blesses him in the land of Egypt, "God before whom my fathers, Abraham and Isaac did walk . . ." (Gen. 48:15) For further instances of this habitual walk with God see Psalm 56:13; 101:2; 116:9; 119:45.

We must also notice that the Lord would have us "love mercy."

This has two aspects to it. First, it is our love for God's sovereign mercy to us in Christ Jesus, as the free-gift of God. Here we bow humbly; we take the shoes from off our feet. We listen in believing and loving attention to God as he speaks the awe-inspiring words, as recorded in Exodus 33:19, ". . . and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will shew mercy to whom I will shew mercy." Here we hear the "Who art thou, O man, that answereth against God?" This same severe tone we hear in Micah 6:8, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good . . ." There are many people who purport to believe the Bible, but they do not love mercy. But God's people, who have been made alive with Christ, love a God who is rich in mercy, for his great love in which He made us love in Christ. By grace are ye saved, lest any man should boast. These love this mercy and boast and glory alone in the LORD. These never weary of the Lord's controversy with his people.

Of course, having received mercy, we love to show mercy. Thus Jesus speaks of the blessedness of such, when he says, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Matt. 5:7). No man can show mercy who have not obtained

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mercy from God. Standing in the mercy of God we love to be merciful to our neighbor. Such mercy boasts against all judgment (James 2:13). God bestows upon us His wisdom, which is from above, which is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, *full of mercy* and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy (James 3:17).

Finally, just a word about "to do justly," as this occurs here in the text. The KJV translates this as an adverb of manner of life. The Dutch translates, "*recht te doen*." Luther translates, "*Gottes Wort halten*." This means "to keep God's word." We can see from all that which we have

discussed that this cannot be a work righteousness at all. This falls within the framework of what Paul denominates in I Timothy 1:8: to use the law lawfully. Hence, it is according to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God.

God's theodicy stands up in His own court. Such is his controversy with "my people" in endless ages. Amen. □

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## Book Review

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**Applying The Scriptures (Papers from ICBI Summit III);** Kenneth S. Kantzer, ed.; Grand Rapids, Mich. Zondervan Publishing House (Academie Books; 514 pp., paper, \$17.95. [Reviewed by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema]

This is a very interesting book. It contains the papers (and responses) from the International Council of Biblical Inerrancy Summit III, which met in Chicago in 1986. It is impossible in the space of a review to summarize the contents of the book. There were no fewer than seventeen papers delivered, and to each paper, with the exception of one, there were two or three responses. The participants were all committed to the principle of the inerrancy of Scripture, but they were from widely variant denominational and theological backgrounds. Here is a list of the subjects dealt with: The Living

God (Robert D. Preus), The Savior And His Work (Roger R. Nicole), The Holy Spirit And His Work (James I. Packer), The Church And Its Mission (Edmund P. Clowney), Sanctity Of Human Life (Norman L. Geisler), Marriage And The Family (William and Mary Pride), Divorce And Remarriage (William A. Heth), Sexual Deviations (John White), The State Under God (Charles W. Colson), Law And Justice (John Warwick Montgomery), Discrimination And Human Rights (Gretchen Gaebelein Hull), War (Kurt E. Marquart), Economics (Ronald H. Nash), Work And Leisure (Walter A. Henrichsen), Wealth And Poverty (John M. Perkins), Stewardship Of The Environment (Carl F. H. Henry), God And History (James Montgomery Boice).

Some of the papers were rather bland, I thought, even to the point that it made me wonder whether specifics were avoided in the interest of avoiding controversy.

However that may be, as I perused this volume, one question kept pressing itself on me. It is this: what good is a supposed agreement on the inerrancy of Scripture, when such divergent positions as are represented in this volume all appeal for their authority to those inerrant Scriptures? Is this divergence a reflection of a lack of perspicuity in the Scriptures? Or is it a reflection of the fact that a more or less formal adherence to the inerrancy of Scripture is after all rather meaningless? The more important questions are: 1. What saith the Scripture? 2. Are you willing to bow before the clear teaching of Scripture?

Recommended for informative reading. □



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# News From Our Churches

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Ben Wigger

March 1, 1988

Rev. R. Miersma and his family arrived safely in New Zealand on January 14, after what had to be a very long and tiring flight. Their new address in New Zealand is 26 Kairanga Crescent, Wainuiomata, New Zealand. Their phone number is 011-64-4-646-129.

Homecoming Week at Covenant Christian High School in Walker, Michigan was held from February 8-12. The Homecoming Chapel featuring the Class of 1972 was held on Friday, February 12. Other events scheduled for that week included tug-a-war and arm wrestling competition, a dress up day, an impersonation day, a hat, wig and hairdo day, interclass basketball competition, a black and gold day, career day, college and university day and a chapel with Rev. Slopesma.

Everyone in the Hudsonville P.R.C. in Hudsonville, Michigan was invited to a casserole supper sponsored by the Young People's Societies on Thursday, February 4 from 5-7 P.M. It proved to be a time of fellowship and an opportunity to help raise funds for the next convention.

Due to the lack of snow on January 23, the Young Adults of

Hudsonville Church in Hudsonville, Michigan, did not go sliding as planned, but decided to try ice skating instead. So the young adults were encouraged to dig out their skates and meet at church on Saturday, February 6. From there they went to a lake where they built a bonfire and tried to do some skating.

The Mother's Circle of the Doon Protestant Reformed School in Doon, Iowa, sponsored a soup supper on February 3. Serving of supper went from 5:30-8:00 P.M. in the basement of the Doon P.R.C.

Doon's Young People's Society sponsored a roller skating party January 25 from 7:00 to 9:00 P.M. at Magic Wheels in Sioux Center, Iowa. All in the congregations of Doon, Hull, Iowa, and Edgerton, Minnesota were invited to attend.

The Mother's Club of Adams Street Christian School in Grand Rapids, Michigan must agree with the mothers of Doon. Nothing seems to taste as good as a bowl of hot soup on a frosty winter night. They also held their annual soup supper on February 11 at First Church in Grand Rapids. This year three different soups were served instead of the usual two.

The Heritage P.T.A. in Hudsonville, Michigan met February 11 to hear Mr. Gary Vander Schaaf speak on "How to encourage reading at home".

The Hope P.T.A. in Walker, Michigan, met February 12. The program for the evening involved demonstration classes with students from grades K-5. In the upper grades parents only got to see a teacher in action.

In the January 31st bulletin from Southeast P.R.C. in Grand Rapids, Michigan, there was a note of thanks for the sketch of the church on the new bulletin cover done by Dave Orzechowski. Up until now their bulletin cover has always had a picture of the church on it. Now that remodeling of the foyer is complete, a new picture was needed. It looks real nice, definitely worth a look if you are in the area.

On Friday night, January 29, the Ladies Circle in Loveland, Colorado held a combination soup-supper and game night. Everyone was asked to bring his favorite table games for after supper. A free-will offering was taken for the new church kitchen fund.

A "Daily Bible Reading Plan for 1988" was made available to the members of the Loveland P.R.C. in Loveland, Colorado. This is an arrangement of Scripture reading for every day of 1988 which, if followed, complete the reading of the entire Bible in one year.

We also rejoice and extend congratulations to Rev. and Mrs. Cammenga of Loveland, Col-

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



# THE STANDARD BEARER

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orado in the birth of a baby boy, Daniel Edward, on Sunday, January 3. I can't help but wonder if Rev. Cammenga was able to conduct both worship services that Sunday.

The first meeting of a special evangelism course was held January 19, sponsored by the Randolph P.R.C. in Randolph, Wisconsin. This course ran for six consecutive Tuesday evenings. The theme was "*The Five Great Doctrines of Grace*." The first lesson was a historical introduction which sought to show how the truth of salvation by grace alone, the truth of the Scriptures, is the historic faith of the church. The committee in charge requested all church members to invite people from outside their church to this course. Members of the church were also encouraged to attend to help support this work.

About twenty men and women met to express interest in an area-wide Reformed Witness Hour Radio Choir. Twelve others called to say they were also interested. Unfortunately this proposed Radio Choir from the Grand Rapids area decided not to meet this season because they were unable to engage a director. They will try again next September.

Closing thought: taken from the January *Across the Aisle*, of the First P.R.C. of Grand Rapids.

"The common cold is positive as well as negative. Sometimes the eyes have it, and sometimes the nose." □

### NOTICE!!!

The Free Christian School of Edgerton, Minnesota is in need of a teacher for grades 5-9 for the 1988-89 school year. Some administrative duties are involved. Call Al Brummel, (507) 442-3622, or 442-5931. His address is: 251 Maple, W., Edgerton, MN 56128.

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Mr. and Mrs. Society of the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church extends its sympathy to their fellow members Doug and Lynn Bruinsma, Joe and Marcia Van Baren and to their families in the loss of their father, MR. TUNIS VAN BAREN.

"The Lord will give strength unto His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace." (Psalm 29:11)

Rev. D. Engelsma, President  
Myrna Boer, Secretary

### NOTICE!!!

All students enrolled in the Protestant Reformed Seminary, who will be in need of financial assistance for the coming school year, are asked to contact the Student Aid Committee, Mr. Larry Meulenberg, Secretary. (616-453-8466) This contact should be made before the next scheduled meeting of the committee on April 6, 1988.

### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On February 26, 1988, our parents, MR. AND MRS. RALPH BRUMMEL observed their 40th wedding anniversary.

We, their children and grandchildren, are grateful to our Covenant God for the years He

has given them and the faithful Christian instruction they have given us. It is our constant prayer that God will continue to bless and keep them in his care.

Arlin Brummel  
Jim and Gloria Bleyenberg  
Amy, Heath, Lisa, Carrie  
Phil and Sherry Brummel  
Heather, Jenny, Amber  
Terry and Gayle Bonestroo  
Andy

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Consistory and Congregation of Grandville Protestant Reformed Church express our Christian sympathy to Neal and Jeanne Hanko and family in the death of their father and grandfather, MR. PETER ZANDSTRA.

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

Rev. J. Kortering, Pres.  
T. Bodbyl, Ass't. Clerk

### SYMPATHY RESOLUTION

The members of the Jr. Mr. and Mrs. Society of Hope Protestant Reformed Church (Walker, MI) express their sincere sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Paul Zandstra in the recent death of his father, PETER ZANDSTRA. May grace and comfort be found in God's Word.

"For all flesh is as grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away.

"But the Word of the Lord endureth forever." (I Peter 1:24, 25)

Mr. D. Engelsma, President  
Mrs. M. Lotterman, Secretary