

**A Reformed
Semi-Monthly
Magazine**

THE STANDARD BEARER

It requires grace, which creates hatred, not merely of sin's consequences, but of sin itself, because it enables men and women to see the darkness of sin, in this case pornography, in stark contrast to the glistening purity of the holy being of God.

See "Freedom from Pornography"
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Inside this issue . . .

It is one thing to deplore, and even be sickened by, the terrible crimes committed by the rapists and murderers who are an ever-increasing menace to the society in which we live. It is quite another to see all of that sexual violence as the judgment of God on a pornographic society.

Again, it is one thing to deplore the fact that pornography, in every conceivable form, pervades the land in which we live. It is quite another to get really serious about rooting the carnal enjoyment of it, in one form or another, out of one's own life.

Read "Freedom from Pornography," in which editorial Prof. Engelsma goes as usual straight to the heart of the problem. Then meditate again on the "cover copy."

THE STANDARD BEARER

ISSN 0362-4692

Semi-monthly, except monthly during June, July, and August. Published by the Reformed Free Publishing Association, Inc. Second Class Postage Paid at Grand Rapids, Mich.

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The Business Office will accept standing orders for bound copies of the current volume; such orders are filled as soon as possible after completion of a volume. A limited number of past volumes may be obtained through the Business Office.

16mm microfilm, 35mm microfilm and 105mm microfiche, and article copies are available through University Microfilms International.

Meditation

Rev. James Slopsema

Redeeming the Time

See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Ephesians 5:15, 16

Ephesus was a major city. It was also a very godless city, given over to the worship of the goddess, Diana.

The apostle Paul in this letter to the church in Ephesus warns the saints not to have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness that prevailed in Ephesus. Their calling is rather to reprove these evil works and even expose them for what they were.

The apostle Paul roots this calling in the great work of grace which God had accomplished in the Ephesian saints. At one time they were darkness. But now they are light in the Lord. Walk, therefore, as children of the light.

See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

The connection is quite simple. If the Ephesian saints will expose and reprove the unfruitful works of darkness around them, they must walk circumspectly, redeeming the time.

The same holds true for us. As children of the light we must walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time.

* * * * *

The word of God speaks here of time.

Sometimes when the Bible speaks of time, it views time simply as a succession of moments: seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years

Here, however, the Bible emphasizes that which characterizes a specific period of time. The word "time" could just as well be translated "age" or "era." We speak, for example, of the Industrial Age, the Nuclear Age

If we will be more specific, the time God speaks of here is the time each one of us has on the earth. That which characterizes this time is opportunity, wonderful opportunity to serve the Lord.

God affords us in this life many wonderful opportunities to serve Him. Children have the opportunity to serve the Lord in the home by honoring father and mother. Children also have the opportunity to serve the Lord in school by preparing themselves

for their future work in the kingdom. Marriage affords opportunities to serve the Lord.

Husbands and wives serve the Lord when each fulfills his or her duties in marriage. Married couples also serve the Lord when they bring forth the seed of the covenant and train them in the fear of the Lord. The wealth God gives us is an opportunity to serve the Lord. The wealth God gives us is an opportunity to serve the Lord. So too are our God-given abilities. We will never lack opportunity to serve the Lord. This is true even when we are old and feeble and feel that we are a burden to others.

This time we are to redeem.

To redeem simply means to buy or purchase for yourself. To redeem the time therefore means to buy up for yourself all the opportunities to serve God that are presented to you in this life.

This is obviously a figurative expression. The idea is that we must make good use of the opportunities God gives us to serve Him. When presented with an opportunity to serve, we are to seize it and take full advantage of it.

By means of this figure of redeeming, however, the Word of God emphasizes especially two things.

First, the Word of God emphasizes that, if we will make use of the opportunities He gives us to serve, there is a price to be paid.

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This certainly is the case, when we buy some earthly possession for ourselves. There is a price to be paid. It costs us something. In like manner it costs us when we make good use of the opportunities afforded us to serve God. Sometimes it will cost us dearly. Serving God can cost us often a great deal of money, when, for example, we send our children to the Christian school. Serving God also costs a great deal of effort and time. It can cost us the esteem of our fellow man. It may even one day cost us our lives.

For that reason many fail to make use of the opportunities they have to serve. They squander their opportunities. It costs too much to serve God; and they are not willing to pay the price.

The Word of God, however, charges us to make use of every opportunity we have to serve God, no matter what the cost.

Redeem the time.

Through the figure of redeeming the time the Word of God also emphasizes that by making use of our opportunities to serve God we purchase for ourselves a great reward.

When we go shopping and buy something for ourselves, we get something for the price we pay. We end up with something we want or need, perhaps something that gives us great pleasure and satisfaction.

In like manner do we purchase for ourselves a great treasure when we make use of the opportunities God gives us to serve Him. We will obtain from the Lord the reward of eternal life.

Certainly this great reward is not earned or merited by the service we render to the Lord. This reward is earned for us by the perfect obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, this great gift of eternal glory is given to us as a reward. God gives eternal glory as a reward to all those

who seize the opportunities God gives them in this life and serve Him with a pure heart.

When we redeem the time, we purchase for ourselves a great reward!

And bear in mind that this reward of eternal life is so great that the cost of serving God is not worthy to be compared to it!

* * * * *

See then that ye walk circumspectly.

Because the days are evil.

Our walk is the whole of our life: our thoughts, our desires, our motives, our speech, our actions. To walk circumspectly means to live carefully, with exactness and precision. More specifically, to walk circumspectly means that in the whole of our lives we are careful to keep God's will and commandments, straying from them neither to the right nor to the left. We are careful to conform our thoughts, our desires, our motives, our speech, our actions, our all to the will of God.

Quite obviously this carefulness to keep God's commandments is necessary, if we will redeem the time. For we can serve God only when we do the will of God.

Many, even in the church, are not circumspect with respect to their walk of life. Their great care in life is not to do the will of God but to attain material wealth, to enjoy the pleasures of this world, to gain the esteem of man. Consequently, when these learn that the service of God requires that they give up many of these earthly things, they are neither willing nor able. These earthly things mean too much to them. The cost of serving God is too high. And so the golden opportunities God gives them to serve Him slip through their fingers one by one.

See then that ye walk circumspectly, redeeming the time.

The need for this carefulness to do God's will in our life is underscored by the fact that the days are evil.

That the days are evil means that they are dangerous, full of peril. The days are evil exactly because the wicked fill them with the unfruitful works of darkness. Wickedness abounds in our day. It prevails in every level of society. Wherever we go, wherever we turn, we face the great

abomination of the children of darkness. In fact, many of these works are so abominable it is a shame even to speak of them.

And we are the children of light. But we are children of light who still have a sinful nature that is aroused and excited by these works of darkness. Consequently, if we do not walk circumspectly, we will soon be led astray into the unfruitful works of darkness, squandering the golden opportunities God gives us to serve Him.

See then that ye walk circumspectly, redeeming the time, for the days are evil.

* * * * *

It is possible to redeem the time only in Jesus Christ.

Indeed, we are called to redeem the time. But we must also remember that at the cross Jesus has already redeemed us and therefore has also redeemed the time for us.

Apart from Jesus Christ we are children of darkness, in bondage to the power of sin. The result of this spiritual slavery is that we are bound to live according to the course of this world, squandering all the opportunities God gives us to serve Him.

But Jesus has redeemed us at the cross. He has paid for all our sins. The price He paid was extremely high. He paid for our sins with His own life.

On the basis of this great sacrifice the risen and exalted Jesus transforms us from children of darkness into the children of light. Through this wonderful transformation we are delivered from the bondage of sin. And we are led by Christ to walk circumspectly, redeeming the time.

It is only therefore in the power of Jesus' redemption that we can redeem the time.

This means that to redeem the time we must live by faith in the power of Jesus' death and resurrection.

This we do when we spend much time with the Word of God and in prayer.

See then that ye walk circumspectly.

Not as fools, but as wise. Redeeming the time.

Because the days are evil. □

Editorial

Freedom from Pornography

The State of Florida recently carried out its duty as the servant of God by executing His wrath upon a murderer in the form of the death-penalty. This was obedience, whether conscious or unconscious, to the will of God. God commands, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Gen. 9:6). The purpose is primarily retribution: the justice of God, Who made man originally in His own image, avenges itself upon the murderer. But in this way Florida also proved itself a servant of the citizens of the United States. By the execution of the murderer, the people are protected from further depredations on the part of that evildoer. Also, we may be sure that others inclined to the same wickedness will be deterred from carrying out their desire by fear of punishment. Rulers who are willing to use the electric chair are a terror to evil works.

It came out after the murderer's death that pornography played a powerful part in his gruesome killing of many women. He was quoted as saying:

I have lived in prison for a long time now, and I've met a lot of men who were motivated to violence just like me. And without exception, every one of them was deeply involved in pornography — without question, without exception, deeply influenced and consumed by an addiction. There's no question about it. The FBI's own study on serial homicide shows that the most common interest among serial killers is pornography.

There seems to be little reason to doubt his testimony concerning his own behavior. Apparently, the murderer poured out confessions at the end, terrified by his impending execution and by the hell to follow.

Whether he spoke the truth in his own case or not, his reference to pornography points out something that ought to trouble the citizens of our country more than that such depraved

men as he are on the loose. God is punishing our pornographic society with such men as this murderer and with such atrocious deeds as those done by him. Our nation permits, indeed revels in, pornography. Magazines, music, movies, videos, theaters, books, and television make sexual filth of every imaginable (and even unimaginable) kind the standard fare for millions. It is open, public, and protected by law. To a people who approve and take pleasure in this iniquity, God says, "Do you permit this? Do you want this? Do you amuse yourself with this? Do you allow your young to be raised on this? Do your courts decree that this ungodliness and unrighteousness have a legal right in the corner drug store, nightly on prime-time television, and at the movie theater as advertised in every newspaper? Very well, you shall have this sin, in My wrath, in its effects and consequences!" And the rapists and murderers stalk the land!

God punishes the children of disobedience for pornography. "Because of these things," Paul writes in Ephesians 5:6, "cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." He refers to such things as naming fornication, uncleanness, filthiness, and foolish talking and jesting. For this, the wrath of God comes upon the world already now. It comes! As Paul writes in a similar vein in Romans 1:18, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men . . ." One way that divine wrath comes upon the world is the consequences of the sins themselves that the world loves. The sovereign God makes sin too a rod of His wrath.

These are terrible judgments of God. Accounts of the deeds of the recently executed murderer sickened hardened law officers, we are told. The present judgments of God are not as awful as those that will follow the final judgment of the nations at the coming of Christ; but they are awful still. The living God is dreadful in the reaction of His holiness to the corruption of sinful men and women. This is one important way in which He distinguishes Himself from the lifeless idols that abound in nominally Christian churches today.

The world will not see the judgments of God. Just as the world violently repudiates the explanation of AIDS and the other diseases that run rampant in the wake of sexual promiscuity and perversity, that they are divine judgments on sin (and sinners), so does the world reject the warning that sexual violence and murder are the whirlwind reaped by those who sow the wind of pornography, because God cannot be mocked. Hardly had the murderer spoken of the rule of pornography in his crimes than

the secular press jeered at the silly notion that those deeds "were all the fault of dirty pictures." Scripture is fulfilled. Time and again, Revelation says of the world at the end that, no matter how sorely they are afflicted by the vials of God's wrath, "they repented not to give him glory" (16:9, 11).

The world cannot see. To see the judgments of God requires a mind opened to the warning of Scripture in Proverbs 5 that the "strange woman" will cause a man to "mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed," and that the reason for this is that "the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings. His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins" (vss. 11, 21, 22). It requires grace, which creates hatred, not merely of sin's consequences, but of sin itself, because it enables men and women to see the darkness of sin, in this case, pornography, in stark contrast to the glistening purity of the holy being of God. The world cannot see because God is blinding the world for the final judgment. As the simpleton of Proverbs 7 goes after the strange woman, the world pursues its pornography, "as an ox goeth to the slaughter . . . and knoweth not that it is for his life" (vss. 22, 23).

But what about us, who have been called out of the world and who are enlightened by the Holy Spirit?

Do we tremble a little at the possibility of our dear wives and daughters being ravaged by such a devil (if we are men), or at the possibility of our being raped and murdered (if we are women), and do we vehemently assert the justice of the execution of such as he was, only to settle down again to . . . pornography?

Pornography is simply sexually unclean materials, whether music, pictures, books, magazine articles, television programs, or (as is the latest invention) a recorded message available by telephone. Biblically, whatever depicts, portrays, or relates sexual impurity for amusement and entertainment is pornography. The word itself has as its root the Greek word *pornee*, meaning whore, or prostitute. Pornography then is the filth (in whatever form) related to the sin of whoredom, or prostitution. The gospel of Jesus Christ condemns pornography, and forbids the Christian to give it any place in his or her life. Ephesians 5:3 speaks of this very temptation: "But fornication, and all uncleanness . . . let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints." Not fornication, but the naming of fornication among us in forbidden; and the naming of fornication among us is pornography. Sexual filth may have no place in our lives whatever. This is simply what it means to be a saint, i.e., a man or woman made holy by the Spirit of Christ. Freedom from pornography is part of the *abc's* of the Christian life.

The foolish talking and joking about sexual filth on the television talk shows, the infidelities portrayed on the afternoon "soaps," and the evening dramas devoted to illicit sex (and often to illicit sex and violence) are pornography. The magazines featuring nudity are pornography. The movies that entertain with fornication are pornography. Many a modern novel, devoid of any plot except how to indulge every sexual lust, is pornography.

The outrage of professing Christians who regularly and impenitently amuse themselves with this filth over the atrocities committed by such men as the murderer recently put to death by the State of Florida is hypocrisy.

The man or woman for whom the use and enjoyment of this pornography of television, magazines, and movies is a way of life has no reason to regard himself or herself as different from the world in its most debauched depravity, nor any reason to suppose that he or she will escape the world's judgment.

The urgent call from our Lord Jesus to every believer and to the children of believers is, "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (II Cor. 6:17). Government that truly cared for the welfare of the nation, much more that had a modicum of zeal for the holiness

of God, would outlaw pornography. It would drive the pornographic publishers and the pornographic television and movie moguls from the land, not only as scum, but also as enemies of the State, especially in its young people. Pornography has no more rights under the First Amendment than does screaming "fire" in a crowded public building.

But our hope does not rest in the wisdom of the Supreme Court. Rather, it lies in the reality and power of the antithesis. By His redeeming death and by the sanctifying of His Spirit, Jesus Christ frees every member of His elect church from the slavery of pornography. By His gospel, He calls every one of us to walk in this liberty: "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness" (Eph. 5:11). Note well: the imperious call of the Lord is to separation from the world's dark works.

To the believer temporarily snared in pornography (by his own fault!), it is the call to repentance, earnest prayer for grace to resist in the future, a fierce battle of self-discipline, and, perhaps, turning to his pastor or elder for help in the struggle.

To the young people, it is the warning to avoid pornography in every form from the very outset of the conscious Christian life that hopes to end in heaven, as they would avoid one of Satan's most powerful, most destructive, and most shameful devices.

To us pastors, elders, parents, and Christian schoolteachers, it is the call of the Savior to instruct the people of God, old and young, in their glorious liberty from pornography and to admonish them against being again entangled in that sordid bondage. □

-DJE

Letters

Limits to Submission?

Regarding your January 1 editorial, "Whither the P.R.C.?" I want to show my appreciation for the thoughts expressed, especially in a paragraph which I quote in part:

"The P.R.C. must not be blind to the internal threat of division and strife born of pride, fanned by wicked tongues, and justified by a zeal that ignores Christian liberty in the area of adiaphora, the demand of the

gospel that strong and weaker brethren live together in peace, and the Apostle's tribute to charity."

A clearer and more concise commentary on Psalm 15 I have never read. Keep up the good work, Mr. Editor; may *The Standard Bearer* ever hoist such warning flags!

J.M. Faber

Grand Rapids, Michigan

With respect to the December 1, 1988 issue of the *Standard Bearer*, which throughout forbade Christians to resist governments, I have some questions based on history.

1. In 1944 during the Nazi occupation in Holland, the queen, Wilhelmina, being in England ordered all the railroad personnel to strike, with the idea of preventing Jews from being transported from Holland to the gas

chambers in Germany. The Nazis forbade it. What action was a Christian railroader to take?

2. Were our Dutch forefathers correct in fighting king Philip II in the Dutch religious war, 1568-1648?

3. Was William III of Orange correct in liberating England from King James and thereby humanly speaking saving Protestantism?

4. Also, the Bible gives examples of resisting government:

- a. the Judges against their oppressor-kings.
- b. king Hezekiah against Assyria (II Kings 18:7), and with the blessing of the Lord.

The point I like to raise is: Are there not limits to this submission to government? It seems to me that the Lord has blessed the above-mentioned revolts. For sure, history would be quite different if people would meekly have submitted to such tyrants. Hopefully you can explain this to me.

C. VanOosterom
Chilliwack, British Columbia

Response

It is the clear teaching of the New Testament that the Christian is called to serve the Lord Jesus by an unconditional submission to the civil government.

Rebellion, or resistance, is never permitted the believer, although there are certainly times when he may not obey specific laws.

Historical events must be judged in light of the Word of God; and not the other way around. If Romans 13:1-7 condemns our Dutch forefathers' struggle for liberty against tyrannical Spain and the persecuting Roman Catholic Church, which historian Motley has called the most glorious struggle for religious and political liberty in history, so be it. The same holds

for the Glorious Revolution of 1688. The Reformed Christian has his own view of history. Here as everywhere, the principle applies, "let God be true, but every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4). Before these struggles are judged as rebellion, however, it would have to be established, first, that the tyrants were the legitimate authorities and, second, that the "resistance" was not in fact the lawful effort of "the lesser magistrates" to bring to heel, or depose, rulers who had overstepped their bounds. This makes interesting historical study.

As regards your reference to the Dutch resistance to the Nazi occupation during the second world war (a very volatile subject among the older Dutch Reformed people in the past), I have never understood the debate as centering on the question, whether believing citizens of a country may revolt against their legitimate rulers. Rather, the question was whether the Nazis were the legitimate government of Holland. If they were, Reformed Christians were wrong to resist, on the basis of Romans 13:1-7. In my judgment, there is good reason to believe that the German occupying force was nothing but an invader and a usurper, similar to a home-invader who might temporarily take over in a home by force, but whom the Reformed husband would overcome, or even kill, if need be, at the first opportunity. In this case, there was nothing wrong with resistance in compliance with the directives of Queen Wilhelmina.

Your references to Scripture underscore the point that there is distinction between a legitimate government (which may not be resisted) and a foreign power that temporarily subjects a weaker nation to itself (whose tyranny may be broken at the first opportunity). The nations that enslaved Israel during the time of the

judges did not by that fact become Israel's rightful lords. Nor was Assyria the "higher power" over Judah at the beginning of the reign of Hezekiah. Hezekiah's father, Ahaz, had wickedly made Judah dependent upon, and subject to, the world-power of Assyria, trusting in that great nation for help rather than in the Lord (cf. II Kings 16:5ff.). Hezekiah's "rebellion," therefore, was a good, godly repudiation of the illicit might of Assyria. Besides, of course, Israel was the people of God, over whom no nation had any right to dominate, much less a right to oppress, so that, when God had finished chastising His people by means of the nations, it was right that the Lord raised up deliverers for Israel.

One thing more — even if men and nations sinfully resisted lawful authorities, God could, and did, bring wonderful benefits out of this for His church. God is able to bring about in history what He has planned for the blessing of His church through deeds of men that are contrary to His commands. But from the beneficial result of this or that uprising in a nation, no conclusion can be drawn as to the godliness of the uprising itself. The selling of Joseph into Egypt had wonderful results — the salvation of the Old Testament church; but the deed was a wicked one on the part of the brothers. □ -Ed.

Be not too busy with thy work and care

To look to God, to clasp thy hand in His;

Miss thou all else, but fail not thou in this.

Thou needst not all alone thy burdens bear.

Listen and wait; obey and learn His will.

His love and service all thy life shall fill.

The Day of Shadows

Rev. John Heys

Satan's Spiritual Subtlety

The enmity which God declared would arise between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent manifested itself in the first family that dwelt upon the face of this earth. It clearly revealed itself as being due to a spiritual difference between two individuals, and as fulfillment of God's word in the mother promise.

One seed of the serpent may kill another seed of the serpent. That we see when we find one nation rising up against another nation because of a desire for more land, or for riches that another nation has. It may also be because of cruelty that the other nation made it suffer.

Nothing like that caused Cain to kill Abel. He was not trying to get hold of Abel's earthly possessions. It was not because Abel had struck him by a blow, or even called him by a name he did not want attached to him. No, it was because of a spiritual difference that God had realized between them. God had implanted His love in Abel and not in Cain. He had caused Abel to be born again, and He had left Cain in the spiritual death Adam had brought upon the human race through his sin.

When Jesus was crucified, and they cast lots for His robe, He was not killed because they were after His robe. The completely opposite spiritual nature which was in them made them hate Him and take away His earthly life. Cain's killing of Abel foreshadowed this cross; and it reveals why the Jews who were the seed of the serpent nailed Christ to His cross. It also foreshadowed the sufferings the church has had since that day of Abel's death, and the worldwide murder that is coming to the seed of the woman in the days of the antichrist.

There at the dawn of history, at the beginning of the human race, and in its first family, one who was outside of Christ revealed his hatred against His church. Yea, Cain's hatred against Abel reveals the present world's hatred against God, Who made such a tremendously contrasting difference between His church and the world, in the first two sons that were born to Adam and Eve.

Here is the truth of Jeremiah 6:14: "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace." There is no peace because God gave a new spiritual life to some, and left others in their spiritual death. There just cannot be peace on this earth until Christ returns and

removes from it all the seed of the serpent, and until He raises our bodies, so that they have none of the hatred against God that we all have all through this life.

Thus, the cross of Christ is not the only manifestation of the world's hatred against God. That hatred against God reveals itself in the way the seed of the serpent treats all those who love God, and who reveal this in their walk of life. Cain will presently appear spiritually in the person of the antichrist. We may be sure that the truth in that mother promise is going to be revealed, not in one family, but across the face of this earth. A universal enmity will be manifested.

But to return to what we began last time, the shadow of Arminianism and all other false doctrines was clearly cast just outside the garden of Eden. And as pointed out before, the so-called theistic evolutionists — which actually are atheistic evolutionists, for they will not listen to God but to evolutionists, and go along with atheists who are the seed of the serpent — deny that mother promise. For they call Genesis 1-11 fiction and not fact. They must deny, then, the fact that a man named Cain killed his brother Abel. This is only fiction. And the awesome thing is that, by calling those first eleven chapters of Genesis fic-

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tion, they call the mother promise fiction! God then did not really say that to Adam and Eve and to Satan. No, go and listen to the seed of the serpent, who can tell you better than God can how this world came into being.

Do these so-called theistic evolutionists listen to the evolutionists when they speak about the birth and death of Christ? Could a woman, who is a virgin and remains a virgin when her child is born, get a child without an earthly father in less than a billion years? And when a body was in the grave for three days, could it in less than a billion years develop into a new, wonderful, spiritual body? Why call the first eleven chapters of Genesis fiction, and then call the first four books of the New Testament fact? If God could — and He did — bring forth the body of Christ in Mary in nine months; and if He could — and did — raise Christ's body in three days, why must we have all that nonsense, that insulting philosophy drawn up by the seed of the serpent, to explain the creation of this world? Do we not read in Psalm 33:9: "For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast"? Is Psalm 33 also fiction?

If we are going to listen to the unbelieving evolutionists about how the world came into being — denying even that God created it — why do we not listen to them also as far as Christ's virgin birth and resurrection the third day are concerned? Should it take us three years to decide whether what the seed of the woman, Moses, wrote as guided by the Holy Spirit, is correct; since the seed of the serpent, who rule God out completely, deny this truth? Should it take us three years to decide whether we are going to listen to God or to Satan and his seed?

What are we going to do with the New Testament passages that also speak of Cain and Abel? In Hebrews 11:4 we read: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh." How can a fictitious man die? He never lived. How then could the author of Hebrews, being inspired by God, say that a man who never existed died, and still speaks today by his deeds? Why are we not here informed by God that this is only a story, a parable and not an actual fact?

Still more, in I John 3:12 we read: "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brothers righteous." John does not give even the slightest suggestion that Cain and Abel were fictitious persons. He presents them as real persons; and God is the one Who moved John to write that way about them.

Let us hold fast to the truth of that mother promise that the seed of the serpent is going to do all it can to destroy the seed of the woman. They are going to try to destroy our faith in God, for Satan is behind them, and they are his seed. It is not simply the physical death of the seed of the woman that Satan is constantly seeking. Far more serious is the fact that he is seeking to kill them spiritually by bringing the lie into the church. And the sad fact is that the teaching of evolutionists, the seed of the serpent, has so much power in the church world today. And, pretty soon, those who continue to refuse to listen to the world, in the day of the antichrist, are going to be killed, even as Abel was.

Another interesting and important passage is Matthew 23:34-35 where Jesus speaks of Abel as a real person. Never mind what the so-called Theistic Evolutionists say. Listen to Christ! He said: "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify: and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." Did Christ mix up a fictitious person with a very real person? Or did He not know that the first eleven chapters of Genesis were fiction?

Then again in Luke 11:49-51 we read these words of Jesus: "Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them shall slay and persecute: That the blood of the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation. From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple." Jesus, Who was no Theistic Evolutionist, said that Abel was slain from the foundation of the world. There is not the slightest suggestion here that this was fiction and not fact! Why begin with the blood of a fictitious person and put him in the same class, in fact as the head of the class, in which Zacharias was? Why may we call Zacharias a real person, if we insist that Abel was not?

How mightily Satan is working in the church world today, trying with false doctrines to get the seed of the woman to join the seed of the serpent, rather than reveal the sharp, distinct spiritual difference between them. Here is

Satan's lie and deceitful approach to Adam and Eve repeated and continued. He did not want man to listen to God, when He said that man should not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Now he has gotten men in the church world to tell us not to listen to what God said in those first eleven chapters of Genesis. The Bible begins with a myth, not a true story. And even God's own Son in our flesh was not aware of the fact that this is only myth. He thought Abel was a real person, as real as Zacharias! Will it take you three seconds to decide whether you are going to listen to Christ or to Satan and those whom he has gotten hold of and caused to believe what he has caused the seed of the serpent to say about creation, and thus about God, Who presents that creation quite differently in Psalm 33:9, as already pointed out? But then look at verse 6 as well: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." Was God speaking for billions of years in order to make the created world?

When then today we see the idolatries which deny that Jehovah is God and God alone, but also find churches, that call themselves Christian churches, teaching a salvation by works instead of by grace, we see how much Satan has through his seed influenced that church world. Likewise the denial of total depravity, the denial that Adam died spiritually, and did not simply become weak before God caused him to be born again, reveals this enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. It reveals that the seed of the serpent is seeking to kill us spiritually; and that what Satan tried, and succeeded in doing there in Adam and Eve, he is still doing, and with craft and guile is attacking the church of Christ. He did not quit tempting man after he fell. Because God caused His elect to be born again, Satan is furious and is executing wide-spread, subtle attacks.

That we should hold before our eyes! His attack through false doctrines should warn us and spur us on to more defence of the truth. We ought to be far more concerned with our children's spiritual well-being than their physical good.

Today while many are attempting to bring together into one body all who call themselves Christians, by compromising with the lie, making more general creeds and confessions, watering down doctrines to get unity, we should insist on what God declares in His word, and live in the consciousness of the fact that there are two contrasting spiritual differences in what calls itself church, as well as between true believers and the seed of the serpent.

To be safe we have to know who the enemy is. And we have to listen to God and not to men. If evolution gets into the church, Satan is there, and more false doctrines are going to follow and rule the churches into which he has already brought the seed of the serpent as their leaders and teachers. □

Guest Article
Rev. Robert Harbach

True and False Shepherds (2)

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TRUE SHEPHERDS ENTER BY THE DOOR

"He that entereth in by the door is the (literally, a) shepherd of the sheep" (v. 2). In the previous article we pointed out that most commentaries in their exposition apply this verse to

Jesus. But this, we believe, results in a faulty exegesis. It is a shepherd who enters in by the door of the sheep. This shepherd represents the teaching and preaching elder of the church. To this person, "the doorkeeper openeth." The spiritual shepherd

of the sheep does not climb up over the wall. He does not force the door, nor sneak in unnoticed by the doorkeeper. The overseer of the door is the doorkeeper. He recognizes the shepherd as an officebearer appointed by the Chief Shepherd, and so grants him entrance. The door gives access because the doorkeeper opens. We may say that the Father is the doorkeeper. The door is subject to Him. The Father brings all the shepherds, and all the sheep to Jesus the Good Shepherd who is the Chief Shepherd of all undershepherds. Therefore the door opens when the doorkeeper so wills it. Christ the Door, the Mediator, admits true pastors at the behest of the Father. The pastor of a flock holds office in Christ's church. Entering by the door, going in and out, and finding pasture is his daily work as an under-shepherd. Early in the morning he approaches the gate of the fold. He has no problem gaining admittance. The doorkeeper opens, he enters, issues his pastoral call, steps back out through the gate, his own sheep following, he leads them, then at night he guides them back to the fold again.

The sheep *hear* his voice (v. 3), they *know* his voice (v. 4). They *DO* understand his word; they believe it not because it is his, but because it is his and the Chief Shepherd's. The people of God recognize their pastor as a divinely appointed officer and overseer of the church; and it is the mark of a true Shepherd that true Christians approve of his teaching, "He calleth his own sheep by name." Jesus is speaking of what "a shepherd" does in the sheep country of the Holy Land. The Lord is saying that He as the great Shepherd has many under-shepherds who have their own flock. The undershepherd calls his own sheep by name. He

knows them well because he goes in and out among them. The other shepherds who bed down their sheep in the same fold do likewise. These shepherds have all entered in by the door. Therefore they shall be saved, kept safe and sound. As one shepherd put it, "I *was* delivered out of the mouth of the lion; and the Lord *shall* deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom" (2 Tim. 4:17, 18). The undershepherd shall also go in and out and find pasture for his own sheep. Solomon prayed for wisdom that he might be a faithful shepherd of Israel, "that I may go out and come in before this people" (2 Chron. 1:10). Solomon found green pastures for the flock of Israel in His Psalms, Proverbs, and Song of Solomon.

FALSE SHEPHERDS DO NOT ENTER BY THE DOOR

These are whom the Gospel account calls "the Jews" (9:22), and "the Pharisees" (v. 40). They were the "thieves and robbers" (v. 8) of whom Jesus spoke. They did not, would not enter by the door. They were never called nor commissioned by the Lord, as the apostles were. They "climbed up some other way." They were what Jesus described as "stranger" and "not my sheep." They refused the Bread of Life. What the Scribes and Pharisees presented was the husks which the swine did eat. They were office bearers in the false, hierarchical church. They persecuted the true church. They claimed to be official shepherds in Israel, but they did not feed the flock; instead, they fleeced the flock. Their system of doctrine was not the gospel. It could hardly be said to be even "another gospel." It was Judaism, a spiritually dead religion of "by-works righteousness," a piece of Jewish arrogance by which the church was never for long deceived.

Jesus had this class of persons in view when He said, "All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them." Rendering the text "All who made a public appearance previous to My coming, laying claim to being divinely commissioned teachers, are thieves and robbers" is totally unacceptable. For that would be to call Moses and all the prophets, including John the Baptist, impostors. This is Gnostic heresy which taught that in these words is Christ's testimony against the Old Testament.

Some took the words of verse 8 to mean, "All who came professing to be the Messiah before Me were impostors." But where is there one instance of any who appeared *before* Christ making this claim? It was *after* Him that many came making this claim! Others interpret "all" to mean "all for the most part." That, however, is an unjustifiable usage of the word "all," as much as it would be at John 12:32. Other strained interpretations have been tried, as, "all who have come without Me," or "apart from Me." But "before Me" (*pro mou*) cannot be wrenched to mean "apart from Me" (*choris mou*). Some would make "before Me" mean "in My place" (*anti* or *huper*). There is no need for any of this.

Jeremiah, in 17:16, leads us in the right direction: "As for me, I have not hastened from being a pastor (shepherd) to follow Thee . . ." Paraphrased this means, I have not gone before, but followed the Chief Shepherd! "All who ever came *before* Me are thieves . . .," *before* Me, putting themselves between Me and mankind, placing themselves above Me, usurping My place as mediator. Through Me, if any one enter the door, admitted by the doorkeeper, he is a true shepherd. All who came "before

Me," present themselves to Me as the door, but do not labor to enter into that strait-gate, but seek to by-pass the door, are thieves and robbers. All who do not recognize Me as the door, do not use Me as the door, are not true, but pretended shepherds. They stand before the door, but despising it, do not themselves enter, and do all they can to keep the sheep from entering. That's the way it was with the Scribes and Pharisees. That's the way it is with false teachers and hypocritical pastors and leaders in the modern cults. In the western hierarchical church there is the *Pope* who comes *before*, in front of, Christ. In the eastern hierarchical church there is the *patriarch*, or in this country, it is a "Rev. Ike" or Pastor Jim Jones. The church must have nothing to do with the like of these. The contextual connection is plain: in verse 7 is Christ's divine assertion that He is the door; in verse 8 we have a description of those who do *not* enter by the door: and in verse 9 a description of those who *do* enter by the door. The word *before* is *pro*, and has the sense of "in superiority to," "in preference to" (Thayer). The law of God demands, "Thou shalt have no other gods *before* (in superiority to, or in preference to) Me. To come *before* Christ in this sense is the sin of *idolatry*. It is to intrude self before His authority.

For us in Christ's church this means, "Try the spirits." Not everyone has the right to go in and out among us to lead us in green pastures. No one has that right who by the doorkeeper has not been introduced through the door into the sheepfold. That one may not be considered as one of the shepherds who follow the chief shepherd. Beware of those who have climbed up some other way to enter the sheepfold. Beware of a pretended shepherd

in whose voice you cannot hear the echoes of the Good Shepherd's voice. When the Chief Shepherd has given us an under-shepherd who shows evidence of having entered through the door, then treat him as your shepherd, hear his voice, follow him. He will not require you to receive his message merely because he says so. He will never have you accept anything on his own authority, nor to do anything because he asserts it. He never says, *I say unto you*, but always, thus said the *Lord*. His ministry will be "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that we may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). He will "preach the Word, be instant (diligent) in season, out of season, (to) reprove, rebuke (and) exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (4:4). So hear him faithfully and thankfully.

If we are Christ's sheep, and our pastor is a true shepherd, then sheep and shepherd will have mutual confidence in each other, and will together walk in the ways of the Lord. There are false shepherds as well as true within the fold of the visible church. There are many ways by which men obtain admission to the office of minister, but if they do not enter by Christ the Door, and if their ministerial conduct and instruction do not give evidence that He has called and sent them, they have an awesome account to give of themselves before the judgment seat of Christ. Therefore, let every under-shepherd severely examine his own motives, principles, and the tendency of his own doctrine and practice for having sought the Christian ministry. False shepherds, modernist ministers, including current, clever purveyors of the pseudo "health and wealth gospel," must answer

for the privileges and distinctions sought in the pastoral office in which they so ostentatiously glory. They seize on an office by which they have become rich. Yet they lack the knowledge, honesty, humility and industry to labor as a true shepherd of the sheep and preacher of the Christian, historic, orthodox Reformed Faith. Such a shepherd's aim is not the glory of God, nor the conversion of sinners, nor the edification of believers, for he cannot say to his flock, "I seek not yours, but you." The true shepherd knows his people, attends to their spiritual needs, leads them in the knowledge, experience and practice of the most holy faith, and goes before them in every good work. Every Christian who values his own soul, and his own spiritual welfare must avoid those who intrude into the ministry, whose doctrine is earthly, and who suppose that gain is godliness. (1 Tim. 6:5). True people of God will flee the hireling teachers, who care not for the sheep, for they know not the voice of strangers. Christ is the source of all the authority of pastors, their role model as the Good Shepherd and the judge of all their pretensions. Many preachers of the health and wealth gospel have debased the sacred ministry in rising from obscurity to riches, grandeur, and luxury as hirelings. Their procedure does not resemble the conduct of the Good Shepherd, but is in contrast to it. They entered the ministry out of carnal motives, and therefore in an unholy manner. Let true under-shepherds examine themselves, whether they be in the faith. Let them crucify the flesh and every covetous, selfish and sensual desire. Let them declare the whole counsel of God, then they shall never earn for themselves the name of "thief", "robber" or "hireling", being faithful unto death. □

Decency and Order

Rev. Ronald Cammenga

Emeritation

"Ministers, who by reason of age, sickness, or otherwise, are rendered incapable of performing the duties of their office, shall nevertheless retain the honor and title of a minister, and the church which they have served shall provide honorably for them in their need (likewise for the orphans and widows of ministers) out of the common fund of the churches, according to the general ecclesiastical ordinances in this matter." *Church Order*, Article 13.

This article of the *Church Order* deals with the subject of emeritation or retirement of ministers, even though the word "emeritus" or "emeritation" does not appear in the article. The word "emeritus" comes from the Latin and means literally "out of merit." It was a word used by the Romans to refer to a soldier who had served his time in the military, a veteran. With reference to a minister it refers to one who has faithfully given his life to the service of the church and therefore earned the right to retire honorably from active service.

Article 13 is based on the principle that the calling to the

ministry of the gospel is for life. The church whom the minister has served claimed all of his time and strength, and did not allow him to pursue any other occupation. Since the church called him for life, the church is also under obligation to support him for life, even when he becomes unable actively to carry out the duties of his office. This obligation for support extends not only to the minister himself, but also to the surviving members of his family. The minister was obliged to care for his dependents during his life, and the church was obliged to furnish him with sufficient means to be able to do this. When a minister dies, his dependents become the responsibility of the church. For this reason the article mentions "the orphans and widows of ministers."

Decisions of two early Dutch synods form the background for the decision of Article 13. The *Church Order* adopted by the National Synod of Middelburg, 1581, states in Article XI:

When it happens that a faithful minister, having been handicapped by age or sickness, can no longer fulfill his office, the congregation is responsible to provide as much support as shall be granted him ex bonis publicis (from the general treasury) with which he may be able to survive honorably and capably the rest of his life. Also, the widows and orphans of the ministers must not be forgotten.

The *Church Order* of the National Synod of 's Gravenhage, 1586, states in Article XI:

If it happens that any ministers because of age, sickness, or otherwise become unable to perform their ministry, they shall nevertheless in spite of this retain the honor and title of a minister and shall be honorably supported in their need by the church which they have served (as also the widows and orphans generally).

REASONS FOR EMERITATION

The article mentions two reasons for emeritation: age or sickness.

The first reason for retirement is age. The article is general and does not mention a mandatory age of retirement. In the Old Testament the Levites were required to retire at the age of 50, Numbers 8:23-26. There are some denominations that have a mandatory retirement age.

The Christian Reformed Church Synod of 1956 ruled that "ministers shall have the privilege of retiring at the age of 65 years." It was not made mandatory for ministers to retire at 65. But ministers were given the right to retire at 65, if they so desired. The Christian Reformed Synod of 1980 decided that "ministers of the Word shall be granted the privilege of retiring at the age of sixty-two, with the approval of the classes involved, under the reduced pension scale adopted by the Synod of 1978."

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Our Protestant Reformed Churches have adopted no mandatory retirement age. As long as a man is able to carry out the duties of the ministry, he ought to remain active in the office. But when his age begins to have its effect on his ability to carry out his work, he ought to retire.

A second reason for emeritation is sickness.

If illness renders a man incapable of carrying out the labors of the ministry, he ought to seek emeritation. The "Constitution of the Emeritus Committee," Article IV, requires that "If sickness is the cause of his inability, he must furnish proof of this by a statement from two competent physicians." This "Constitution" further states in Article XV: "A minister (or professor) who has been declared emeritus by reason of sickness or weakness, but later has regained his health, shall no longer have claim to support but is morally obliged to provide for his own needs."

TWO SPECIAL CASES

Article 13 adds to the two specific reasons for emeritation a more general statement: "... or otherwise, are rendered incapable of performing the duties of their office . . ." This "otherwise" has been interpreted by our churches to cover two special cases when a minister retains his office, but does not continue actively to function in a local congregation. These two cases are professor of theology and ministers who through no fault of their own are deprived of a congregation. Neither of these cases really fit under Article 13. Article 13 deals with emeritation because a minister is rendered "... incapable of performing the duties of his office." This is not, strictly speaking, the case with professors of theology or ministers who through no fault of their own are deprived of their congregation. Nevertheless, for

expediency's sake these two cases have been included under Article 13.

The decision that has been appended to Article 13 by our Protestant Reformed Churches covers the case of ministers who through no fault of their own are deprived of their congregation.

In the case of ministers who through no fault of their own have been deprived of a congregation, it is both possible and mandatory that pending the reception of a call to another congregation such ministers be temporarily declared emeriti.
Procedure:

1. *The minister who through no fault of his own has been left without a fixed charge may apply to a consistory of the classis in which he resides for emeritation, and such consistory may declare him emeritus.*
2. *This shall not be done, however, without the approbation of the classis and of the deputies of the synod.*

Responsibility for Support:

1. *Since the minister becomes emeritus not of his own congregation, but of a congregation he has not served, the obligation to support him and to provide honorably for them "in their need" shall not rest upon the local congregation, but upon the churches in common, and he is to be supported out of the common Emeritus Fund of the Churches.*
2. *In such cases, if the abandoning church has been subsidized from the Needy Churches Fund, the amount of such subsidy shall be transferred to the Emeritus Fund, pending the next meeting of synod. (Adopted by Synod of 1956, Art. 177 and Supp. XVIII.)*

Our churches have also applied Article 13 to professors of theology who no longer serve in a particular congregation, but teach in the denominational seminary. Our professors are considered to be emeritus ministers of the congregation they last served. For this reason, although their church membership resides in the local congregation they at-

tend, their ministerial credentials reside in the congregation in which they most recently ministered and from which they have been emeritated.

PROCEDURE FOR EMERITATION

The procedure for emeritation is described in the "Constitution of the Emeritus Committee," Article III: "The minister shall present his request for emeritation to his consistory who shall decide upon his request with approbation of classis and synod." The "Constitution" places the initiative for the procedure with the minister. Ordinarily this will be the case. The minister himself will seek emeritation, usually after consultation with his consistory.

But it is conceivable that a consistory would have to take the initiative. It is possible that a minister is incapable of functioning in his office but refuses to recognize this fact. In this case the consistory, for the sake of the welfare of the congregation, would have to take the lead in the process of emeritation.

The Reformed Churches of Holland in 1893 adopted the following policy:

Emeritation, where necessary, takes place upon the request of the parties concerned, (either Minister or Consistory) by action of the Classis, supported by the Synodical Examiners of the Provincial Synod.

SUPPORT OF EMERITUS MINISTERS

The support of emeritus ministers is not a matter of benevolence, but of right and duty. It is not alms, but a stipend which the church is obligated to pay. The "Constitution of the Emeritus Committee," Article VI states:

The support granted to the emeriti ministers (or professors) and to the widows and orphans of ministers (or professors) is not a dispensing of mercy but an administering to which

the above mentioned have a legal claim

The responsibility for this support rests with the local congregation last served by the retiring minister. That is the sense of the article: ". . . and the church which they have served shall provide honorably for them in their need" "Church" here is not the denomination. But "church" is the congregation last served by the minister. This responsibility of the local congregation is also pointed out in the "Constitution of the Emeritus Committee":

The obligation of giving this support to a minister rests in a legal sense not upon the churches jointly, but, even as the payment of salary, upon the local church, which the minister serves or has last served. (Article VII).

Although the local congregation remains responsible for the support of its retired minister, those congregations unable to meet this support provide for their retired minister through the denominational Emeritus Fund. This fund is supervised by the synod. The members of the

Emeritus committee are appointed by the synod.

During the Secession smaller congregations were unable to bear the burden of providing for a serving minister and a retired minister. For this reason some congregations were no longer calling older ministers who were nearing retirement age. The solution to this problem was the establishment of a common fund.

There are good grounds for a denominational Emeritus Fund. For one thing, this relieves what would otherwise be an impossible burden for the smaller congregations of the denomination. Besides this, the retiring minister has not only served the congregation from which he is retiring, but other churches of the denomination. Therefore, the denomination as a whole bears some responsibility for providing for him in his retirement.

STATUS OF EMERITUS MINISTERS

An emeritus minister retains the honor and title of the office of the ministry: ". . . shall never-

theless retain the honor and title of a minister", Article 13. By emeritation a minister does not lay down his office *per se*. While still retaining his office, he lays aside the labors of the office.

Because he still retains the office, the emeritus minister is still permitted to function in the office. He may still preach in the churches and administer the sacraments. He may still perform weddings and conduct funerals. He may be delegated to the broader assemblies, serve on committees of consistory, classis, or synod. He may serve as a church visitor.

An emeritus minister desiring to re-enter the active ministry of the Word would have to be declared eligible for a call again by the consistory and classis that approved his emeritation. It would have to be shown that the reasons for his emeritation no longer exist and that he is fully capable of discharging the duties of the office. □

Bible Study Guide

Rev. Jason Kortering

Judges — Jehovah Delivers His Unworthy People (4)

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We come now to the ninth judge, Samson. The Lord delivered Israel into the hands of the Philistines for 40 years (13:1). The angel appears unto the wife of Manoah, of the city of Zorah from the tribe of Dan, and an-

nounces that though she is barren, she will conceive and bear a son. He is to be a Nazarite unto God from the womb; hence she is to drink neither wine nor strong drink, nor eat anything unclean. When this son is born, no razor

must come on his head. He will deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines (13:2-5). She informs her husband of this visit and he entreats the Lord to send the messenger once again to give them details on how this son must be raised. The angel returned when Manoah was away, so she hastened to call him. Manoah asked him about his message, and he confirmed it for him. He offered to fix a meal for him, but he refused to eat or to identify himself. When Manoah offered a meat offering to Jehovah upon the rock, the angel ascended in the fire. It was then that they knew he was an angel, and fear of death came upon Manoah. The wife suggests that the Lord received their offering and brought good news to them, that they would therefore not die. She conceived a son, Samson. He grew under the blessing of God, and the Spirit of the Lord began to move him in the camp of Dan (13:6-25).

Samson became acquainted with a woman of Timnath, a daughter of the Philistines. He asked his parents to arrange for their marriage. They were disappointed that he hadn't chosen a woman of Israel, for they knew not that Jehovah was behind all this to seek occasion against the Philistines. As they went down to Timnath to arrange the marriage, a lion roared against them. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson and he secretly killed it.

When they went down for the wedding, Samson took honey out of the carcass of the lion and they ate of it (14:1-9). At the wedding feast, Samson presented a riddle to the 30 Philistines who were given to him for his companions. "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." They had seven days to answer. If they failed, they would give Samson 30 sheets and changes of

garments; and if they succeeded, Samson would give the same to them.

On the seventh day, these Philistines threatened Samson's wife to give them the answer or they would burn her and her father's house with fire. She pleaded with Samson that he ought to tell the answer to his new wife. She wept and carried on so that finally on the seventh day he told her. She gave the answer to the Philistines: honey out of the lion. He immediately discerned that they had gotten it from his wife. "Ye have plowed with my heifer." To get the 30 sheets and changes of garments, Samson, after the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, slew 30 men of Ashkelon and went home with his parents without his wife who was given to his companion (14:10-20).

Later, at the time of wheat harvest, Samson decided he wanted to visit his wife. He learned that she was the wife of another. Her father offered her sister to Samson. This made him angry and he caught 300 foxes and tied a fire-brand between their tails and burned all the harvest of the Philistines. They in turn burnt the woman and her father with fire (15:1-6). Samson was enraged and he killed a large number of Philistines and went to dwell on top of the rock Etam (15:7, 8).

The Philistines came with an army against Judah, in Lehi. The men of Judah were afraid they would suffer on account of Samson. So they sent 3000 men to the rock Etam to bind him and turn him over to the Philistines. Samson agreed that if they would only bind him and not kill him he would consent (15:9-13). When they came to Lehi, the Spirit of the Lord strengthened Samson and he broke the two new cords like flax burnt with fire, and he took the jawbone of

an ass and killed a thousand Philistines. Samson was thirsty, and the Lord miraculously provided water for him. He judged Israel 20 years (15:14-20).

When Samson went to Gaza to visit a harlot, the men of the city lay in wait for to kill him in the morning. At midnight Samson arose and carried the gates with the two posts to the top of a hill at Hebron (16:1-3). He then set his affection upon Delilah in the valley of Sorek. The lords of the Philistines were able to get her to cooperate with them to find the source of his strength. He first told her if she would bind him with seven green withs he would be helpless. With the lords of the Philistines secretly hidden in the chamber, she did this and cried, the Philistines are upon thee Samson. He broke the withs like a thread of tow in the flame (16:4-9). Then he said, use new ropes. The results were the same (16:10-12). This was followed by the suggestion that she weave his hair with the web. He ran off with the pin of the beam and web (16:13, 14).

At last he told her that if she cut his hair, he would be weak, since he was a Nazarite unto the Lord. With the lords of the Philistines present, and while he slept, she had his hair cut. This time he could not escape. They took him and put out his eyes and brought him to Gaza (16:15-21). After awhile the hair began to grow, and when the lords of the Philistines gathered for a feast to Dagon, their idol god, to give him praise for delivering Samson into their hand, they called for Samson to make sport of him. He asked the young boy leading him, to help him feel the pillars which supported the entire structure. While he prayed to God for strength to avenge himself of the Philistines for his two eyes, he took hold of the pillars and with all his might

pulled the house down upon all the people. More people were killed at his death than his entire life. His family came to bury him between Zorah and Eshtaol, the burying place of Manoah, his father (16:22-31).

3. We have yet to outline the third main division in the book, the two incidences which demonstrate the terrible evil that existed during this period (17:1-21:25).

A man by the name of Micah, from mount Ephraim, had stolen 1100 shekels of silver from his mother. When he admitted this to her and returned the stolen property, his mother said she had intended that the silver be used to make a graven image. She then gave 200 shekels to the founder to make such an image, which was placed in the house of Micah, who had already a number of such images. He consecrated his son to function as priest (17:1-6). Soon a traveler from Bethlehem-Judah came along and befriended Micah. Since he was a Levite and was looking for a place to stay, Micah suggested that for 10 shekels of silver a year, a suit of apparel, and food, he stay and function as a priest in his house. Micah thought that since he was a Levite, the Lord would bless his house (17:7-13).

At this same time, five strong men of Dan left Zorah and Eshtaol and searched out the land to determine where they could securely live. In their travel they came to the house of Micah and recognized the Levite who functioned as his priest. They asked him to inquire of God whether they would prosper in their search. The answer he brought was that they would indeed succeed (18:1-6). These men then traveled to Laish and took note of the careless way the people lived. There was no king and no law enforcement. When

they returned to Zorah and Eshtaol they told the people there to prepare to move to Laish for that was a good land and God would give that to them (18:7-10). An army of 600 men went first and came to the house of Micah. The five men that had visited here previously knew exactly where the graven images were placed. So they secretly entered and stole them. When they were about to leave, the Levite heard them and asked them what was going on. They suggested that he come with them and he could be priest over an entire tribe, rather than over one house. This sounded good to him and he left with the 600 men. When they were some way off, Micah heard of it and pursued after them. He asked in an angry voice why they took his images and his priest. They warned him not to speak roughly, or they could kill him. He realized he was outnumbered and returned home. The army of 600 went and captured Laish and sent for their families and changed the name of the city Laish to Dan. Here they set up the graven images of Micah and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, and his sons were priests (18:11-31).

The second incident of spiritual poverty involved another Levite. He had married a concubine out of Bethlehem-judah and lived with her at Mount Ephraim. She committed whoredom and returned to her father's house. He went after her with his servant and a couple of asses laden with goods. He spoke kindly to her and she invited him to stay. This turned into a five-day feast of eating and drinking with her father. Toward evening of the fifth day he insisted on leaving. They traveled as far as Jerusalem and the servant suggested they put up for the night. The master insisted they travel to Gibeah or Ramah,

a city in which the children of Israel dwelt. Later that night they arrived in Gibeah and sat in the street; but no one would take them in (19:1-15). Finally an old man came in from the field, asked their whereabouts, and took them into his house and provided for their needs (19:16-21). After they were eating and drinking, there was pounding on the door, the men of the city wanted to do to the traveler what the men of Sodom wanted to do with the angels. The old man denied them, do not so wickedly. He offered them his daughter and the concubine of the traveler. They accepted the concubine and abused her all night so that by morning she stumbled to the door and fell down dead. The Levite placed her body upon the ass and went to his house. There he divided her body into twelve pieces and sent it throughout the coasts of Israel (19:22-30). In response, 400,000 footmen that drew swords came. The Levite told them his story. They decided they would avenge this deed by sending a select army to Benjamin to kill the men of Belial at Gibeah. Instead, Benjamin raised an army of 26,000 men along with 600 from Gibeah. From them 700 were able to sling stones at an hairbreadth and not miss (20:1-17). □

*My God, my everlasting Hope,
I live upon Thy truth;
Thy hands have held my childhood
up,
And strengthened all my youth.
Still has my life new wonders seen,
Repeated every year;
Behold my days that yet remain,
I trust them to Thy care.*

Some Impressions From “Down Under” (2)

Dear Readers of *The Standard Bearer*:

It is high time that I write once again and try to keep my promise to tell you a little of the visit of Prof. Hanko and me to the Synod of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church last September. It will be impossible for me to go into detail, for our report to the Contact Committee was 4½ pages long; and I cannot very well hog so much space in our magazine.

However, before I write about the Synod, let me try to give you somewhat of an understanding of the situation down here.

First of all, something that will strike you immediately down here is the fact that you will not find many names in the E.P.C. like De Vries, Holstege, Hoekstra, Vanden Top, etc. In fact, in the whole denomination, I think, there are only three families with any Dutch blood, two of which are here in Burnie. You will meet people with names like Driscoll, Ling, Connors, Higgs, Greatbatch, Carins, Hurse, Logan, Torlach, Jones. I say this, not because ethnic backgrounds are important, but to underscore the fact that these churches are in the main not of Dutch Reformed

background. Hence, they do not have our Protestant Reformed heritage. By that I mean not only the heritage of our more than 60 years of Protestant Reformed growth and development of the truth, but also our heritage going back into the Christian Reformed Church(es) to the Doleantie of 1886, to the Secession of 1834, and to the Synod of Dordrecht of 1618-19, and thus to the Reformation. But, you say, they have a Presbyterian heritage. Yes, that is true in a way; but one might almost call it an *adopted* Presbyterian heritage.

You see, these churches have no Presbyterian roots historically. The first generation of EPC members (and that includes their first generation ministers) did not come out of Presbyterianism. On the contrary, in some instances they came from nothing ecclesiastically; in other cases they came from the Salvation Army, from Methodism. And they found their way into Arminian crusade-type evangelism. Not a few were students at the World Evangelization Crusade College in Launceston. And then there came about a remarkable change. Through various circumstances they became disillusioned with this rank Arminianism (with some Pentecostalist overtones). And through study they came first to a five-point Calvinist position, but remained Baptist. But

in process of time they embraced the Reformed position as set forth in the Westminster creeds. And one of the most remarkable aspects of this theological pilgrimage is that, when they arrived at the Reformed position, they came all the way, so that they repudiated the error of common grace and a general well-meant offer of the gospel. Thus they were constituted in the early 1960s with just a few congregations, first under the name of Reformed Evangelical Church and later as the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. And they were an ecclesiastically very lonely little group of churches. I remember distinctly how overjoyed some of their men were when in the early 1970s they became acquainted with our Protestant Reformed position and discovered that after all they were not the only churches in the world who repudiated the well-meant offer. Through correspondence and through a visit by the late Mr. Charles Rodman (at that time pastor of the Launceston church) we became better acquainted. In 1975 the Rev. C. Hanko and I visited and preached and spoke both in Tasmania and in Brisbane during our Australasian tour. Since that time there has been contact, but never anything on an official level — partly, as things turned out, because there were some in

Prof. Hoeksema is professor of Dogmatics and Old Testament in the Protestant Reformed Seminary.

the E.P.C. who were against such contact with the P.R.C.

But in the early 1980s this little denomination was troubled by controversy. Significantly, the controversy arose about the truth of sovereign, particular grace. The pastor of Launceston began to preach and teach that Christ according to His human nature loved all men. As the controversy developed, the doctrinal and confessional issue became that of the Person and natures of our Lord Jesus Christ and that of separating between the natures. At the time of this controversy some of our men, myself included, were asked for advice and help. The outcome of this controversy was a split in the little denomination, with the congregation in Hobart and in Taranna leaving, the congregation in Launceston losing a minority of its membership, and a total loss of about 100 members. And so the E.P.C. today is left with 200+ members, 3 ministers, 5 congregations, plus a couple of preaching centers. Though they had become organized with a synod and two presbyteries, it is rather difficult to maintain this structure. However, at their synod in September they decided (chiefly for practical reasons) to continue as they are, rather than reverting to a one-presbytery organization.

All of which brings me to the Synod meeting (3 ministers and five elders) at which Prof. Hanko and I represented our churches. We were very cordially received; Prof. Hanko addressed the Synod in behalf of our churches; and on numerous occasions we were asked for our opinion and advice on various matters. I wish I could report in greater detail, but I will have to limit myself in this letter to a summary of some of the more important items concerning our relations with the E.P.C.

First of all, we spent a long evening meeting with a committee of the three E.P.C. ministers at which there was very free and frank discussion of our areas of fundamental agreement and some areas of disagreement. Generally, there is creedal agreement; there is full agreement on the doctrines of sovereign and particular grace (and the rejection of the well-meant offer); there is agreement on the Christian's antithetical calling; there is agreement with respect to the truth of God's everlasting covenant of grace. There are also areas of disagreement as to church government, as to purity of worship, as to the question of divorce and remarriage, as to the so-called establishment principle, as to the Westminster position on the covenant of works. All of these areas were spelled out. The committee of ministers prepared a written report to their synod, where matters were again discussed carefully, and we agreed on certain proposed areas of cooperation and further contact. These are:

- 1) The establishment of a relationship which would be less than a full sister church relation.
- 2) Future help, upon their request, with ministerial supply.
- 3) An exchange of articles in our publications. (Note: the EPC is trying to revive their little magazine, but have trouble doing so because of their manpower shortage.)
- 4) Possible exchange of pulpits.
- 5) Trying to establish some kind of forum to discuss and explore our differences.
- 6) Some cooperation in the area of foreign mission endeavors. (Note: this was, I understand, rejected by our Contact Committee.)
- 7) Help with the theological training of EPC students. More about this below.

The EPC appointed a Contact Committee of two ministers and two elders from the Queensland Presbytery to deal with the various suggestions and with our Contact Committee.

The Synod also accepted our invitation to send observers to our Synod of 1990, D.V., and to the proposed Theological Conference to follow. The Rev. Chris Coleborn was appointed; and when two brethren generously offered to underwrite the expenses, the Rev. Philip Burley was appointed as a second delegate.

When Saturday noon came and the synod was almost finished with its business, Prof. Hanko and I bade them farewell; and we certainly left with a good feeling that we had received a hearty welcome and had a very fruitful contact. A beginning has been made toward what can be a mutually beneficial relation. Incidentally, the Burnie congregation, where I am currently working, has already approached our Contact Committee with a request for ministerial supply after my departure.

That brings me to a few additional remarks about the matter of theological training. The EPC has never had a seminary of their own, though they had a rather haphazard program of theological training. Pastor Coleborn is a product of that program. And at this synod there were some rather extensive proposals for training. But these would have entailed training in part at our seminary, in part at the Reformed Presbyterian seminary in North Ireland, and in part here in Australia. We discussed this matter in detail in our meeting with the three ministers and at the synod itself. We criticized the program rather frankly for its lack of unity as well as for its impractical length. And we proposed help from our

P.R. Seminary, in order to provide the EPC with new ministers as soon as possible. At the same time, we proposed and pointed out the possibility of providing room in such a seminary training for instruction of their young men in their own Presbyterian distinctives. Our proposals met with a very favorable reception by the EPC Synod. There are a few young men in the EPC who are interested in studying for the ministry. And since Synod's meeting one young man (from Burnie) has already applied to be accepted as a student for the

ministry in the EPC. In a practical and concrete way this is undoubtedly an area where we can be of great assistance to the EPC; and Prof. Hanko and I were very happy to see our suggestions get a good reception.

Nevertheless, at best it will be a few years before the EPC will have any new ministers of their own. Meanwhile they will continue to have a very critical need; and if our churches can at all help them during these years of critical need, this would be a great blessing to them. I am living in their situation and have

the opportunity to know both their need and their great appreciation for our help firsthand.

All of which reminds me how thankful our churches ought to be that our forefathers saw our need of having our own seminary and our own source of ministers in the very beginning of our history in 1925. This should also remind all of us of the critical need in our own churches for young men to study for the ministry.

With love in our Lord
Jesus Christ,

Prof. Homer C. Hoeksema □

Feeding Sheep Or Amusing Goats

C.H. Spurgeon

An evil is in the professed camp of the Lord, so gross in its impudence, that the most shortsighted can hardly fail to notice it. During the past few years it has developed at an abnormal rate, even for evil. It has worked like leaven until the whole lump ferments. The devil has seldom done a cleverer thing than hinting to the Church that part of their mission is to provide entertainment for the people, with a view to winning them. From speaking out as the Puritans did, the Church has gradually toned down her testimony, then winked at and excused the frivolities of the day. Then she tolerated them in her borders. Now she has adopted them under the plea of reaching the masses.

My first contention is that providing amusement for the people is nowhere spoken of in the Scriptures as a function of the Church. If it is a Christian work why did not Christ speak of it? 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.' That is clear enough. So it would have been if he had

added, 'and provide amusement for those who do not relish the gospel.' No such words, however, are to be found. It did not seem to occur to him. Then again, 'He gave some apostles, some prophets, some pastors and teachers, for the work of the ministry.' Where do entertainers come in? The Holy Spirit is silent concerning them. Were the prophets persecuted because they amused the people or because they refused? The concert has no martyr roll.

Again, providing amusement is in direct antagonism to the teaching and life of Christ and all His apostles. What was the attitude of the Church to the world? 'Ye are the salt,' not the sugar candy — something the world will spit out, not swallow. Short and sharp was the utterance, 'Let the dead bury their dead.' He was in awful earnestness!

Had Christ introduced more of the bright and pleasant elements into his mission, he would have been more popular when they went back, because of the searching nature of his teaching. I do not hear him say, 'Run after these people, Peter, and tell them we will have a different style of

service tomorrow, something short and attractive with little preaching. We will have a pleasant evening for the people. Tell them they will be sure to enjoy it. Be quick, Peter, we must get the people somehow!' Jesus pitied sinners, sighed and wept over them, but never sought to amuse them. In vain will the Epistles be searched to find any trace of the gospel of amusement. Their message is, 'Come out, keep out, keep clean out!' Anything approaching fooling is conspicuous by its absence. They had boundless confidence in the gospel and employed no other weapon. After Peter and John were locked up for preaching, the Church had a prayer meeting, but they did not pray, 'Lord grant unto thy servants that by a wise and discriminating use of innocent recreation we may show these people how happy we are.' If they ceased not for preaching Christ, they had not time for arranging entertainments. Scattered by persecution, they went everywhere preaching the gospel. They 'turned the world upside down'. That is the only difference! Lord, clear the Church of all the rot and rubbish the devil has imposed on her and

bring us back to apostolic methods.

Lastly, the mission of amusement fails to effect the end desired. It works havoc among young converts. Let the careless and scoffers, who thank God because the Church met them half-way, speak and testify. Let the heavy laden who found peace through the concert not keep silent! Let the drunkard to whom the dramatic entertainment had been God's link in the chain of their conversion, stand up! There are none to answer.

The mission of amusement produces no converts. The need of the hour for today's ministry is believing scholarship joined with earnest spirituality, the one springing from the other as fruit from the root. The need is biblical doctrine, so understood and felt, that it sets men on fire. □

(Reprinted from the November, 1988 issue of *Banner of Truth*, Edinburgh, Scotland. Charles Spurgeon lived from 1834 to 1892.)

New Subscribers! You can receive the Standard Bearer for the first year for half price, \$6.00!

News From Our Churches

Mr. Benjamin Wigger

March 1, 1989

MINISTERIAL CALLS

Rev. Carl Haak declined the call he received from our Faith church in Jenison, Michigan.

And from the trio that was included in the last news, our South Holland, Illinois congregation has extended a call to Rev. Charles Terpstra, who presently serves the Pella P.R.C. in Pella, Iowa.

CONGREGATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Prof. H.C. Hoeksema writes in a letter to the congregation of the Hudsonville P.R.C. in Hudsonville, Michigan that one advan-

tage of the year that he and his wife are spending in Tasmania is the avoidance of a cold and raw Michigan winter. In Tasmania it is now mid-summer. The schools have their long vacation. The yards in their neighborhoods are lush with summer growth and many, many flowers. And on the 26th of December the Burnie congregation had its annual picnic in a park on the ocean shore — another unique experience for them.

I would like to add a few more details concerning the Creation Seminar sponsored by our Grandville P.R.C. in Grandville, Michigan. These seminars were scheduled to be held on three consecutive Wednesdays in February and covered three aspects of creation: Creation and

Scripture, The Doctrine of Creation, and Creation and the Other Doctrines. Prof. H. Hanko was the teacher of these classes.

All P.R. young people in the West Michigan area were invited to a Sweetheart Banquet held February 9 at the Hope P.R. School Gym. The Jr. Young People's Society of our Faith Church sponsored this event, with proceeds going, as usual with any Young People's project, for the up-coming Convention.

Beginning February 16 and continuing each Thursday night for six weeks, seminars will be conducted at the seminary by area ministers and elders, focusing on all areas of married life. At each session opportunity will be given for questions and discussion. All couples contemplating marriage, as well as those who have been married for two years or less, were urged to attend.

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

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

A congregational meeting was held in early February at the Kalamazoo P.R.C. They met that night to consider the purchase of a lot behind the church.

A brother in our Loveland P.R.C. in Loveland, Colorado is overturing Synod by way of the Consistory of Loveland and Classis West to change two expressions in the Apostles' Creed: "quick" to "living" and "Holy Ghost" to "Holy Spirit." Loveland's Consistory forwarded this overture with its approval. Loveland's Consistory also decided that they wanted to make

this change in their unison confession of the Apostles' Creed and they started doing that on January 8.

The Men's Society of our Loveland Church has set up a magazine table in the Fellowship Hall, as part of the library. Magazines may be checked out for one week. Congregation members were also asked to share any religious magazines that they might subscribe to and that were not displayed on the table.

Loveland also held a congregation-wide ice-skating party as part of their winter fellowship in the middle of January.

And one more item for "busy" Loveland Church. On February 10 their Young People's Society sponsored a Sweetheart Banquet for couples of all ages. A delicious meal and special program was planned. And guess where the proceeds went — to this year's Convention of course.

The Consistory of Hope P.R.C. in Walker, Michigan publicly expressed its thanks to Miss Sybil Engelsma on the occasion of her retirement from being a church organist. For the past 50 consecutive years she has, with humility and faithfulness, assisted the consistory in conducting the worship service. We could add that this occasion should also remind all of us to thank our own church organists for their time and effort expended in using their abilities to the benefit of our congregation. "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." Galatians 6:9.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The PTA of Adams St. Christian School in Grand Rapids, Michigan met recently to hear a follow-up to their Fall meeting. Two of Adams teachers, along with their administrator, gave a presentation on "The Role of the Teacher and the Administrator Beyond the Classroom."

Prof. Decker spoke at the February PTA of Heritage Christian School in Hudsonville, Michigan on the subject, "Developing Proper Self-esteem in our Children."

The Ladies' Circle of our Loveland P.R. Christian School planned a Father-Son Banquet in late January. A warm meal and a small program were provided.

The Ladies' Circle of the Northwest Iowa P.R. Christian School sponsored their annual Soup Supper on February 13, and the Adams St. Christian School Mothers' Club also held their annual Soup Supper on February 9.

News from the Contact Committee

When sister church relations were established with the Protestant Reformed Church of Wellington, New Zealand, that small congregation asked permission to call one of our ministers. As most of our readers know, this permission was granted by Synod and subsequently Rev. Rodney Miersma was called and accepted that call. In order to provide for their minister, financial help from our churches was asked. An appeal was made to our people for such help, and the money was abundantly provided. This money, now collected, was to be sent to New Zealand over a five-year period of time. Last Autumn a check in the amount of \$11,100.49 was sent to this congregation, and recently the Session of the Wellington Protestant Reformed Church sent a letter of

thanks for this amount to the Contact Committee. By means of this announcement we convey the thanks of the saints in Wellington to our people who so generously gave to this cause. The letter reads in part: "We are very grateful for the continuing support given by the Churches. It is not clear how the Lord will work in this area; there is here, as elsewhere, a lack of interest in sound, Reformed preaching but there are one or two hopeful signs. In widely separated places there are people who are interested. We pray that the Lord will enable some of these lonely saints to move to the Wellington area to join with us." We commend the cause of the Wellington Protestant Reformed Church to the prayers of the saints. □

-Prof. Herman Hanko

Parting thought from "Across the Aisle" from First Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

"People may fall many times, but they are not failures until they start saying somebody pushed them." □

ATTENTION TEACHERS!!!

Hope Christian School of Redlands, CA is seeking to add a teacher to its staff beginning the 1989-90 school year. Teaching assignment would be either grades K and 1, or 2nd - 4th. Those interested may call Ed Karsemeyer (Principal) at school (714-793-1504) or at home (714-793-7166), or Mike Gritters (Secretary of School Board), at (714-739-4439). Applications or resumes should be sent to Hope Christian School, 1309 E. Brockton, Redlands, CA 92374.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Ladies Society of the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church expresses Christian love and sympathy to its sisters: Evelyn Poortinga, Jessica Wiersma, Dorothy Bruinsma, Tena Poortinga, Tenie Poortinga, Connie Busker and Kathryn Poortinga in the passing of a beloved husband, father, brother, brother-in-law and uncle, DANIEL POORTINGA on February 7, 1989. "For we know that if our earthly house of This tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (II Cor. 5:1)

Rev. George Lanting, Pres.
Mrs. Arthur De Jong, Sec'y.

NOTICE!!!

The South Holland Protestant Reformed School is seeking applications for a teaching position at the elementary grade level beginning the 1989/90 school year. Direct all inquiries to:

Lamm Lubbers, Administrator
16511 South Park Avenue
South Holland, IL 60473
(312) 339-6585

or to

James Lanting, Board Sec'y.
16230 Louis Avenue
South Holland, IL 60473
(312) 596-5093

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The consistory and congregation of the Loveland Protestant Reformed Church extend their Christian sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Dave Poortinga and family in the death of his father, MR. DAN POORTINGA. May they be comforted in the assurance that "... all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28)

NOTICE!!!

Covenant Christian School of Lynden, Washington, will require a teacher/administrator, for the 1989-90 school year. Those interested please call John Meyer, president of school board, at (206) 354-3354, or Ben VanderVeen, secretary of school board, at (206) 354-3188. Written resumes may be sent to Mr. Ben VanderVeen, Secretary, 9503 Northwood Road, Lynden, WA 98264.

NOTICE!!!

The Northwest Iowa Protestant Reformed Christian School is seeking applications for a teaching position at the lower elementary grade level beginning the 1989/90 school year. Direct all inquiries to:

Chester Hunter, Jr.,
Administrator
106 Fifth Ave.
Doon, IA 51235
(712) 726-3381

or to:

John Mantel, Board President
R.R. 2, Box 247
Rock Valley, IA 51247
(712) 476-5609

NOTICE!!!

All standing and special committees of Synod, as well as individuals who wish to address Synod 1989, are hereby notified that all material for the 1989 Synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches should be in the hands of the Stated Clerk no later than April 15. Please send material to the Stated Clerk:

Rev. M. Joostens
2016 Tekonsha S.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute expresses its sincere sympathy to Mr. Ignatio Quenga and his son, Dwight, in the death of their wife and mother, MRS. ANTOINETTE QUENGA, on January 17, 1989.

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

John Kalsbeek, Pres.
Judie Feenstra, Sec'y.