

**A Reformed  
Semi-Monthly  
Magazine**

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# THE STANDARD BEARER

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*Scripturally based education does not close minds, but opens and expands them. They now think great thoughts — thoughts about God; about the world as bearing the impress of God's glory; about human life, not as the accidental and meaningless movement of rational slime, but as devotion to the living God or as revolution against Him.*

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July 1, 1989

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## Inside this issue . . .

Changing an address for one of our more than 2,000 subscribers to the *Standard Bearer* is a rather simple procedure. All the addresses, after all, are on a little computer disk, and one has merely to call up the address in question by pressing the right keys on his keyboard, and then quickly type in the new address. Not always was it so. What today can be carried around in the Business Manager's pocket had once to be stored in a large file cabinet — drawer upon drawer of metal addressograph plates. And each change of address required disposing of the old plate and painstakingly impressing each letter and numeral of the new address on a new plate.

And then there's the mailing. Today a computer and printer are used to print out all of the addresses on labels . . . in zip-code order. The labels are put in an automatic label affixer, and one has only to stack the *Standard Bearers* in one of the trays of the machine and watch the magazines speed through the system. Again, not always was it so. With the old system the Business Manager was indeed able to load a small stack of addressograph plates in the plate holder, but from then on it was all work, for he had to feed each magazine by hand into the machine and make the imprint of the address by pulling down hard on the lever — hundreds of times, for a single mailing.

For about 20 years, Mr. Henry Vander Wal provided that service. What was that — about 600,000 *Standard Bearers* addressed and mailed? And who knows how many plates made! All without a word of complaint — and on time! It's that kind of conscientious labor that is so important to a successful operation. Mr. Vander Wal did the job well — with the old machines, the drawers of metal plates, and the dual-cards-filing system in his basement. And he could be depended on. Now he retires. We owe him a debt of gratitude. See "Interview with Henry Vander Wal" inside this issue. □

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## Meditation

Rev. James Slopsema

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# Benediction

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*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. —II Corinthians 13:14*

With these words the apostle Paul concluded his second epistle to the church of Corinth. These words are really a benediction Paul pronounced on the behalf of God upon the church. Many of us reading these words will recognize them as the concluding benediction in our own worship services. This beautiful benediction proclaims to the church the glorious gospel of salvation and assures her that the salvation of God is hers.

\* \* \* \* \*

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Simply put, grace is unmerited favor. When someone is gracious to you, he does you a favor you don't deserve.

The grace spoken of here is the grace of salvation. The salvation of our souls is the greatest favor we can possibly receive. There is no meaning in all of life, if we perish everlastingly in hell.

Salvation is a favor we definitely do not deserve. For we have sinned against God. We sinned against God in Paradise through our first father, Adam.

As a result of that original sin we sin every day against the living God. This makes us completely unworthy of any favors from any source. Our sin renders us worthy only of God's wrath and judgment, both now and eternally.

The benediction ascribes this saving grace to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God come in the flesh to be our Mediator. Because the Lord Jesus is our Mediator, we receive all the blessings of salvation only through Him. Thus, for example, our salvation is based solely on His suffering and death at the cross. In turn, we actually receive and enjoy the blessings of salvation only through the same Jesus, Who daily appears before the face of God for us in heaven. He is, indeed, our Savior, as His very name "Jesus" indicates.

By speaking of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, this benediction teaches us that Jesus' work of salvation on our behalf is strictly a matter of grace — undeserved favor. It was grace that moved Jesus to submit to the agonies of the cross to obtain our salvation. It is grace, and grace alone, that motivates the Lord Jesus Christ to shower us from heaven with the blessings of His salvation day by day. It's all grace: nothing that we have earned or deserve but purely a matter of undeserved favor.

It's rather striking, though, that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ should be mentioned, first in this benediction. For being the Mediator of salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ is not the source of salvation but only the means through Whom the Source, God, accomplishes our salvation. We might therefore expect the love of God to be mentioned first, to be followed by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

However, this benediction approaches us from the viewpoint of our experience. And in the experience of our salvation the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is first.

Since Jesus is the Mediator of our salvation, we can approach unto God only through Him. Jesus is the way to the Father. No man comes to the Father but by Him. The only way to God is through the work of Jesus Christ. In salvation, therefore, we deal first of all with the Lord Jesus Christ.

And as we contemplate the salvation we enjoy through the mediating work of Jesus Christ, there is one thing especially that deeply impresses every sincere child of God: it's all of grace.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ!

\* \* \* \* \*

And the love of God!

The Bible has a great deal to say about the love of God.

Here follows the sum of God's love. God's love is eternal. In the endless ages of eternity God

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*Rev. Slopsema is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Walker, Michigan.*



chose unto Himself a people in Jesus Christ. And eternally He set His love upon them.

This means that God's love is first. God does not love us because we first loved Him. Were this the case, none of us would ever know the love of God. For of ourselves we are hopelessly involved in sin, prone to hate God and our neighbor. Being an eternal love, God's love is first; our love for Him only follows.

In fact, God loved us even while we were yet sinners. We will praise God every day for this, as we travel the endless corridors of eternity.

And we will also praise Him for the fact that in His love He sent His only begotten Son into the world for our salvation.

Because God loves His people, He seeks their welfare. He will save them from their sins. He will deliver them from the certain destruction they have foolishly brought upon themselves. In fact, God in love purposes to bring His people to the glory of His own eternal home, where they may know the joy of His friendship and fellowship forever.

But this requires a payment for their sin, a payment that only His Son can make. The payment for sin requires that His only begotten Son enter into our flesh and suffer the agonies of hell on the cross in our place.

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. This love of God for His people stands as the eternal fountain of all the saving work of Jesus our Mediator.

And so, after calling attention to the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ in our salvation, the benediction of God now calls our attention to the love of God that stands behind it all.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ!

And the love of God!

And the communion of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is very much involved in our salvation.

We have seen that all our salvation is in Jesus Christ. Through His death Jesus earned our salvation. Through His resurrection and exaltation into heaven, Jesus obtained our salvation. And from heaven Jesus showers the blessings of this salvation upon us day by day, so that we both enjoy them and live in their power.

But Jesus showers these blessings upon us only through the Holy Spirit. For, to receive the blessings of salvation in Jesus Christ requires that we be brought to a true and living faith in Jesus. Faith is that which brings us to Jesus Christ, the Fount of all blessings. Faith is that which unites us to Christ, so that we become partakers of His salvation.

That faith Christ works in our hearts through the inner working of the Holy Spirit. When Christ, through the Word, calls His people to repentance and faith, the Holy Spirit works irresistibly within them, leading them to lay hold of the Savior in true faith. Through the work of the Holy Spirit every child of God is brought into saving communion with Christ.

And so, in addition to the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God, there is also the communion of the Holy Spirit.

\* \* \* \* \*

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit *be with you all.*

To be with someone means to be present with him at all times, to aid and assist him. For the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit to be with

us means that they are always present with us to accomplish our salvation.

How important that this be the case! If the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, or the love of God, or the communion of the Holy Spirit is not with us, we will most certainly perish. Your salvation and mine depends on these being with us.

And, now, the beauty of it all is that what is proclaimed here is not merely a wish but a benediction. The apostle Paul, as he concluded his second epistle to the church of Corinth, was not merely stating a wish when He penned these words. He was speaking on behalf of the living God, pronouncing God's blessings upon the church.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit are with the church! They are with all who are truly members of the church: elect in Christ, redeemed by the blood, belonging to Jesus by faith.

With this assurance the apostle Paul also concluded this benediction with a resounding, Amen (i.e., it shall truly be). In that confidence we, as the church of Jesus Christ, also live. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit are with us and shall be with us forever and ever.

With that we lift up our hearts and voices with thanksgiving.

Blessed be God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ, along with the Holy Spirit, for the love and grace they have shown to us and of which they also assure us forever unto our salvation!

Amen! □



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# Does "Reformed" Make A Difference?

## Interview With Henry Vander Wal: Present-Day Colporteur

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### Editorials

#### Does "Reformed" Make A Difference?

*(Less than a month ago, many children and young people among us graduated from Reformed, Christian schools. Many others completed a year's study. A goodly number of men and women looked back on a year's work of teaching or of administration in these schools. Parents gathered at the graduation exercises to rejoice, not only in their child's finishing the course, but also in the covenant community's maintenance of the school for another year. Many others celebrated, viewing the children of the church as their children too and supposing themselves to have a stake in these children's education. To all these — is anyone overlooked? — is this editorial directed.)*

Graduates, faculty and administration, families of the graduates, and friends of Christian education, "Reformed" makes a difference!

"Reformed" makes a difference for education!

"Reformed" makes a difference for life!

The faith that the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ restored to the church by the Reformation in the 1500s and that is confessed by

Reformed churches in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dordt makes a difference in the education that believing parents give their children and in the life that the young people live by the power of this education.

Reformed, Christian education is costly, to be sure; but it is also priceless.

This was brought home to me in a forceful way, a couple of years ago, in the devastating criticism of higher education in the United States by the University of Chicago professor, Allan Bloom: *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987). Higher education in America does not educate. It is impoverishing the minds and souls of students. The reason is that it believes nothing, stands for nothing, and really knows nothing. Not a Christian himself, Bloom notes with alarm that the product of education in America is a life of nihilism, of immorality, and of despair, and this, on the part of the youth — a nation's most valuable resource.

This is not the fault only of the schools. Bloom sees the relation between home and school and blames the home equally. The home no longer gives the

children religious instruction, particularly instruction as to the difference between right and wrong. The family no longer reads the Bible for the benefit of the children, a necessary thing, says this perceptive unbeliever.

"Reformed" makes a difference!

It makes a difference in education. The difference is simple and radical: the difference is God, the God Who is truly God. The faith called Reformed acknowledges God — the Triune God and Father of Jesus Christ the Lord. He is sovereign, which is to say "truly God," and not merely some idol dependent upon almighty man. He is Creator of us and of all things. He saves the church that He has chosen. He governs all for the sake of this church.

This is God's own testimony about Himself in Isaiah 45. "I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded" (v. 12). The LORD calls Himself "the God of Israel . . . mine elect" (vss. 3, 4). He declares that He has raised up Cyrus, mighty head of the Persian world-power, so that this heathen monarch "shall build my city and . . . let go my captives."



even though, in fact, Cyrus has not "known me" (vss. 13, 4). Such is the relationship between the God revealed in Scripture — our God — and even the most powerful of humans — a Cyrus, a Gorbachev, or a Bush — that God is Potter and humans are clay (v. 9).

Because God is God, He is the beginning and the end, or goal, of education, as He is of every aspect of human life and labor.

The basic flaw in modern American education is that it has left God out, indeed has banished God. Bloom sees this:

*The critical standpoint from which to view modern culture is its essential atheism (p. 197).*

To banish God from education makes a difference. If God is not in all their thoughts and theories, education disintegrates. If God's blessing of the educational enterprise is rejected, His curse blasts it. To banish God is to invite the devil.

Where the living God is the beginning and goal of education, where He is the foundation on which all teaching builds, where He is the light that illumines the instruction, where He is the very life of that mystery that we call learning, education has meaning, integrity, coherence, worth, and profit. Things make sense. Everything hangs together. There is good reason to know the world and to live knowledgeable and wisely in it.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.

Yes, and education is joyful. I hope that some of you graduates have felt the sheer joy of learning! I trust that all of you teachers have experienced the sheer delight of teaching!

It is the outstanding mark of the Reformed faith that God is honored as God.

This great God has made Himself known in His Word, Holy Scripture. Because Scripture is

the Word of the sovereign God, it has authority. This is a second way that "Reformed" makes a difference in education. We humbly receive this Scripture by faith as the very Word of God, breathed out of God by the Holy Spirit.

Scripture not only gives us knowledge of heavenly things, e.g., the forgiveness of sins through the cross of Jesus, but also of earthly reality. As John Calvin wrote in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, the Scriptures are the glasses through which we blind people can see the truth of creation for the first time.

*Just as old or bleary-eyed men and those with weak vision, if you thrust before them a most beautiful volume, even if they recognize it to be some sort of writing, yet can scarcely construe two words, but with the aid of spectacles will begin to read distinctly; so Scripture, gathering up the otherwise confused knowledge of God in our minds (received from the creation — DJE), having dispersed our dullness, clearly shows us the true God (I.vi.1, Battles edition).*

Not only do we know God from the Scriptures, but we also know ourselves, the starry heavens, the course of history, and right behavior in distinction from sin. Without the glasses of Scripture, modern, well-educated American people cannot even see the difference between protecting the life of unborn human beings and their murder.

Scripturally based education does not close minds, but opens and expands them. They now think great thoughts — thoughts about God; about the world as bearing the impress of God's glory; about human life, not as the accidental and meaningless movement of rational slime, but as devotion to the living God or as revolution against Him.

At the very beginning of his book, Bloom remarks that one

thing a professor in an American, secular university or college can be absolutely sure of is that almost every student believes that truth is relative. Students are sure of nothing except this, that nothing is sure. For them, there is no such thing as truth — rock-solid, unchanging truth. The apostle of the Truth described them in II Timothy 3:7: "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Necessary for education is a source of truth, a basis of truth, a standard of truth. This is the Bible, the Word of God Who is Truth Itself. And this is found in good Christian schools which, although they do not specialize in teaching the Bible, teach all in the light of the Bible. Therefore, there can be knowledge, rather than ignorance — young people do come to the knowledge of the truth. This knowledge is certain, not doubtful, whether it be the real existence of the creation, or the law of non-contradiction, or the resurrection of the bodies and final judgment of every human, or that killing the unborn is murder.

This happy knowledge of the truth is the privilege of the children of believers. "Reformed" makes a difference, not only as regards God, the beginning and end of education, and as regards the Word of God, the authority in education, but also as regards you who are being educated. Precious knowledge is not a right or a possibility for all children. It is a gift. And God graciously gives it, through education, to the children of believers. It is a covenant gift.

The Reformed faith has an eye for the covenant of God with believers and their children. God's sons and daughters must be Godly taught.

We must have good Christian schools!



We must have good Christian high schools and colleges, as well as grade schools. If this is possible, we ought to have a Reformed university in North America. But they must be schools that are Reformed in reality, and not in name only: God-centered schools! Scripture-honoring schools! Covenantal schools!

From them, and from genuinely Reformed homes, we expect a difference in the life of the young people.

"Reformed" makes a difference in life.

It sends you young people into the world. It requires you to use your abilities. It permits you to enjoy every creature of God. It involves you in all the ordinances of human life — work, government, marriage and family. We must have nothing of fleeing the world, huddling fearfully off in a corner, waiting for Jesus to come.

But in the world, it calls you to devote yourself, not to the world, but to the great, sovereign God, to Whom you owe everything — your creation and your salvation. You may not conform to the world of godlessness. Your mind is claimed — by God. Your bodies are claimed — by God. Your abilities are claimed — by God. Your possessions are claimed — by God. Your time is claimed — by God. "I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me" (Isaiah 45:5). Such a life (the Bible calls it a holy life) is a life of obedience, rather than self-will, and a life of self-discipline, rather than self-indulgence.

This is a hopeful life.

Allan Bloom points out the well-nigh universal despair of young people. These are not the deprived ghetto-dwellers, but the university students — university students at the University of Chicago.

*Nobody really believes in anything anymore, and everyone spends his life in frenzied work and frenzied play so as not to face the fact, not to look into the abyss (p. 143).*

"... so as not ... to look into the abyss"! The abyss is death, which not only cuts life off finally, but also renders all of life futile, senseless, absurd, vain. You hear the despair in their music. You see it in their drug-culture. You find it in their promiscuity.

If God is not, nothing matters. Human life is one absurd thing after another, and death is the thing after that. The apostle of the living God Who has conquered death and the grave in the resurrection of Jesus and Who has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, put it this way: to be "without hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 1:12). You hear the melancholy winds howling; you feel the chill of infinite cold; you get a glimpse of the vast void; you shudder with the soul's sense of unutterable loneliness. "... without God in the world," and therefore "without hope."

But for you, God lives. With all He is, He is your God in Jesus the Christ. Everything matters. Your life has worth and purpose: knowing God and enjoying Him forever. Your work and play need not be "frenzied," but may be hearty, because you are always looking into the heights of eternal life in the Day of Christ.

Reformed education nourishes hope.

Therefore, I congratulate you graduates on completing this phase of a Reformed education.

I thank you teachers and administration for serving us parents, our children, and God in the high calling of Christian education this past school-year.

I make myself so bold as to urge us all to carry on in the great work of the God of truth and covenant, education that is Reformed. □ —DJE

## Interview With Henry Vander Wal: Present-Day Colporteur



By August 1, Henry Vander Wal will have turned over the last of his responsibilities on behalf of *The Standard Bearer* to others. Henry is one of the "unsung heroes" in the story of the spreading of the witness to the truth by the Protestant Reformed Churches. At the time of the Reformation of the church in the 16th century, one of the important ways in which the Reformation made advances in Europe was the peddling of Reformation literature — books and pamphlets — by men known as colporteurs. Henry Vander Wal is a contemporary colporteur. Not only has he sent out countless issues of *The Standard Bearer* and innumerable copies of Reformed Free Publishing Association publications, as well as bound volumes of *The SB*, but he has also slipped into the mailings many pamphlets, reprints of articles that appeared in *The SB*,



catalogues of RFPA publications, and First Church bulletins. These have gone all over the world.

The interview with Colporteur Vander Wal by the Editor took place in Vander Wal's basement (unostentatious headquarters of his work) at 1047 Alto Ave. in Grand Rapids, Michigan. With his wife, Dorothy, Henry has lived at this address and in the house across the street for 50 years.

DJE: Henry, tell us a little about your background in the PRC.

HVW: I was baptized in Eastern Avenue Christian Reformed Church by old Dominie Groen in the Dutch language. Dominie Hoeksema came to Eastern Avenue when I was 11 years old. In those days, there was a Dutch service in the afternoon, besides the English service in the morning and evening. I used to attend the Dutch service every Sunday afternoon with my grandmothers even though I could not understand Dutch, besides going to church in the morning and evening. My family went with Rev. Hoeksema and his Consistory when they were put out by the CRC and were members of First PRC from the very beginning.

DJE: What work have you done over the years in spreading the Protestant Reformed witness?

HVW: I was Business Manager of *The SB* for some 21 years. I mailed books for the RFPA for 6 or 7 years up until a year ago. And I served with others on the Reformed Witness Hour radio committee for about 10 years.

DJE: What was involved in this work?

HVW: For the Reformed Witness Hour committee, I used to record the ministers. I did this for about 33 years, until about a year ago. Then I would take my turn in making copies from the master tape and mailing these

copies to the radio stations. Mrs. Vander Wal would make coffee and cookies for the ministers.

DJE: You must have had some interesting sessions recording all the ministers.

HVW: In the years right after the split of '53, we recorded radio sermons in Ed Kooienga's home. The preacher sat in the living room. I was in the basement with the recording equipment. We put the phone in the closet. Once I could not figure out why Dominie Hoeksema began speaking before I was ready. When I went upstairs to find out, I discovered that a salesman had knocked on the door. Thinking that this was his signal, Rev. Hoeksema began preaching.

DJE: Who was your favorite minister to record?

HVW: Dominie Hoeksema. After he recorded his sermon, we would go upstairs together to the radio room in the old First Church to play the sermon back. I always gave him some Dutch Master cigars. He would sit there smoking a cigar as though he were almost asleep. But all of a sudden he would say, "Watch it now, Henry, a mistake is coming up on the tape." Once I noticed that instead of referring to Ephesians 2:8, he said, "Ephesians 8:2." When I called this to his attention, he said, "Never mind. Nobody will ever notice it." And nobody did.

DJE: What about your other duties?

HVW: For the RFPA book publishing committee, I mailed out all the books that people ordered and saw to it that Kregel's Book Store had a supply of all our books to distribute to the book stores. I had to get the books from a warehouse in Grand Rapids.

DJE: What work was involved as regards *The SB*?

HVW: I kept all the records on subscriptions, renewals, and

changes of address. I mailed out renewal notices. I made the bank deposits. I acknowledged the gifts. Often, I would enclose a bulletin in my mailing. I mailed all the copies of each issue of *The SB*, usually by myself at Wobbema's (printer of *The SB* — DJE). This would take me from 9 o'clock in the morning until 2:30 in the afternoon. And it had to be done twice a month. Also, I mailed the bound volumes.

DJE: You have seen some changes over the years, haven't you?

HVW: When I began mailing *The SB* back in the late 60s, it cost \$9.42 for the bulk mailing of each issue. The cost of mailing a single copy in the United States was 4 cents. Now it costs 65 cents to mail a single copy. And the cost of the bulk mailing of each issue is \$227. It has been a great improvement that we recently changed the method of mailing *The SB*. It goes much faster. I always had to address each copy by pulling the lever of the addressograph.

DJE: What work are you still doing?

HVW: Sending our renewal notices; recording changes of address; making out two cards for every new subscriber; and going to the post office for *The SB* mail every day except Sunday.

DJE: What was the most aggravating part of the work?

HVW: People procrastinating paying for their subscription to *The SB*. I have to keep sending renewal notices. This takes time. And it is costly for *The SB*. People should pay right away.

DJE: What work did you enjoy the most?

HVW: It was certainly not mailing the books! I think I enjoyed recording the ministers the most, although the work for *The SB* was interesting too.

DJE: What aspect of the work was most rewarding?



HVW: Receiving letters and gifts for *The SB*. Without gifts, *The SB* could not survive. Many send in a few dollars extra when they renew their subscription. Others send in good-sized contributions during the year.

DJE: Are there any changes that you think should be made?

HVW: We should raise the subscription rates to other countries. It costs 74 cents to mail a single copy to Canada. It costs \$1.88 to air mail a single copy across the ocean. \$12 per year for 21 issues is not enough. It is not enough for a subscription in the United States.

DJE: Do you look forward to

being relieved of all your duties on behalf of *The SB*?

HVW: I am 77 years old. Some things, I am not able to do any more. I can't do the mailing. I am willing to help yet in other ways, if necessary. I have enjoyed the work.

DJE: Henry, thank you for your work! □ -DJE

## Letters . . .

It appears to me, that the word "Resistance" has caused a lot of confusion and misunderstanding . . .

It should be understood and respected, that those who lived in The Netherlands during the war and who were of the Reformed faith, were often involved in a form of resistance against the occupation of a foreign political power.

The resistance there had at least thirty different faces. Identity-papers had to be printed, stamps falsified, food-coupons captured, as to save the lives of many young men, and amongst them again many of the Reformed faith.

The resistance was not only a movement, with weapons, it was also very personal — spreading news and information, hiding pilots of the Royal Air Force, caring for the wounded at secret places, etc. Also, gathering of young people of the church (the youth group of which I was the president was forbidden by name) was difficult, but it was done, every week at another address. Mind you, all the Reformed ministers I knew were in the leadership of resistance groups, including my own small brave

asthmatic pastor, who later married my wife and me. My own father, guarding the sealed royal palace of The Hague, hid and protected during five years up to 300 young men in the cellars, risking his life day and night, refusing taking holidays or sick leave. Soon after the end of the war he became ill; he died at the age of 49 years.

Our government and our queen Wilhelmina were in London. We listened to their instructions by radio, in secret, because the enemy did not allow that. So, in London was our civil government, not in Berlin.

My father stood every day in front of the huge statue of Prince William I, who sacrificed everything he had for the defence of the Protestant, Reformed faith in The Netherlands. We are descendants of the Huguenots.

We defend the freedom of God's children, against Spaniards, against Nazis, against Communists, and who else will come yet in the future. *Fiat Voluntas Tua*.

We know we will always be a minority, wherever we are, walking on a tight rope in the shadow of death. But God knows our motives.

J.P. de Klerk  
Ashhurst, New Zealand □

### Response:

I note these crucially important words in your letter, ". . . a form of resistance against the occupation of a foreign political power."

In addition, by the "freedom of God's children" you refer, no doubt, to their earthly freedom. The defense of the spiritual freedom of believers and their children is the work of the Holy Spirit through the pure preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ and of the grace of God in Him. □

—Ed.



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## The Reader Asks . . .

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Before asking my question, I would like to make two prefacing remarks. First, thanks so much for the abundance of articles you have written. From them I have gained invaluable insights in so many areas of life. Second, the question I am about to ask is just that, a *question*. So often people assume that asking a question implies also a criticism. Rather, I am assuming that I personally fail to understand something . . . and I would like to understand it!

In the April 15, 1989 issue of *The Standard Bearer* you had a section of WALKING IN THE LIGHT devoted to "Sabbath Desecration." In this section you wrote: "The Lord's will is that the first day of the week, as part of the creation ordinances, is the Lord's Day." This sentence confuses me. Is not the seventh day of the week, Saturday, the Old

Testament sabbath and also the day of rest according to the creation ordinance? I have thought that the resurrection of Christ *changed* the day to the first day of the week . . . and then that day could hardly be the same day as the creation ordinance, could it? I don't question that *a* day of rest is a continuing part of the creation ordinance, only that the first day of the week is this day.

Please enlighten me . . . and thanks!

A fellow observer of the  
Lord's Day,  
Carol Brands  
Edgerton, MN

### Answer:

I appreciate your question concerning my article in the April 15 issue of the *Standard Bearer*. You are correct in your observation that the Sabbath on the first day of the week is a change of the creation ordinance. It is true, as you say, that the setting aside of *a* day is the ordinance of God's creation, but the change from the seventh day to the first day was brought about by our Lord's resurrection.

It is interesting to note in this connection that all the ordinances of creation, including the institution of marriage, were not annulled by God's work of redemption in Christ, but were raised to a higher level in keeping with God's redemption of His entire creation.

Thank you for calling this to my attention. □

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## The Day of Shadows

Rev. John Heys

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## A Blessed Shadow

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The most awesome thing in life is death. It separates us from our loved ones, and from the rest of the human race, as well as from all the pleasures and treasures our flesh enjoys. It brings a complete end to all the activities of this life as far as our bodies are concerned.

However, to understand and realize the awfulness of death we should look at it as God presents it to Adam, and through this presentation shows us its awfulness. Adam was told that the day he ate of the forbidden fruit he would die. And since Adam did live for 930 years after that day

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that he sinned, it is an undeniable fact that he died spiritually that day. God said that he would die that day. He did not say that death would merely begin in him. Complete spiritual death took hold of Adam that day that he committed his first sin.

Had man not died spiritually that day there would be no physical death. The holy angels who have not sinned have not lost one bit of their physical life and glory. Spiritual death calls for the physical death as its punishment. A man who will not use God's creation in the way of serving Him, and to glorify Him, must not only be separated from that creation. He must be punished for every sin that he committed.

We must not take the unscriptural position that physical death brings the existence of man to an end. Man's soul never dies in the sense that its existence comes to an end. It dies in the sense that it loses all its ability to do anything that is right in God's sight. Man loses all ability to keep God's law until and unless he is born again. And that means that he receives a new life for his soul. In fact, what Jesus said to Nicodemus actually is that except a man be born from above, he cannot even see that there is a kingdom of heaven. Just go a few verses farther. In John 3:31 we read, "He that cometh from above is above all." Strikingly enough, the word here translated as "above" is the same word that is translated in John 3:3 as "again." For the same Greek word appears in both of these verses. And, of course, being born from above does make one born again. His first birth is from a life that is here below.

We must insist that Adam and Eve died spiritually the day that they ate of the forbidden fruit. Satan got them to turn away

from God, and in fact to try to take His place. Do not minimize that awful sin of Adam and Eve. They tried to become gods who decide what is good and what is evil. They decided that God is a liar, and that Satan spoke the truth when he said that they would not die but would "be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5). They decided to push God aside. They could not, but that is the awfulness of their sin. They wanted nothing to do with Him, since He was trying (so Satan made them believe) to deny them the fleshly joy they wanted. It was no little sin but that which revealed that man wanted to commit all the sins that we see in the world around us today. All these sins are but aspects of that first sin. Sin always reveals spiritual death. It reveals that man wants to kill God and get rid of Him!

All this makes it possible for us to see and understand the development of sin that has been in the world since that day. Adam's and Eve's first sin reveals why Cain killed Abel, why Lamech killed a man and took to himself more than one wife, and why there followed all the sin that brought forth the flood, and will bring forth the awful devilishness in the days of the anti-christ, when, according to II Thessalonians 2:4 and Revelation 13:6, he will exalt himself above all that is called God, sit in the temple as though he is God, and blaspheme His name. Adam's sin was a shadow of what is here today and is still coming as far as sin is concerned.

Adam's sin explains why God said before the flood that EVERY imagination of the thoughts of man were ONLY evil CONTINUALLY (Genesis 6:5). We err greatly, and walk in the sin Adam introduced, when we take the position that God spoke an untruth when He said that man

would DIE the day he committed the first sin! It is not true that men come into this world with ability to do some things that from a spiritual point of view are good works. He may do things that please God, because in those works God's counsel is being fulfilled. The crucifixion of Christ was a devilish deed; but it pleased God to have it happen for our salvation. Spiritually dead men just cannot do one brief work that pleases God from a spiritual point of view. And when Jesus said that a man must receive a new life — that is what it means to be born again, or born from above — before he can even see that there is a kingdom of heaven, He teaches us that we do not have that life and are spiritually dead.

What is more, even as no dead man can raise himself, or raise any one else by his words, so no man already spiritually alive, by a rebirth which God caused to take place, can truthfully say that he accepted Christ. Dead men just cannot do that. No person who ever came into this world can rightfully say that he asked his parents to bring him forth. Arminians, with their idea that man fulfills conditions and must take the first step of accepting Christ in order to be saved, also commit Adam's sin. That theory of Arminianism makes God dependent upon man. God would like to save him; but man is the one who decides and — though spiritually dead — performs that important act of letting God do what He, the almighty God, wants to do, but depends upon the works of dead people to get His way.

Now, we will the Lord willing come to this later, but we are very swiftly approaching the days of which the godlessness, the devilry that brought forth the punishment of the flood was but a shadow. Those days lie just



around the corner for us, and in fact they are here in a far greater measure and in more vile deeds. Sin developed rapidly those first 1600 years of man's existence, from the day man did die spiritually and could only bring forth children who were spiritually dead. But in the almost 4,400 years since that flood, sin has developed tremendously, so that we can expect shortly that of which the flood was only a shadow. A few people will be saved by Christ when He returns. But the host of them that died at the flood is a small percentage of the hoards in the kingdom of the antichrist, who will begin to know the agony and torment of hell.

The homosexual wickedness that brought down fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah is not only much more widespread today but is also allowed and approved of by governments, whose calling it is to keep God's commandments. No government may have laws and constitutions that ignore and approve of acts of breaking God's law. Government also must have no god before Jehovah! Should governments provide financial support for the murder of unborn babies? Should governments approve of the research for a cure for the deadly disease of AIDS — not simply for those who by a blood transfusion — not by their own sin — contracted the disease? The purpose of mankind today is to find a cure so that men can commit the sin and escape the punishment. They cannot. Death may be delayed by a cure that is discovered. But no man can keep the sinner from going to hell for his sins, when he enters into physical death.

What reveals how greatly sin developed in the first 1600 years when man was on this earth is to be seen in the fact that all during those 120 years during which

Noah was building the ark, and during the seven days when he and his family were in the ark before the rain began to fall, not one person believed Noah's word about the punishment God was going to send. Even when the rain began to fall, not one person ran to the ark and began to knock on the door. They laughed those seven days under clear blue sky and made their sinful and foolish ridicule of Noah and his family. Sin had developed greatly and rapidly.

That it took Noah 120 years to build the ark should not make us question this truth and fall into the unbiblical position of theistic evolution. In Noah's day they did not have the tools we have, nor the electrical power that makes things so much easier and swifter. But consider also that with the tremendous strides man has made in invention and discovery of the power God put in this creation, that all this is being used by man in many sinful ways that were impossible in the days before that flood. If then every imagination of the heart of man was only evil continually, what an awful world does the holy God of our salvation see today! How far and swiftly can man not reveal his sins by printed material, radio and television, to say nothing of tape recordings and VCRs. Things are not getting better. Christian nations are allowing more antichristian activity than in days of the past. Rather than boldly to curse and swear in years gone by, by fully printing the words, they went only as far as writing the d—, although they meant damn. Words of sexual suggestiveness and deeds of fornication are today used so freely and openly that one wonders whether he is living in Sodom and Gomorrah or in what calls itself God's Jerusalem. The Sabbath is so openly violated, and wicked

works are allowed and openly performed with church approval. If the world was ready for judgment in Noah's day, surely it is ready for the final judgment today. And the woe that falls upon man when Christ returns will be more terrifying for the world than the shadow judgment that the unbelievers saw in Noah's day.

One thing we had better hold on to is that we are rushing toward the days of the antichrist and the final judgment which will fall upon the whole world. The earth does not rotate one hour faster, and our days are still twenty-four hours long with sixty minutes in each hour.

We do well, therefore, to live close to God's Word. These shadows of things to come are presented to us and preserved for us in Scripture. It must not be a closed book for us. It must not be a book occasionally used, and read without thought. It is so easy to read the newspaper and news magazines, to listen to the radio and watch the newscasts on TV, and leave God's book closed. It is more satisfying to hear what men have to say about what is happening all around us. In fact, count once the minutes you spend every day reading God's Word and studying it. Compare that with the time you spend reading what worldly men wrote, or hearing what they spoke about world events.

Now there are shadows presented to us in God's Word which make it plain to the child of God, who has spiritual eyesight, that the judgment day is coming, and is not far away. As pointed out before, the shadow of an huge airplane becomes bigger and bigger as the plane approaches the land. And we ought to see by all that which God caused to fall upon Sodom and Gomorrah, and upon the kingdom of Judah when



Nebuchadnezzar came and took that kingdom away from the Israelites that God punishes sin. These were shadows of what lies ahead of us and is coming down upon this earth.

But remember that a shadow can bring benefits and blessings to the believer, even as there are shadows of that which will hurt the unbelievers. A shadow can make it hard for one to read, because of the poorer light. But there is also comfort and coolness caused by a shadow that

protects from the burning sun. And the return of Christ will be a wonderful thing for the true church. The shadow of His coming should encourage and comfort us. The wars and rumors of wars, the earthquakes in diverse places, the famines and pestilences (Matthew 24:6, 7) cast a shadow of Christ coming for our blessed life in His coming kingdom. Let all these troubles and woes in the world today be seen as shadows which assure the child of God that Christ is coming for our glory.

Iniquity abounds today. Much that calls itself church is joining the world and letting go of its doctrines and practices which God's Word gave it in the past. We are getting near the day of Christ's return.

As believers we do see by God's grace a blessed shadow of a perfect salvation that has been promised us, and is soon to be enjoyed by the whole church from Adam onward. Have no fear, but be thankful for what God is saying to us. □

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*All Around Us*  
Rev. Gise VanBaren

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## Old Fashioned Values? C.R.C. Yearbook 1989

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### Old Fashioned Values?

During the past number of years there has been an attempt to remove religion and Christian morality from all public institutions. Prayer is not allowed in public schools (though one does wonder what kind of prayers could be uttered in schools with students of various religious backgrounds — or no religious background whatsoever). It is not permitted to post the ten commandments on the walls of the public schools. The scriptures are not to be read or studied as part of devotions within these schools. Attempts are being made to remove any religious slogans from the coins (as: in God we trust).

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This is being done under the claim that there is to be separation between church and state. Religion is supposed to be practiced in the church or confines of the home. Education and government are to be "neutral," that is, have no ties whatsoever with any religion.

But the result has been that we have raised a generation with no moral values whatsoever. There is no longer any standard by which morality can be measured. The current theory is that what is "moral" is that which is decided upon by majority vote or established by court decree. Without any absolute standards, it is easy to understand how abortion can be approved, how drugs can permeate society, how crime of the most evil sort can take place.

Some are even beginning to recognize the sad consequences for a society which has no

standard of morality. Those who express concern are not interested, likely, to return to the standard of morality which God sets forth in Scripture. Yet these know that some absolute standard must be recognized.

Cal Thomas, a nationally syndicated columnist, wrote in the *Grand Rapids Press*, April 18, 1989:

*At a news conference announcing the administration's strategy, Attorney General Richard Thornburgh touched on the ultimate solution to the drug problem. He said that only the restoration of "values" in America would break the siege on America's cities.*

*I agree. The government's renewed emphasis on fighting drugs will fail if it is not accompanied by restoration of standards for belief and behavior in our children that the national Education Association once viewed as gospel . . .*



*The fact is, it will take nothing short of a national assault on "crime, wrongdoing, evil and sin" to reverse the process. But in order for that to occur, a generation must again embrace the standard by which lawfulness, rightdoing, the good and righteousness are measured.*

*In pressing for the rights of everyone to live by his own standards, so-called civil libertarians have created a cultural Three Mile Island, whose fallout has infected us all. What has the abandonment of moral and ethical standards produced? For one, a society so racked by drug violence and abuse that the president declares a national crisis. Unrestrained freedom uninformed by standards has proved to be an empty and dangerous philosophy. The nation should return to what was once a self-evident truth, even to the motion-picture industry which, like the educational establishment, saw itself 40 years ago as "directly responsible for spiritual or moral progress, for higher types of social life and for much correct thinking."*

*The Reader's Digest, May, 1989, presents several articles which show the same line of thought. In "The Trouble with Divorce," Diane Medved states:*

*In my private practice as a marriage counselor and psychologist, I've helped plenty of struggling couples through separation and "liberation." I originally thought that staying together in turmoil was more traumatic than making the break, that striking down taboos about divorce was part of modern enlightenment.*

*I was wrong. As I shifted my professional focus to divorced individuals, the truth was difficult to avoid: treating divorce as "morally neutral" — an option no better or worse than staying married — was irreparably damaging to the very people I wanted to help . . .*

*. . . The knowledge gained during the sexual and social exploration of the '60s and '70s should have proved to us the sanity of many rules we've discarded.*

*There are sound benefits to the old-fashioned virtues that foster a faithful marriage and a stable family. And those virtues are now beginning to regain popularity. Let's not ignore their lessons.*

*Another article, treating the subject of drug abuse, contains this statement:*

*. . . Dr. Nahas warns, "it's difficult to teach kids healthy habits in the absence of a moral message. Today in some countries — notably the United States — we've reached the point where it seems to be immoral to moralize."*

*Interesting indeed! It is true that none of the above writers direct the attention of the reader to Scripture or to the ten commandments. That, of course, is also their fatal error. There can be no proper morals nor morality apart from the demands of the absolute standard set forth in Scripture. It is also true that insisting on following the demands of Scripture apart from regeneration and conversion is an impossible demand. The depraved, dead sinner will not submit to the*

*requirements of God. Still, these writers do recognize that the problem today is the lack of proper standards for morality. The message of the church has been that there must be repentance and true conversion — thus a return to the Word of God. The church has those standards, and by God's grace, lives according to them. Whenever any depart from that Standard which God has given us, the sad consequences follow — which is becoming very evident in our own society. □*

## **C.R.C. Yearbook 1989**

The editor of the *Banner* presents a brief report on their 1989 Yearbook in the issue of May 1, 1989. The opening paragraph states:

*Yearbook 1989 is now available. Faithful readers of this annual manual will note that the total number of members in the Christian Reformed Church went down from 310,159 at the beginning of 1988 to 309,445 at the end of the year. Many different explanations will be offered for the decline . . .*

*I could offer possible reasons for that decline too, but that would serve no useful purpose. It is worthy of note that the last Synod of the C.R.C. set the goal of 400,000 members by the year 2000, I believe. At least in the year of 1988 they appeared to be headed in the wrong direction. □*

## **Decency and Order**

Rev. Ronald Cammenga

# **Duties of the Minister**

*Rev. Cammenga is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Loveland, Colorado.*

*"The office of the ministry is to continue in prayer and in the ministry of the Word, to dispense the sacraments, to watch over his*

*brethren, the elders and deacons, as well as the congregation, and finally, with the elders, to exercise church discipline and to see to it that every-*



*thing is done decently and in good order." Church Order, Article 16.*

### **Introduction**

This article concerns itself with the duties of the minister of the gospel. The article defines the work to which the minister is called, mentioning specifically several of his duties.

These duties of the minister are OFFICIAL duties. For this reason the article speaks of the "office" of the minister of the Word. The labor of the minister of the gospel is to be regarded as official labor in the church. To this labor he has been appointed by Christ. In this labor he works as the representative of and on behalf of Christ.

It is not the purpose of the article to list the duties of the minister exhaustively. Only the fundamental duties of the minister are mentioned. For a fuller treatment of the duties of the minister consult the *Formula Of Subscription*, the *Form For Ordination Of Ministers*, *Questions For Church Visitation*, and the *Ministerial Call Letter* in use in the Protestant Reformed Churches.

Generally the duties of the minister are described in the names by which this office is referred to in the Scriptures. Some of the more common designations of the office are: elder (I Tim. 5:17-19; I Pet. 5:1); minister (Rom. 15:16); pastor (Jer. 23:1, 2; Eph. 4:11); bishop (I Tim. 3:1); preacher (Rom. 10:14; II Tim. 4:2); evangelist (Eph. 4:11; II Tim. 4:5); teacher (Eph. 4:11; I Tim. 4:11); servant (II Cor. 4:5).

The duties mentioned in Article 16 can be distinguished in a twofold way. First, there are those duties which belong to the minister as minister of the gospel. Secondly, there are those duties which belong to the minister as an elder.

### **DUTIES OF THE MINISTER AS MINISTER**

The duties mentioned in Article 16 belong to the work of the minister in the public worship services of the congregation. The first duty that is mentioned is prayer. The prayers referred to are not the minister's own personal prayers, as important as these are in the life of every minister. But the prayers referred to are the prayers of the minister in public worship, the congregational prayers. This is an important aspect of the calling of the minister. Special attention is given to this calling of the minister in I Timothy 2:1-8. The importance of this duty comes out in the fact that it is mentioned first in the article.

The minister is also "to continue . . . in the ministry of the Word." The reference is to the official preaching of the gospel, the main duty of the minister. From a certain point of view, it can be said that this is the minister's only calling (cf. I Cor. 1:17, 18; II Tim. 4:1-5). Every other duty of the minister is only an aspect of and subservient to his main calling to preach the gospel.

The Synod of Wezel, 1568, stated concerning the calling of the minister:

*For it is beyond doubt that the office of ministers (whom Scripture calls shepherds and overseers, and sometimes also elders) consists predominantly of proclaiming and applying God's Word correctly, in public as well as in private, unto teaching, admonition, and comfort, according to the given circumstances.*

The minister himself, the consistory, and the members of the congregation must recognize that the chief task of the minister is preaching. Never must anything be permitted to interfere with or replace this task. With a view to this duty the minister must be diligent in studying God's Word and preparing his sermons. In

carrying out this calling he must regularly occupy the pulpit on the Sabbath Day.

The article also calls the minister to dispense the sacraments. The administration of the sacraments is closely connected to the minister's calling to preach the gospel. That connection is brought out by Christ in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19, 20; Mk. 16:15, 16) where He calls the disciples to preach and to baptize. Administration of the sacraments belongs to the official work of the minister of the gospel. Only one who is a minister of the gospel may administer the sacraments.

Although the minister is called actually to administer the sacraments, this does not rule out the supervision of the elders. Always the sacraments are to be administered under the strict supervision and careful oversight of the elders.

### **OTHER DUTIES NOT MENTIONED IN ARTICLE 16**

Besides these main duties of the minister, there are other duties not mentioned in this article.

An important duty is catechetical instruction. Reformed churches take the position that catechism instruction is official ministry of the Word. It is a means of grace especially adapted to the children and youth of the congregation. Because this is an official work of the ministry, catechism instruction should not be given over to others besides the minister of the gospel, as is often done today.

Another important duty of the minister is the visitation of the sick. This too is an official ministry of the Word. Although the visitation of the sick, the elderly, and the shut-ins is the duty of every member of the church (Matt. 25:34-40; James 1:27), and also belongs to the calling of the elders and deacons



(cf. *Form Of Ordination Of Elders And Deacons*), this is peculiarly the calling of the minister of the gospel. He is called to be a pastor to God's people. We need only think of Jesus' ministry of mercy to see that this belongs to the calling of the minister.

The Reformed Church of Geneva at the time of Calvin adopted the following with respect to the visitation of the sick:

*Because many are negligent to console themselves in God with His Word when they find themselves in necessity through illness, and consequently many die without any admonition or teaching, which is then more than ever salutary for man, for this reason we have decided and ordered that no one is to remain three full days confined to bed without seeing that the minister is notified, and that, when any wish a minister to come, they shall take care to call him at a convenient hour, so as not to distract him from that office in which he and his colleagues serve the Church in common. It is to remove all excuses that we have resolved on this course, and especially we enjoin that relations, friends, and guardians are not to wait until the man is at the point of death, since in this extremity consolations are for the most part of little avail. (Quoted from The Register Of The Company Of Pastors Of Geneva In The Time Of Calvin, edited and translated by Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, p. 46.)*

The Synod of Dordrecht, 1574, stated:

*Visiting the sick belongs to the office of the ministers of the Word, and it is risky to assign other persons to that task. Therefore, the ministers shall request the elders and deacons to help them with their task. They shall do so because their office in comparison with other Christians requires more with respect to visiting, comforting, and strengthening the sick, the poor, and members in need of comfort.*

An interesting question was put to this same Synod concerning whether or not a minister was obligated even to visit those members of his congregation who were suffering from the plague, thus exposing himself to the deadly disease. The answer of the Synod was:

*Since God has commanded to visit the sick and has not made a distinction between diseases, they are guilty if they, having been summoned to such persons, do not go. They must go since they do not know at the time that they are called what the problem is. However, the ministers must not act wrecklessly and carelessly in such cases, and if they find they are doing more harm than good, they should inform the consistory and ask for advice.*

Besides these labors, the following may also be mentioned as duties of the minister of the gospel: family visitation, officiating at weddings, conducting funerals, leading Bible study classes, pastoral counseling, serving on classical and denominational committees, etc. We will have opportunity to comment on many of these other labors in connection with subsequent articles in the *Church Order*.

#### **DUTIES OF THE MINISTER AS AN ELDER**

The minister of the gospel is also an elder, a teaching, not a ruling elder, but an elder for all that. The Scriptures make this clear. One passage is I Timothy 5:17: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine." The Apostle makes a clear distinction between two types of elders, both of whom "rule" in the New Testament church. Those who labor in the Word and doctrine, an obvious reference to ministers of the gospel, are also elders. In I Peter 5:1 the apostle Peter, a minister of the gospel, refers to himself as an elder: "The elders

which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder . . ."

The duty of the minister, as an elder, is "to watch over his brethren, the elders and deacons." This watching over of his fellow officebearers concerns not only their doctrine and life, but particularly their faithfulness in carrying out the duties of their office. This supervision is not due to the fact that the ministers have a higher or greater authority than the other officebearers. This is not the case in the Reformed system of church government. But this is an aspect of the mutual supervision that the officebearers exercise over each other. It is not only the calling of the minister to watch over the elders and deacons, but the calling of the elders and deacons to watch over each other and over the minister (cf. *Church Order*, Articles 23 and 81).

As an elder the minister has the calling to participate in church discipline. Because he is an elder, the minister is called to take part, along with the other elders, in this important aspect of the elders' work. A word of caution, however, is in order. Even though the minister must participate in the work of discipline, his office must still be kept distinct from the office of the ruling elder. It is wise, in this regard, that the actual work of discipline, the committee meetings that are involved, be conducted by the elders. The minister's participation in Christian discipline should be limited to the pulpit and to the consistory room.

It also falls to the minister that he ". . . see to it that everything is done decently and in good order." A special responsibility rests with the minister to see to it that matters in the congregation and in the consistory are handled properly. Decently and in good order means according to the principles of the Word of God



and the articles of the *Church Order*. As the one charged by the Word of God with leading the congregation in worship, it is the calling of the minister to see to it

that the church's worship is characterized by decency and good order. As the president of the consistory, it is his calling to see

to it that all matters brought before the consistory are dealt with in decency and good order. □

## *In His Fear* Rev. Arie denHartog

# Speaking the Truth in Love

The Lord has redeemed us as His people in order that we might testify of His truth for the glory of His name. We are to do this out of love for God. We must do this as individual Christians and also corporately as the church of Jesus Christ. This is a great calling which we must fulfill by His grace and Holy Spirit.

Love and truth are both from God. The Lord is the source and standard of them both. There is neither love nor truth without God. Love and truth are inseparably related to each other. God is the God of truth. He is also the God of love. The truth reveals the glory and greatness of our God. God has made His truth known in the greatness of His love in Christ Jesus. He created all things that they might reveal His glory and truth. God made man in His own image so that He could know the true God and speak of Him in love and for His glory.

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*Rev. denHartog is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Randolph, Wisconsin.*

God has revealed His glorious truth to His special chosen people. When man fell he lost the truth of God. His understanding was darkened. He believed and followed after the lie of the devil. The devil is the father of lies who deceived the whole world. Fallen man cannot and does not know the truth of God. He loves darkness rather than light. He denies the true God and makes unto himself a false idol god that he worships and serves. He professes himself to be wise but he has become a fool. Proud fallen man continues to imagine that his own mind is the ultimate standard of all truth. He hates and denies the true God. From fallen man's corrupt mind proceeds all false religion and human philosophy.

After the fall God has revealed Himself in a more glorious and wonderful way in His Son Jesus Christ. He has revealed the glory and greatness of His truth in His sovereign and gracious salvation of His people. God has revealed His truth to His people whom He has chosen and loved with an everlasting love. He has formed His people as His own and made Himself known to them as their God and Father. He translated His chosen people from darkness into His marvelous light. By the

wonder of regeneration He gives to His people a new heart and mind whereby they can know Him and the truth that is in Him. The knowledge of the true God is the very essence of the blessedness of life eternal. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). God has caused His truth to be preached throughout the world. He has preserved His truth by causing it to be infallibly recorded by the wonder of inspiration in the Bible.

We who are the people of God must know and confess His truth in the world. God's people are His witnesses. We must speak the truth first of all out of love for God. If we love God we will love to speak His truth. If we love God we desire that God should be glorified. God is glorified when His truth is known and confessed and maintained by His people in the world.

The calling of the Christian to speak the truth of God will always involve a great spiritual struggle. That struggle will be with the devil and with wicked men. The devil always opposes the truth of God. He is the great enemy of God. He does all in his power to contradict and oppose the truth of God. He teaches men



false doctrine and lies. He is the author of all false religions and pagan philosophies. He influences men to oppose the church and the children of God in their testimony of the truth. Therefore when the Christian seeks to speak the truth of God he will be immediately contradicted and opposed, ridiculed and persecuted by the world which hates the truth of God.

The opposition to the truth of God takes on various forms. It can take the form of pagan philosophy and heathen religion. We in America are not often faced with this form of opposition to the truth. In America the opposition takes on the form of modern day worldly philosophy that arises in nominal Christian nations. This opposition is very subtle and attractive. The world's philosophies are presented in such a way that they seem so intellectually respectable. They can be "proven" by the world's greatest scientists and by high sounding and technical experimentation. They are proposed by the great and most glorious of men. They are believed by the vast majority of intellectually respectable people in the world. They are supported by carefully orchestrated studies and surveys in the world.

The strongest opposition to the truth of God always comes from modern apostate Christendom. The false church presents the lie as though it is the truth. It uses many of the Bible's terms. It pretends to believe in God and His Son Jesus Christ. It often uses the name of Jesus and often speaks of salvation in Jesus. But the false church has entirely changed the meaning of the truth of God. It has in reality substituted the philosophy of men for the truth of God. It does not glory in God but in the wisdom of men. It proposes a doctrine that does not glorify God but rather exalts the

greatness and goodness of men. It denies that sin is indeed a great offense against the holy majesty of God and minimizes the need of salvation.

One of the most common forms of opposition to the truth in our day is the notion that truth is relative. According to this notion, there is no such thing as objective truth. No one knows the truth absolutely. Truth changes. Every age has its own understanding of the truth. Everyone has a right to believe what he wills. We must be tolerant of everyone's belief. Each man is for himself the standard of truth. Those who hold this notion in its most extreme form take the position that we must tolerate all other religions and opinions of men. All religions after all have some elements of truth in them. None has an absolute corner on the truth. One of the greatest principles of supposed godliness in America is the tolerance of everyone and the appreciation of everyone's personal beliefs. Tolerance is so nice and kind. Tolerance avoids strife and conflict among men. Tolerance will yield peace and harmony among all men. But all of this is vain. All of this will result in a denial of God and His truth.

Others will pretend at least to limit truth to the Christian religion, though they will be mild in condemning false religions. But they say that there are many different interpretations of Christian doctrine. There is none that is absolutely right. All have their strengths and shortcomings. Everyone has the "right" to interpret the Bible in his own way. We must appreciate everyone's opinions and beliefs as long as they are sincere. There are after all many different possible interpretations of the Bible, and none is to be condemned as being absolutely wrong. But this notion also ultimately leads to the denial

of the truth of God and makes man's private interpretation the absolute standard of the truth.

The Christian must know and maintain and confess the truth of God. That is his great calling. God alone is the absolute standard of the truth. God has revealed the truth in His Word, the Bible. His truth can be known by His people. It can be known by every Spirit-filled child of God who humbly and earnestly searches the scriptures. God has revealed His truth in a simple and plain manner so that the simplest of His children can know and understand it. Knowing the truth of God we must speak of that truth in love.

Speaking the truth will always involve at the same time the calling to oppose and contradict the lie. That is inevitable. One often hears in our day the notion that in our speaking the truth we must always only be positive. We must never condemn other people for what they believe. We must never categorically say that someone is wrong in what he believes. There is no need of this kind of thing. It is unpleasant. There is really no such thing as heresy any more today. There is only difference of opinion and perspective. We need not be negative. This whole line of thinking however is wrong. It is contrary to the Bible. In the Bible we find the prophets and apostles constantly condemning false doctrine. The Lord Jesus Himself did plenty of that because it was necessary. He soundly condemned the false teachings of the Scribes and Pharisees. Much of the letters of the apostle Paul are polemics against false doctrines. Speaking the truth in love for God means that we oppose and contradict all that which denies the truth of God and seeks to rob God of the glory of His truth.

We must speak the truth of God in love to our neighbors. We



are called to love our neighbor. If we truly love our neighbor we may not be silent before him with regard to the truth of God. There is no greater love for our neighbor than to bring to him the truth of God and of His salvation in Jesus Christ. Love for our neighbor is not tolerating the humanistic and worldly philosophy that he holds to and lives by. Love for our neighbor is not allowing him to continue in the lie and in sin to his own destruction. This kind of thing might result in external and humanistic peace and friendship. But this is not love for our neighbor. In order to speak the truth in love with our neighbor we must avoid two great evils. We must avoid the evil of compromising the truth only to maintain peace and

friendship with our neighbor. We must avoid the great evil of speaking the truth without love. We do the latter when we speak the truth out of a spirit of pride and exalting our own wisdom. We may speak of the truth of God only in deepest humility, acknowledging that this truth is not ours but God's only. We speak the truth in love when we have genuine compassion for our neighbor and a sincere desire to do him good and not evil. We speak the truth in love to our neighbor when we speak with genuine sympathy for the situation of our neighbor and are ready to become all things to all men in order that by some means we might gain some. We speak the truth in love when we speak with carefulness so that we

might present the truth of God faithfully and in the best possible manner to our neighbor, always with the highest purpose that God might be glorified and His people might be saved.

We are to speak the truth in love in the midst of the communion of the saints. By means of the truth we must seek to admonish and exhort and comfort one another in the church of God. In this manner the saints of God edify one another and the whole church grows up unto the measure of the fulness of the stature of Christ. Speaking the truth in love is the most beautiful manifestation of the communion of the saints. God delights in such speaking and blesses His saints together when they so speak to one another. □

## Bible Study Guide

Rev. Jason Kortering

# I & II Samuel — The Beginning of the Kingdom (2)

We begin our outline of the books of I and II Samuel by following the three main divisions — chapters 1-12 which deal with the history of Samuel; chapters 13-31 which cover the rule of Saul; and chapters 1-24 of II Samuel which give us the details of David's reign as king.

### BRIEF OUTLINE

1. The history of Samuel as he restores the theocracy in Israel (chapters 1-12).

*Rev. Kortering is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Grandville, Michigan.*

A man of Ephraim, Elkanah, had taken two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah was barren. Yearly, Elkanah went to the house of the Lord at Shiloh to sacrifice. During this time he showed his love to Hannah by giving her a worthy portion of the meal, for he knew that she was of troubled soul, being childless. Peninnah added to her woe by mocking her during these annual pilgrimages, so much so that she wept during the meal. Elkanah tried to comfort her by asking, "am not I better to thee

than ten sons?" (1:1-8).

Hannah left the table and prayed to God in bitterness of soul, asking for a son. She vowed to the Lord that if He would give her a son, she would return him to the Lord all the days of his life. Eli the priest interpreted her action as drunkenness and admonished her to put away her wine. She in turn informed him of her prayer and he encouraged her to go in peace and the God of Israel grant her petition. As a result of this her countenance was no more sad (1:9-18).

They returned home to Ramah



and Hannah soon conceived and bore a son, Samuel, "for I have asked him of the Lord." During the subsequent annual pilgrimages to Shiloh, Hannah remained home as she prepared Samuel for the day she would take him to the temple that he might abide there forever.

This time came when she had weaned him. She and Elkanah traveled to Shiloh and gave him to Eli the priest in fulfillment of her vow (1:19-28). She expressed her gratitude to God in a song of praise, in which she acknowledged that God had done great things. He maketh the barren to bear seven and she that hath many children is waxed feeble (2:1-10).

Samuel began to minister unto the Lord before Eli, the priest. He had to contend with the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, who were sons of Belial, who knew not the Lord. They demonstrated their contempt for the sacrifice by forcefully taking meat from the people, even when it was still raw, rather than using what remained. This made the people abhor the offerings. They even lay with the women that assembled at the tabernacle (2:11-17, 22). Samuel was of a different spirit. He grew and was in favor both with the Lord and with men.

When Samuel's parents came yearly to sacrifice and his mother brought him a little coat, Eli blessed them and said to Hannah, the Lord give thee seed. She became the mother of 3 sons and 2 daughters (2:18-21, 26).

Eli by now was very old and he heard about the evil done by his sons. He admonished them, but failed to discipline them or remove them from the priesthood. A man of God came to Eli to admonish him for honoring his sons above Jehovah. He warned him that his household would be cut off and his two sons would

die in one day, (2:22-36).

Samuel continued to minister before the Lord in the temple. The word of the Lord was precious and there was no open vision. Samuel received his first call from God when he had lain down to sleep. Three times he heard his name called and he went to Eli, only to learn that Eli had not called him. Eli instructed him to say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." The Lord then told Samuel that He would bring to pass the judgment He had pronounced upon the house of Eli for his refusal to restrain his evil sons. The next morning Eli asked him about this and Samuel told him all. From this time forth, the Lord appeared to Samuel, and all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of Jehovah (3:1-21).

The judgment that fell upon the house of Eli came in connection with Israel's battle with the Philistines. Israel was in Ebenezer and the Philistines were in Aphek. When the first attack was made, 4000 men of Israel were slain. Israel decided to fetch the ark out of the tabernacle in Shiloh. When the sons of Eli brought it into the midst of the camp, the Israelites shouted, and that struck fear in the hearts of the Philistines. With greater determination they fought. The result being that 30,000 footmen of Israel were killed, the ark was taken, and Hophni and Phinehas were slain.

When the messenger of this sad news came to Eli at Shiloh, the 98 year old man fell back from off the seat and broke his neck and died. The wife of Phinehas was with child. When she heard that her husband was dead she went into labor and died in childbirth. She named her child Ichabod, the glory is departed from Israel (4:1-22).

The Philistines placed the ark

of God in the temple of Dagon at Ashdod. The image fell down twice before the ark. During the second time the head and palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold. The Lord struck the men of Ashdod with emerods and many died. The Philistines realized it was the hand of God because of the ark, so they carried the ark to Gath. The same thing happened there and also in Ekron (5:1-12).

After the ark was in the land of the Philistines for seven months, the priests and diviners among them suggested they return the ark to Israel and fill it with an offering (5 golden emerods, 5 golden mice, one for each of the lords of the Philistines). They should place it upon a new cart drawn by 2 milk cows, but the calves had to stay in the stall. If the cows take the ark to Israel they will know that it was Jehovah who sent the plagues and not chance. The cows took the ark straight to Bethshemesh. The men were in the fields harvesting at the time. They rejoiced to see the ark. They cut up the wood and offered the cows as a burnt offering. The Levites placed the ark upon the great stone in the field of Joshua.

When the lords of the Philistines saw this, they returned. But the men of Bethshemesh looked into the ark and Jehovah smote them, killing 50,070 men. In desperation they sent notice to Kirjathjearim to come and fetch the ark. They came and placed the ark in the house of Abinadab and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark. The ark remained there for 20 years (6:1-7:3).

Samuel exhorted Israel to put away the strange gods, Baalim and Ashtaroth, and to return to the worship of Jehovah with the assurance that God would deliver them from the Philistines. As Samuel prayed and offered



sacrifice at Mizpeh, the people repented and the Lord thundered upon the Philistines and they were smitten before Israel. Samuel erected the stone with the name, Ebenezer, hitherto hath the Lord helped us. The cities from Ekron unto Gath were restored to Israel. Mention is made of the judgeship of Samuel, and of his yearly circuit from Bethel to Gilgal to Mizpeh to Ramah where he lived (7:4-17).

When Samuel was old he made his sons Joel and Abiah judges in Beersheba. They were wicked and sought after money and took bribes and perverted judgment. This prompted the elders of Israel to come to Ramah and ask Samuel to make a king like all the nations (8:1-5). Samuel took his displeasure to the Lord and He instructed Samuel to give them their request, only he should protest solemnly. This Samuel did and warned the people that such a king would make slaves of their children and would tax them heavily so that they would cry to Jehovah, but He would not hear. The people persisted in their request (8:6-22).

Reference is made to Kish, father of Saul, whose asses were lost. He requested of his son, a choice young man and goodly, that he take one of the servants and seek the asses. When they arrived at the city of Zuph, Saul was of a mind to return to his father. The servant suggested he visit a prophet (which before was called a seer) in the city and perhaps he could assist in finding the asses. With a fourth part of a shekel in hand, Saul encountered the maidens going out to draw water. They guided him to the place of sacrifice where they met Samuel.

The Lord had told Samuel ahead of time to expect Saul and to anoint him as king. Samuel assured Saul the asses were found and greeted him as the

"desire of all Israel" (9:1-24). They spent the entire day and night together. When they walked alone outside the city, Samuel poured a vial of oil upon Saul and said, "The Lord hath anointed thee captain over his inheritance." He gave him signs to prove that God had called him: first, two men would meet him at Rachel's sepulchre and inform him that the asses were found. Second, he would meet three men in the plain of Tabor, on their way to sacrifice, and they would give two loaves of bread to Saul. Finally, at the garrison of the Philistines, a company of prophets would meet him, they would prophesy, and the Spirit of the Lord would come on Saul and he would prophesy with them. He was to go to Gilgal and wait seven days for Samuel to join him there. All these things took place as Samuel had said (9:25-10:16).

While Israel was gathered at Mizpeh, Samuel warned them that they had rejected God as being their king. The new king was chosen by casting of lots. The tribe of Benjamin, the family of Matri, Saul the son of Kish was taken. Saul hid among the stuff and God revealed to them his location so they could find him. As they took him to Samuel they

saw that he was taller than all the people from the shoulders upward. The duties of his rule were written in a book. Saul returned to Gibeah and the children of Belial rejected him (10:17-27).

Nahash the Ammonite came to Jabeshgilead and offered to make a covenant of peace with them if he could thrust out their right eyes. During the seven days of waiting they contacted Saul who in turn raised an army of 300,000 men of Israel and 30,000 of Judah and completely destroyed the Ammonites. The people were encouraged and wanted to kill all who had rejected Saul. Saul prevented this and the kingdom was renewed at Gilgal (11:1-15).

Samuel testified of his faithful ministry among the people. They agreed that their request for a king was not due to the failure of Samuel. He rehearsed before them the care of God during all the years of their history. He warned them to obey Jehovah, and by the sign of the thunderstorm during wheat harvest the people were brought to fear Jehovah greatly. He called them to repent and be confident that Jehovah would not forsake His covenant; and he assured them that he would continue to pray for them (12:1-25). □

## Book Review

**AN ANTIDOTE AGAINST ARMINIANISM**, by Christopher Ness; Still Waters Revival Books, 1988; 126 pp.; \$6.95. Available by mail from Still Waters Revival Books, 12810-126 St., Edmonton, AB, Canada T5L 0Y1 (Reviewed by the Editor).

This is the most recent reprint of the vigorous refutation of the

five points of Arminianism originally published in 1700. Ness, an English preacher, demolished the Arminian errors of conditional election, universal atonement, free will, and the falling away of saints, showing that these teachings are both unbiblical and absurd. At the same time, he defended the Reformed



doctrines of salvation by grace alone against which the Arminian errors were directed.

Brief, clear, and pointed, this short book will serve well to refresh Reformed people in the "five points of Calvinism" and to remind them of the God-dishonoring and comfort-robbing character of the only alternative, "Arminianism." The book can also be put into the hands of one who thinks after the Arminian fashion (setting up "the rotten Dagon of man's freewill, before or above the ark of God's special predestinating grace," as Ness pungently puts it) to point out to him the issues involved in his confession of salvation by free will and, God being gracious, to serve as an "antidote" against that spiritual disease.

Ness is not the best opponent of the Arminian heresy, however. He accepted a "natural grace" and a "supernatural common grace" (pp. 102 ff.). More than once, he evaded Arminian objections to Reformed doctrine by twisting Scripture. For example,

his response to the Arminian appeal to Matthew 23:37, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often would I have gathered thy children . . .," was to deny that the gathering spoken of is a work of salvation:

*This gathering does not design a gathering of Jews to Christ internally, by the Spirit and grace of God; but a gathering of them externally, to hear Him preach, so that they might be brought to an assent unto Him as the Messiah (pp. 98, 99).*

A poor defense of the truth is the worst attack upon it. Also, Ness was a genuine hyper-Calvinist (I say "genuine" because in our day "hyper-Calvinist" is the name given to the few who do still boldly and consistently confess the "five points of Calvinism"). Ness, like John Gill whom he quotes, did not believe that God externally called, or commanded, both reprobate and elect to believe in Jesus Christ. Answering the Arminian objection to particular redemption, that it is the duty of all men to believe, Ness argued that "what

is God's, as a gift to bestow, cannot be man's duty to perform . . ." (p. 72, 73). For Ness, God does not command all men to believe in Jesus, only elect, regenerated men. Therefore, Ness could also write, "When God giveth command to spiritual acts He granteth power to obey the same" (p. 54).

The book is marred by many annoying typographical mistakes: "distributely" for "distributively" (p. 73); "everlasting" (p. 73); "persuasion" for "persuasion" (p. 93); "bon" for "bonds" (p. 115); "convenanted" for "covenanted" (p. 116); and others. All those who have been reprinting *An Antidote* must be copying the same original without correcting the errors in that original. I have also a 1982 edition of the book, published in West Virginia. It has all the same typos on the very same pages. If Still Waters does a second printing, it ought to see to a thorough proof-reading of the original. □

## Report of Classis East

May 10, 1989  
Hudsonville Protestant  
Reformed Church

Classis East met in regular session on Wednesday, May 10, 1989 at the Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church. All the churches were represented by two delegates. Norristown, having been organized by the January, 1989 classis, was represented by delegates for the first time.

Classis' time was devoted primarily to consideration of protests from four brothers from

Southwest who protested the decisions taken by the January classis in regard to their appeals re the erection of a cross in the sanctuary of Southwest Church. Classis had decided in January not to sustain these brethren. Again in this session, classis decided that the January classis had acted properly and that the issues of their protests had been treated by the January classis. Classis, therefore, did not sustain the protests of these brothers. One of the protests was not

treated since it did not meet the criteria of Article 31 of the Church Order.

Requests for classical appointments were granted for Holland, Faith, and Norristown (in the absence of their pastor who will be working in Ireland for six months). The following schedules were adopted: HOLLAND: June 4 - Woudenberg, June 11 - Key, June 18 - Joostens, July 2 - Gritters, July 9 - Slopesma, July 23 - Kortering. FAITH: June 4 - Kamps, June 11 - Van Baren, June 25 - Kortering, July 2



-Kamps, July 9 - Woudenberg,  
July 16 - Joostens, August 6  
-Slopsema, August 13 - Wouden-  
berg, August 20 - Gritters, August  
27 - Bruinsma, September 10  
-Flikkema, September 17  
-Slopsema, September 24 - Grit-

ters. NORRISTOWN: September  
16, 23 - Key, August 6, 13  
-Kamps, August 20 - Flikkema,  
September 3, 10 - Van Baren,  
September 24, October 1 -Kort-  
ing.

The expenses of this classis

amounted to \$1226.39. Classis  
will meet next on Wednesday,  
September 13, 1989 at First  
Church, Grand Rapids.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jon J. Huiskens  
Stated Clerk ☐

## News From Our Churches

Mr. Benjamin Wigger

July 1, 1989

### MINISTERIAL CALLS

From a duo of Revs. A. den Hartog and M. DeVries, the congregation of First Church in Grand Rapids, MI extended a call to Pastor den Hartog to serve as missionary to Jamaica.

Rev. Ron Hanko, currently of Houston, TX has received the call from our Pella congregation in Pella, IA.

Rev. Slopsema declined the call he received from Faith Church in Jenison, MI, and Rev. Gritters declined the call from Peace in Lynwood, IL.

Faith has formed the following trio: Revs. A. den Hartog, R. Dykstra, and K. Koole.

Peace has the trio: Revs. A. den Hartog, T. Miersma, and G. Van Baren.

Rev. R. Van Overloop, who served as our churches' home missionary to the group in Northwest Chicago until their organization into an instituted congregation (the Bethel P.R.C.), has accepted the call extended to him to become their first pastor.

We also extend our somewhat belated congratulations to Rev. C. Hanko, who celebrated his 82nd birthday on May 19. May he as well as all of our "retired" ministers continue to enjoy the blessings of God through all of their days. Rev. C. Hanko was hospitalized in late May in Florida. He had experienced a faintness and rapid heartbeat. He was released later that week and tests showed no problems which could account for this.

### CHURCH ACTIVITIES

The Consistory and Congregation of our Lynden P.R.C. in Lynden, WA wrote a letter to Professor and Mrs. Hoeksema, expressing their prayers for God's mercies upon them in this time of affliction, and their thanks to God for Prof. Hoeksema's years of service in our churches. All Lynden's members were asked to sign this letter before it was sent on to Michigan.

On May 17, Missionary Steve Houck presented a lecture on the subject, "A Reformed Look at the New Age Movement" in the Westminster Reformed Presbyterian Church in Westminster, CO, a community which is near Denver, CO. This effort was sponsored by the Church Extension

Committee of our Loveland P.R.C. in Loveland, CO.

While Rev. Houck was laboring in Colorado, Rev. Camminga, Loveland's pastor, was taking part in a conference on eschatology sponsored by the Norristown P.R.C. in Norristown, PA. Five lectures were given dealing with the theme, "The Coming of the Kingdom." Besides Pastor Camminga, Rev. Ken Hanko (Norristown's pastor) and Prof. H. Hanko also spoke.

Topics and speakers were as follows: "The Church One, From Jews and Gentiles," Prof. Hanko; "Optimism Versus Pessimism?" Pastor K. Hanko; "Thy Kingdom Come, or Biblical Amillennialism," Pastor Camminga; "Heaven: Father's House," Prof. Hanko; and "Depart From Me, or the Reformed Doctrine of Hell," Pastor Camminga.

On Sunday, May 21, Pastor Camminga preached in the Sovereign Grace Church of Morrill, Nebraska, at their request and with the approval of his consistory. Rev. Camminga reports that the preaching was well received. And on that following Wednesday Rev. Houck lectured in Morrill on the "New Age Movement."

The Consistory of the Cove-

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



nant P.R.C. in Wyckoff, NJ approved the establishment of a "Church Extension Committee."

And from our "First time ever announcements":

There was a combined meeting of the Bethel, Peace, and South Holland P.R.C. societies held in the chapel of the Illiana High School in South Holland, IL. They studied James 4. I say first time, because a year ago two of those churches, Bethel and Peace, were not yet organized.

There was a note on a recent bulletin of the Peace P.R.C. in Lynwood, IL thanking the congregation of their "mother church," the South Holland P.R.C., for having received the balance of the gift of \$125,000.00, whereupon the closing and purchase of their parsonage became a blessed realization.

### SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

On Saturday, May 13, the Covenant Christian High School Building Fund Boosters sponsored a Bike-a-thon. The route selected led down Port Sheldon Road from Hudsonville, MI to Kirk Park on Lake Michigan and back to Hudsonville, a total of 50 miles. The event started at 8:30 A.M., with all the bikers arriving at Lake Michigan by 11:00 A.M. After lunch and rest, the bikers returned by the same route to Hudsonville. Each rider was supposed to raise funds for Covenant by getting as many sponsors lined up as possible, with these sponsors contributing a certain amount for each mile ridden.

Ninety people took part in this bike-a-thon. The youngest participant was an 11 year old boy, the oldest a 58 year old woman. From these 90 people \$8,000.00

was raised for the Covenant Building Fund.

The day provided an excellent opportunity for healthy exercise and Christian fellowship for all who came along. □

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Consistory of the Doon, Iowa, Protestant Reformed Church would like to express their Christian sympathy to its fellow-member, Elder Joawn Van Oort and family in the loss of his father, HENRY VAN OORT.

May our Heavenly Father comfort the bereaved with the assurance that He doeth all things well.

Rev. R. Dykstra, Pres.  
Peter Van Den Top, Clerk

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Mens Society of the Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church expresses its Christian sympathy to Mr. Richard Teitsma in the loss of his wife, ANN TEITSMA.

May he be comforted in the truth expressed in Psalm 116:15 — "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

Hilbert Kuiper, Pres.  
Henry Bergman, Sec'y.

### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On June 18, 1989, our dear parents and grandparents, PERLIN AND AGNES SCHUT, celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary. We are thankful to our Heavenly Father for giving us God-fearing parents, and for the love and Christian instruction they have given us through these years.

"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting

upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children." (Psalm 103:17)

Gerry and Kathy Schut  
Doug, Todd  
Ron and Barb Schut  
Brad, Shauna, Leah  
Scott and Joan Anderson  
Melissa, Chad, Jeff  
Pat Schut  
Pam Schut

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Council and Congregation of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church expresses their Christian sympathy to Elder John N. Dykstra and Deacon Gerald Dykstra and their families in the loss of their father and grandfather, NEIL DYKSTRA, on May 24, 1989.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

Rev. J. Slopsema, Pastor  
Don Lotterman, Clerk  
Grand Rapids, MI

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The consistory and congregation of the Loveland Protestant Reformed Church express their heartfelt sympathy to Mrs. Louise Griess and family in the death of her beloved husband, MR. ALBERT GRIESS.

May the grace of God and the comfort of the Holy Spirit be with our sister, her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13).

Rev. Ron Cammenga, Pres.  
Mr. Robert Brands, Clerk