



The Standard Bearer

***A Reformed
Semi-Monthly
Magazine***

In This Issue:

Meditation — <i>Rev. Steven R. Houck</i> Restoring a Sinful Brother	482
Editorial — <i>Prof. David J. Engelsma</i> The Reformed Worldview 4. The Failure of Common Grace (concl.)	485
Guest Article — <i>Rev. Charles J. Terpstra</i> A Spiritual House for God	486
Search the Scriptures — <i>Rev. Mitchell C. Dick</i> The Secret of the Fruit of the Vine (1): Doctrine Fruit	490
Contribution — <i>Mr. Joel Sugg</i> An Outpost Falls	492
Guest Article — <i>Rev. David Higgs</i> Introduction to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia (2)	493
News From Our Churches — <i>Mr. Benjamin Wigger</i>	495
Index to Volume 74	496

Vol. 74, No. 21
September 15, 1998

Restoring a Sinful Brother

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

Galatians 6:1

In this verse the apostle Paul admonishes us to restore a sinful brother. The occasion for this admonition is found in the words, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault...."

Even though the apostle says "if a man," he does not refer to man in general. The principle which he sets down is not a principle which applies to all people. This principle is only for believers. That is clear from the word "Brethren." The man who is overtaken in a fault is a spiritual brother.

The word "fault" means "to fall beside or near something." It is a lapse or deviation in which a person falls off the path of God's truth and righteousness. It is a trespass or sin. The word "overtaken"

means literally "to take before." The idea is to take a person before he can get away and thus catch him. This fault or sin catches a believer suddenly and holds on to him so that he cannot get away.

This phrase, "overtaken in a fault," implies several things. First of all, it implies that this restoring process is to be used only when a believer sins. Sometimes we criticize another believer, not because he has sinned, but just because we do not like what he is doing. Or worse than that, we talk about a fellow-believer behind his back. We do that just because we disagree with him. Sometimes we are very judgmental. If a person does not conform to our way of thinking, he is not a good Christian.

That is wrong. Never may we accuse a brother unless he has actually sinned. We have to allow for true Christian liberty. We are free within the limits of God's

Word. The moral principles of the Bible teach us what is sin. Therefore, if we are to use the principle of this verse, we ought to make sure that the Bible clearly defines the brother's action as sin.

Secondly, this phrase implies that believers do sin. Believers are not perfect. We may not think that everyone else is evil, while we are always righteous. Sin catches us and overtakes us every day. It is a constant reality in every believer's life. We cannot deny it.

In the third place, this principle is to be used only when a brother does not repent of his sin. Normally when we commit a sin, we repent. In that case, the brother does not have to be restored. He has dealt with his sin properly and taken care of it. But one can be overtaken in the sense that he remains in his sin. The sin has caught him in such a way that it holds onto him and will not let him go. The

Rev. Houck is pastor of Peace Protestant Reformed Church in Lansing, Illinois.

The Standard Bearer (ISSN 0362-4692) is a semi-monthly, except monthly during June, July, and August, published by the Reformed Free Publishing Association, Inc., 4949 Ivanrest Ave., Grandville, MI 49418.

Postmaster: Send address changes to the Standard Bearer, P.O. Box 603, Grandville, MI 49468-0603.

REPRINT POLICY

Permission is hereby granted for the reprinting of articles in our magazine by other publications, provided: a) that such reprinted articles are reproduced in full; b) that proper acknowledgment is made; c) that a copy of the periodical in which such reprint appears is sent to our editorial office.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Every editor is solely responsible for the contents of his own articles. Contributions of general interest from our readers and questions for The Reader Asks department are welcome. Contributions will be limited to approximately 300 words and must be signed.

EDITORIAL OFFICE

Prof. David J. Engelsma
4949 Ivanrest
Grandville, MI 49418
(e-mail: engelsma@prca.org)

CHURCH NEWS EDITOR

Mr. Ben Wigger
6597 40th Ave.
Hudsonville, MI 49426

BUSINESS OFFICE

The Standard Bearer
Don Doezeema
P.O. Box 603
Grandville, MI
49468-0603
PH: (616) 531-1490
(616) 538-1778
FAX: (616) 531-3033

NEW ZEALAND OFFICE

The Standard Bearer
c/o B. VanHerik
66 Fraser St.
Wainuiomata, New Zealand

UNITED KINGDOM OFFICE

c/o Mr. Simon Cresswell
62 Moat Road
Ballymena, Co. Antrim
BT42 4DA Northern Ireland

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE

\$17.00 per year in the U.S., US\$20.00 elsewhere.

ADVERTISING POLICY

The Standard Bearer does not accept commercial advertising of any kind. Announcements of church and school events, anniversaries, obituaries, and sympathy resolutions will be placed for a \$10.00 fee. These should be sent to the Business Office and should be accompanied by the \$10.00 fee. Deadline for announcements is at least one month prior to publication date.

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

believer continues committing sin or does not see that what he has done is sin, and therefore does not repent. That is the brother who needs to be restored.

Finally, this phrase implies that we know about the sin of our brother. Sometimes a brother commits a public sin which many people know about. In that case we not only ought to go to him in obedience to this passage, but we ought to report it to the consistory. Other times a brother commits a sin which is private. However, a fellow-believer may have seen him commit it. He knows about it, not because of hearsay, but because he has witnessed it himself. If he would not say anything about it, it would probably never be discovered. That is the sin with which this verse is concerned.

That brings us to the question, "What are we to do when we witness a brother commit such a sin?" Are we to ignore it? That is what many of us do. We act as if we have seen nothing. We do that for many reasons. We may not want to get the brother in trouble. Perhaps we don't want to face the brother. It is always hard to tell someone he is sinning. Maybe we do not want to testify against a brother. Perhaps we don't want to get involved in a big mess. Sometimes reporting a brother's sin can involve a person in some very unpleasant proceedings.

But that is wrong. We may not ignore a brother's sin. If we ignore a brother's sin, we become guilty of his sin. We become an accessory to his crime. To ignore a brother's sin is sin itself—sin which brings the chastening hand of God upon us.

On the other hand, the apostle does not say that when a brother sins we are to cast him out of the church immediately. That is the other extreme. Perhaps the sin is so hideous that we want to expel him from our communion. We are not concerned about his well-being. We think only of ourselves. The

sinning brother is forced out of the church without so much as a single admonition. That too is sin.

There is another improper reaction to the sin of a brother. We talk about it to others. This happens often. This is the easy way out. We don't have to confront the brother. We don't have to get involved with the consistory. Yet, we can feast on this juicy tidbit with all of our neighbors. We convict and hang the brother with our gossip without seeking true justice or showing mercy.

That is also sin. In many cases this gossip is a greater sin than the sin of the brother. Don't be a gossip. If you witness your brother sin, keep that between you and him. Reveal it to others (your pastor or the consistory) only when he will not repent.

What are we to do when a brother sins? Notice the verse, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one...." We are called to restore him. The word "restore" means "to make sound or complete." This word is used with reference to those who mend their torn fishing nets. They make their nets sound or complete by fixing them. This word is used in connection with putting a dislocated arm back in its socket. The arm is restored to its proper place.

When a brother is overtaken in a fault, we are to mend the tear in his spiritual life. We are to restore him to his proper place spiritually. We are to make him sound spiritually. When a brother sins and does not repent of that sin, it is as if a member of the body of Christ is out-of-joint. The brother has to be fixed. He has to be brought to godly sorrow, the confession of his sin, and the forsaking of his sin. Rather than looking the other way, we have to play the part of a spiritual physician. Rather than cutting off this offending member of the body, we are to seek spiritual healing for him.

Our love for our spiritual

brother ought to move us to help him get out of spiritual trouble. Christ is so merciful to sinners that He calls sinners to repentance. He says in Luke 15:4, "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?" If a shepherd loses one of his sheep, he will seek it until he finds it and restores it to its place. How much more should our love for our brother cause us to seek him when he has gone astray spiritually? If we ignore this biblical principle to restore our sinful brother, we manifest the fact that we have no love for him nor for the God who sent Christ for him.

Who specifically is to restore the sinful brother? Notice the verse, "... ye which are spiritual, restore such an one...." Who are those who are spiritual? Some say that this refers to a very select group of Christians who are much more mature spiritually than other Christians. This group might include the minister, the elders, the deacons, and a few older members of the congregation. If that were true, this verse would not apply to most of us. But that is not true. The designation "those who are spiritual" includes all Christians. For all Christians are spiritual in the sense that they have the Holy Spirit. However, this designation also means that at the time we seek to restore our sinful brother we must be walking in the Spirit. We may not be indulging in the lust of the flesh. How can we restore a brother who is sinning if we ourselves are sinning? Therefore, the one who restores his brother must be a Christian who is, at that moment, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit.

Before we restore a sinful brother we ought to examine ourselves and make sure that there is no sin in our own lives. Jesus says in Matthew 7:4-5, "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in

thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

What do we do when we restore a sinful brother? First, we have to go to him and talk to him about his sin. Even though it is difficult, even though we do not want to face our brother with his sin, this face-to-face meeting is absolutely necessary. In this we have the example of Nathan, the prophet, who faced David and said to him, "Thou art the man" (II Sam. 12:1).

The procedure is given to us in Matthew 18:15-17 where we read, "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

First, we are to go to our brother alone and talk to him. If he repents, that ends the matter. If he does not repent, we go with one or two others. These witnesses are to stand with us in support of the truth which we bring. If that does not lead him to repentance, we are to inform the consistory of the church so that it can deal with the sinful brother.

What are we to say to the brother when we go to him? That comes down to one thing—Holy Scripture. When we go to our brother, we may not bring our own word. We must bring only the Word of God. It is God's Word which God uses to convict a per-

son of his sin. Ultimately, only the Holy Spirit can restore a sinning brother. The Holy Spirit works through the Word of God.

In particular we ought to say three things. First, we are to point out his sin. We ought to admonish him that the thing which he has done is sin. Sometimes a brother does not realize that what he has done is sin. It is a relatively simple matter to show him that it is. Secondly, we are to call the brother to sorrow because of his sin. He has not confessed his sin to God. He has not forsaken it. We ought to use the Bible to bring him to that godly sorrow, confession to God, and the forsaking of his sin. Thirdly, we are to tell our brother that if he repents, he will find forgiveness. God will forgive him. We will forgive him. Repentance is the only way to forgiveness. If he does not repent, God has not forgiven him, and his place is with the heathen man and the publican.

Finally, let us notice the manner in which we are to restore the brother. We read, "... restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." We are to restore our brother in the spirit of meekness. We are not to deal with him with a tone of arrogance, superiority, or anger. Sometimes we are arrogant. We have an attitude that we are much better than the brother who has sinned. We look down upon him and treat him as if he is nothing. We may even be harsh, unkind, and uncaring. We march right into our brother's house and start blasting away. Our voice is loud. Our face is flush. Our eyes are filled with anger. That is not the way to restore a sinful brother. Usually that will have the opposite effect. It will drive him away from the Word of God and his needed repentance. If we seek to restore our brother in that way, we will be guilty of great sin.

Rather, we are to go to him with a meek spirit. We are to be humble. We are not to think of

ourselves as better than he is. We are to go to him in love and mercy, with kindness and gentleness. We are to have patience with him. That is the example which our Lord has left us. He was a meek and gentle man. He says in Matthew 11:29, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart...." This meek and gentle spirit is what brings results, for then the brother will see our concern for him and the church of Christ. He will see that we love him as a brother and seek his good. His heart will be open to the Word of God which we bring.

Secondly, let us notice the reason that we are to restore the brother in this particular manner. We read, "... considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." At the same time that we seek to restore the brother in a spirit of meekness we are to consider ourselves. We are to observe ourselves, think about ourselves. And what are we to consider? The fact that we also are sinners who can be tempted and fall into sin just as easily as our brother. The very sin which our brother has committed, we might commit ourselves. We are not immune to any sin. We can lie as did Abraham. We can get drunk as Noah did. We can commit adultery and murder as David. We can deny our Lord as Peter. Listen to the words of the apostle found in I Corinthians 10:12, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

That is why we are to restore our brother only with a spirit of meekness. But for the grace of God, we would be in his place. That will also make us have a spirit of sympathy and understanding. We know how easy it is for us to sin. Thus, we go to our sinning brother, not to kick him in the dust, but to lift him up and help him back to the place where he belongs—a place of fellowship and friendship with God, a place of peace and joy, a place of usefulness in the body of Christ. □

The Reformed Worldview

4. The Failure of Common Grace

(concluded)

The Protestant Reformed Churches reject the common grace worldview proposed by Abraham Kuyper because this worldview has failed. For some 100 years, the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands have practiced Kuyper's (and, I may add, Herman Bavinck's) worldview. The result has been not only that Dutch culture has not been "Christianized" but also that the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, with the Free University associated with these churches, have become thoroughly worldly. Common grace has been a bridge by which the world has invaded and destroyed these churches.

The Christian Reformed Church in North America threw up the bridge of the common grace worldview a little later. It did this by its synodical adoption of the "three points of common grace" in 1924. The Christian Reformed Church made Kuyper's theory of common grace official church dogma. The purpose of the Christian Reformed Church was to establish a worldview by which she and her members could live in all areas of life and influence society.

The result has been the same as in the Netherlands. North American society has not become Calvinistic or Christian; Grand Rapids, Michigan has not become Calvinistic. But the Christian Reformed Church, with her schools, has become worldly. She has become worldly in doctrine, e.g., the

nature of Scripture, origins, and the extent of the grace of God in Jesus Christ, and in life, e.g., Sabbath observance, marriage, the headship of the husband in home and church, and the dance. In a number of instances, the Christian Reformed Church has explicitly appealed to common grace in support of its abandonment of the historic Christian and Reformed position.

The disastrous failure of Kuyperian common grace is evident also in other churches and, especially, in many non-Reformed but Christian colleges. In the nature of the case, Christian schools espouse and teach a worldview. As the writings of Bernard Ramm, Arthur Holmes, and others show, evangelical colleges too have embraced the common grace worldview of Abraham Kuyper. Not one is holding out against the mind and ways of the ungodly world, whether as regards the doctrine of Scripture, the truth of creation, feminism, or sexual morality.

The reason why the worldview of common grace corrupts the churches and schools is that this worldview breaches the antithesis. The antithesis (for a long time now an unfamiliar and unpopular word in Reformed and evangelical circles) is the spiritual separation and warfare that God Himself has established between His holy people and the unholy world of men and women outside of Jesus Christ. From the very beginning, in the first proclamation of the gospel, Jehovah God put enmity be-

tween Christ and all those who are His, on the one hand, and the children of the devil, on the other hand (Gen. 3:15). God effectually calls all the members of Christ's church out of the world (I Pet. 2:9). The urgent exhortation to believers and their children in all ages is, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate" (II Cor. 6:14-18). This separation has its source and foundation in God's decree of election by which God eternally separated the church from the reprobate, ungodly world (Deut. 7:6; John 15:19).

Such is the importance of the antithesis that it constitutes the salvation of the church. Nothing less. The blessing of Israel by the Old Testament Mediator was this: "Israel then shall dwell in safety alone" (Deut. 33:28). It was exactly the purpose and power of the cross of Christ that it "deliver us" not only from the guilt of sin but also "from this present evil world" (Gal. 1:4). The warning to the saints is that to dally with the world in communion and cooperation is to perish with the world. Positively, the saints escape the world's sins and plagues only in the way of separating from the world. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4).

It is appalling that by his common grace worldview Abraham Kuyper played fast and loose with the antithesis in the interests of political power and cultural influence. It is more appalling still (and inexcusable) that Reformed churches,

schools, and theologians continue to play fast and loose with the antithesis by maintaining the worldview of common grace in the face of the testimony of history that this worldview wreaks havoc with the antithesis.

Peter S. Heslam has recently called attention to the fact that Kuyper's theory of common grace contradicts the biblical truth of the antithesis, which truth Kuyper also advocated. In his analysis of Kuyper's *Lectures on Calvinism*, the speeches at Princeton University in 1898 that proposed the worldview of common grace, Heslam observes:

That Kuyper was able to display a positive approach to the arts was largely due to his doctrine of common grace, which in this lecture, in contrast to his lecture on science, is emphasized at the expense of his doctrine of the antithesis, which plays no significant role. This discrepancy is one of the clearest indications of what is perhaps the central tension in Kuyper's thought between the antithesis and corresponding isolation on the one hand, and common grace and corresponding engagement and accommodation on the other. It was a tension Kuyper never resolved, and a comparison of his Stone Lecture on art with that on science demonstrates how it led to flaws in the overall coherence of his thought.

Heslam goes on to speak of

the fundamental tension in Kuyper's thought—a recurrent theme throughout this book, and expressed at its most basic level in the dichotomy between his ideas of antithesis and of common grace. The final passage of the Stone Lectures is added evidence that this was a tension Kuyper himself was unable to resolve (*Creating a Christian Worldview: Abraham Kuyper's Lectures on Calvinism*, Eerdmans, 1998, pp. 222, 249).

By "tension," the British

scholar means irreconcilable contradiction so that where common grace rules, the antithesis is driven out.

The most ardent disciples of the Kuyper of common grace (there was *another* Kuyper) themselves have been forced to acknowledge and lament the bitter fruits of common grace.

In May, 1952, Dr. Cornelius Van Til told a full house of Calvin Seminary and College faculty and students that if the common grace doctrine of the Christian Reformed Church prevailed one might as well blow up the science building of Calvin College with an atom bomb. This remark mightily irked the leadership of the Christian Reformed Church. It has always puzzled me—not the statement but that Van Til made it. For all his hedging and qualifying, Van Til held the same doctrine of common grace that Kuyper taught in his *Lectures on Calvinism* and that the Christian Reformed Church adopted in its decretals of 1924.

In any case, that was the science building that has given the Christian Reformed Church Howard Van Till's denial of creation, Davis Young's denial of the flood, and the 1991 report on creation and science that affirmed full-blown theistic evolution.

The Rev. H. J. Kuiper, sworn foe that he was of the Protestant Reformed confession of the antithesis, felt compelled to draw up and circulate a petition in which he and his allies charged that the professors at Calvin College "give instruction which is more or less colorless and neutral.... They stress common grace far more than the antithesis.... There is no pronounced spiritual atmosphere in our college." This petition, signed by 147 persons, was presented to the Christian Reformed synod of 1952 (see Henry Stob, *Summing Up Remembrance*, Eerdmans, 1955, pp. 318, 319).

In the fascinating speech that Prof. Nicholas Wolterstorff gave

earlier this year at a conference commemorating the centennial of Kuyper's Stone Lectures (to which I referred in the previous editorials), the Christian Reformed philosopher and teacher offered the judgment that the sad decline of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and of the Free University was due to their stress on common grace at the expense of the antithesis. To my delight (and surprise), Prof. Wolterstorff reminded his largely Christian Reformed audience that for Kuyper there was another doctrine in addition to common grace that is basic to the life of the Christian in the world. That doctrine, according to Wolterstorff, is the antithesis.

The trouble is that Wolterstorff supposes that common grace and the antithesis can and must be held "in balance." This is impossible. Biblically, theologically, and logically, they are contraries. History has proved that they cannot and will not share the field of thought and conduct. When in the question-period Wolterstorff was asked for guidelines to hold common grace and the antithesis "in balance," he frankly admitted that he could not give any.

The common grace worldview has failed. Even its advocates at the end of the 20th century have remarked the failure.

It has failed because it is the contradiction and destruction of the antithesis.

God has judged the common grace worldview in history. In its utter failure to influence the world, and in the worldliness of the churches and schools that embraced it, God has written upon it His "*Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*."

Reformed people must not then celebrate the anniversary of the formal propounding of that worldview. How bizarre! As though those oppressed by the system of Marx and Engels were, after the collapse of Communism, to celebrate the anniversary of the writing of *Das Kapital*.

There should rather be a day, or a week, of repentance with fasting and mourning.

There ought to be, at the very least, a critical reexamination of Kuyper's worldview.

Why in all the commemoration of Kuyper's *Lectures on Calvinism*, from Princeton in the East to Escondido in the West, is there never so much as one small spot on the platform or one secondary place in the program for a man who is critical of the worldview of common grace? Critical, *on behalf of the Reformed churches, on behalf of Reformed education, and, yes, on behalf of a truly Reformed worldview.*

There is one other reason why the Protestant Reformed Churches reject Kuyper's worldview of common grace. It is unhistorical.

Kuyper intended that with this worldview Calvinism would have a powerful impact upon nations, societies, and cultures. He had particularly in mind his own Netherlands and the United States.

This is not, in fact, how Calvinism has ever influenced nations and cultures. Calvinism has certainly had an impact on nations and cultures, a tremendous impact. Think of Germany, of Scotland, of the Netherlands, of the United States. Just as Christianity has affected nations and cultures.

But Calvinism never made this impact by means of some innocuous, feeble "common grace." Wherever it went, in those earlier, glorious days, it went as the gospel of sovereign, particular grace

and as the judgment upon man and all his works of total depravity. It affected nations and cultures exactly as a worldview of the one, special grace of God in Jesus Christ. This aroused the opposition that convulsed the nation. This saved the elect who then lived the antithetical, holy life that had real impact upon the life of the nation. Ask the secular historians.

And I dare say that should God yet will that Calvinism—the Reformed faith—powerfully affect nations and civilizations, this would, and could only, take place by a bold gospel of particular grace that establishes and calls for the antithesis.

Not by lectures on common grace. □

—DJE

Guest Article

Rev. Charles Terpstra

A Spiritual House for God

Dedication Message for the New Church Building
of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan
July 2, 1998

It is a wonderful evening for us as a congregation. Our faithful and gracious God has provided us a new church home in which to worship Him and in which to busy ourselves in the labors and activities of His kingdom. We have a beautiful new church home, inside and out, architecturally and aesthetically. In this respect our new building reflects the beauty of God Himself, as well as the beauty of the church He saves by His grace. We have a well-built edifice, re-

flecting not only the skills of the carpenters and contractors, but also the strength and stability of God's covenant of grace with us and our children.

As we look about us tonight, we have much to be thankful for. We have great reason to praise our God.

We have come together tonight to dedicate this new structure to our God. It is all of Him and through Him, and so we must use it all for Him. Every part of the building itself, every room, every piece of equipment, must be returned to God, used in His service and for His glory. Also all the activities that take place here, every function performed here, must be dedicated to God. Consciously, all

we do here must be done for the Lord.

For let us not forget that we are the church. Not this building, but we the people. These bricks and blocks and wood are not living; they cannot dedicate themselves to God and use themselves in His service. But we can, because we are the church, God's living stones, His spiritual house, His holy priesthood. As such we must consciously give ourselves to God by performing the service that pleases Him. That's the truth of the text we consider together on this occasion, I Peter 2:4-6:

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are

Rev. Terpstra is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan

built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded."

On the basis of this text I speak to you concerning "A Spiritual House for God."

Its Spiritual Construction

The spiritual house of God, which is the church, is made up of stones. Not lifeless ones, like these in the building about us, but living ones. One of these stones is a very special stone. It is set apart from the others, being a fundamental stone, an indispensable stone. That stone is Jesus Christ. He is the Cornerstone, the Headstone of the foundation of the church. He has this place because God, the great Architect and Builder of the church, laid Him as such in the building according to verse 6 of our text. Christ was laid as the Cornerstone by sovereign, eternal election; He was laid by divine promise in the Scriptures; and in the fullness of time He was set in place by His incarnation, suffering, death, and resurrection. That is why this Cornerstone is precious to God, to the church, and to the believer. Christ was indeed disallowed of men. Men despised and rejected Him when He came and took His place as the chief Cornerstone. But God laid Him, preserved Him, and exalted Him!

That Christ is the chief Cornerstone means that the whole spiritual building rests on Him and depends on Him. Christ determines the size, strength, and stability of the church. The church's election and salvation are in Christ alone. He gives life to the other living stones. He's the basis for all that the church is and does. We are nothing and can do nothing without this Cornerstone. We are no spiritual house without Christ; we



First Protestant Reformed Church, Holland, Michigan

have no service to bring to God apart from Christ.

For this reason our text speaks of coming to Christ to be built up. In the way of coming to this living Stone we are living stones and are built up a spiritual house. That "coming" certainly defines the church's task—to point God's living stones to Christ the living Stone. That she does chiefly in the preaching of the gospel, the pure gospel of sovereign grace. And that preaching of the gospel is the power that enables the elect stones of God's church to come to the living Stone. But that "coming" also defines our life in the church. Each living stone must see to it that he or she is coming to Christ so as to be properly constructed. Only insofar as we are constantly coming to Him in true faith can we be built up a spiritual house. Only in this way are we going to be strong and useful in the service of God. Let us keep in mind that in all of our life and activities here in this new building we must be "coming" to Christ the living Stone.

When God's lively stones come to Christ the chief Cornerstone, they are built up a spiritual house. They are constructed together to form one beautiful building. That's another wonder God works with His church. The lively stones which God has chosen and saved in Christ do not stand individually and separately in the church. They are designed and fashioned to fit together, to make up a magnificent, unified edifice, each stone in his

and her place, contributing to the whole. The idea of the communion of saints is implied. We may compare this to the way in which these bricks and other materials also fit together to make up this whole building. So when God constructs His church, He puts together lively stones to form a spiritual house.

That the church is God's spiritual house brings to mind the Old Testament tabernacle and temple. They were God's house. And the main idea of that house was that it was God's dwellingplace, the place where God dwelled with His people in covenant friendship and communion. That's what we are as the church built on Jesus Christ—God's house, His dwellingplace. In and through Jesus Christ God is pleased to dwell in us and with us. We may call this new place God's house too, from this point of view, that when we gather here as God's spiritual house, He is pleased to dwell with us in covenant friendship and fellowship. This building becomes God's house when we are here. And we must desire that fellowship with God and delight in it, also in and through this building.

But in addition to this, the Old Testament tabernacle and temple as God's house was the place where spiritual service to God went on. At the house of God worship took place, sacrifices were made, feasts were celebrated. The whole building and all its activities were dedicated to God. And that's the other point we wish to stress.

Its Spiritual Service

Our text says that the church is not only a spiritual house but also a holy priesthood. Believers are priests, holy unto God. They are set apart from Satan's kingdom, from the world of unbelief, and from sin so as to be God's exclusive servants, His priests who are consecrated to Him. God's people exist for God alone, for His service and for His glory.

That's the idea of dedication too. This material building (house) we dedicate to God because we are His holy priesthood, saved to be consecrated to God. So we use all this for God. Everything we have here and do here we must do for God.

That involves making spiritual sacrifices, just as it did for the church in the Old Testament. They brought sacrifices of thanks and praise to God in worship; they offered to God through their singing, their prayers, their giving, and their hearing of His Word. They also brought animal sacrifices, and these were spiritual sacrifices too, because they were types of Christ's sacrifice made on the cross. As the New Testament church, we don't offer up these sacrifices any longer, for *the* atoning blood has been shed on Calvary. Yet we still come to God in worship and prayer and fellowship in and through Jesus Christ. We present ourselves and our spiritual offerings to God only through the cross of Christ, for in no other way are we and they "acceptable to God." All of the service we perform must be done by faith in Christ, receiving His perfect sacrifice for our sins.

Therefore, as God's holy priesthood, we must now use this new facility to offer up our spiritual sacrifices to God. Standing in God's service, dedicating this place to Him, we must always come with our spiritual offerings to Him. That is especially our worship of God. Here we will and must meet to thank and praise our great and glorious God. Let this place be filled

with our songs of praise to Him, our prayers of thanks to Him and dependence on Him, our gifts laid up before Him and for Him, our faithful hearing of His Word in the preaching of the gospel. Unless this is done here, this beautiful structure is really ugly and vain.

But our spiritual sacrifices include much more than our offering up of official worship. They include our spiritual fellowship as a congregation, our walking together and our coming together in this place in love and delight of one another and for the mutual benefit of one another, whether that be for Bible studies, weddings, funerals, or pancake breakfasts. These sacrifices include our spiritual nurture of the covenant seed in catechism and Sunday School. They include our obedience to the gospel in all areas of life. Let this place be filled with this service to God too. That's how we will show we have dedicated this place to the Lord.

That means that each of us individually, and thus all of us to-

gether, will be personal, living sacrifices to God. We cannot dedicate this place to God and offer up spiritual sacrifices in His service unless we ourselves are dedicated to God, as personal offerings. We must first give ourselves to Him, our hearts, our lives, our time, our energies, our abilities. Some of you have given of yourselves in that way in the building of this place. So it must be in our use of this place from here on. Do we understand our calling as we dedicate this building to God? Are we ready to give our own selves first of all to God? Are we dedicated to Him personally in our hearts and lives? Then, and only then, are we prepared to give this whole building to God and to do all to His glory as we devote ourselves to His service through our spiritual sacrifices offered up here.

May God give us grace to be faithful priests in His spiritual house. Then we and our children will be blessed in our use of this place. □

Living Stones

As we were watching the builders build,
Every worker in his own way skilled,
Our musings turned to our God above,
And how He has built His church in love.
From eternity He had a plan,
And with His creation He began.
His word is the foundation sure,
Through eternity it will endure.
Our Reformed creeds are walls high and strong,
Keeping safe those who to Him belong.
The cornerstone true is Christ our Lord,
By all those within His church adored.
The roof — His love — shelters all within,
And gives forgiveness for all our sin.
So now as we come to worship here,
And seek our God's face in humble fear,
Let us with the faithful church of the past,
To His holy Word alone hold fast,
Knowing He will continue to build
Till all His perfect plan is fulfilled,
And we meet with the saints in glory
And each tell our part in the story,
Of how living stones were used of God
To build His church and spread His Word abroad.

Shirley Casemier

The Secret of the Fruit of the Vine (1): “Doctrine Fruit”

(John 15)

This last discourse of Jesus is secret.

It is one Friend talking to friends. It is between Jesus-Friend and His disciple-friends alone. There are no miracle-seeking crowds. There are no antagonists. Even Judas, once in the company of the true friends of Jesus, is now gone—sent away to do his dastardly, devilish double-cross. Only true friends of God may and can and want to hear what Jesus will say. The eleven. And you?

This last discourse is the secret of the covenant, of God befriending sinners. Jesus speaks about this covenant truth. But more. In the speaking there is truth come to pass! There is actual covenanting! The divine Friend is making and loving the friends of His good pleasure. And friends are loving the Friendship-Maker.

Listen to the psalmist: “The secret of the LORD (Jehovah) is with them that fear him; to them he will show his covenant (Ps. 25:14).”

Jesus-Friend is fulfilling the psalm. I do believe.

Especially does the Friend whisper things of a new covenant. He speaks of the Friend laying down His life for the friends to establish this new thing. He speaks of a Spirit who will come down. He speaks of a fellowship of God

and His own that will be closer than ever. He speaks of what this will finally mean: poor friends, wandering friends, humble friends being taken to dwell in Father’s heavenly mansions, given a home at last, exalted.

*** **

In the friendship, in the covenant of grace, there will be fruit. John 15 reveals this secret of Jehovah, the secret of fruit. God is with His own in Jesus Christ in the covenant friendship-relationship so that they bear the fruit of His divine presence and virtue. In God’s friends there will be light; there will be good; there will be joy; there will be all kinds of heaven’s delectables and glories—all because of God with them, and the covenant secret with them.

Jesus speaks of this covenant fruit-bearing first by way of the analogy of a vine and its branches. Perhaps Jesus, when He speaks of this, is pointing to a vine that the disciples are walking past. It seems, by now, that they have left the upper room where Jesus had had the last Passover and the first new covenant Supper with the disciples. For the Master had said: “Arise, let us go hence” (John 14:31). They could, therefore, have been walking or standing by a vine. Whatever, the Master-teacher compares spiritual fruit-bearing to the fruit-bearing of a vine. He will tell many secrets about this fruit-bearing, so concerned is Jesus that His church be a living and God-glorifying, fruitful church. One secret

of good fruit is good doctrine. This needs to be stressed. Because can’t you hear it now?

“Doctrine is superfluous. Just give me Jesus, and let us end the endless debates about the doctrine of Jesus. Doctrine is dull. It is divisive. It is detrimental to our getting on with discipling the nations, feeding the poor, and gassing the abortionists. Jesus here tells us to abide in Him. He did not tell us to abide in it (doctrine). So let us not get all hung up about such things, especially the finer points of doctrine. Let us just do Christianity—believe and do. Who cares whether one is Calvinist, Arminian, or Calminian? Let us abide in the vine. Have fruit. And hang doctrine.”

I do not know how many times I have heard the likes of the above sermon on doctrine. One time was while chatting with an old Dutchman on the fifth floor of Calvin library. He’s the one who asserted he was unashamedly Calminian. Another time a woman weeding flowers at a church on the corner of the street where I lived declared her disgust with doctrine. Her church was the one, I recall, with the sign out front: “Big enough to serve you ... small enough to know you.” If her speech was representative of the whole lot, the words could be added to the sign: “broad-minded enough to accept you, regardless of doctrine.”

Ironical that the church was on “Vine Street.” Pathetic and preposterous! For the church and the

people who truly abide in the Vine, Jesus Christ, will also be concerned for doctrine: much doctrine, and true doctrine! They will know and appreciate that abiding personally in the Vine, relationally with Christ, is abiding in sound doctrine, and longing for more and more and more doctrine! They will know and appreciate that doctrine is the first-fruit and profit of the Scripture (II Tim. 3:16), the "all truth" into which the Spirit of Christ leads His own (John 16:13).

No doctrine? Little doctrine? Less doctrine? Dumbed-down doctrine?

Such people and churches who are content with a kindergarten, as-little-doctrine-as-possible Christianity will indeed bear fruit. It will be strange. There will be strange doctrinal fruit. For people and churches content with as little doctrine as possible will as sure as the Pope is Roman Catholic not know the difference between true and false doctrine. And then, as sure as Mary was not, they will themselves tolerate false doctrine. And then, as sure as mosquitoes breed in swamps, they will themselves teach the lie and breed liars. There will be, for example, the heresy of the "God helps those who help themselves" gospel. According to one poll of the evangelical vineyard, 87% of the Christian community believes this. Or there will be the poisonous hybrid Calminia, or the deadly doctrine of free-willism—both of which make salvation, in one way or another, depend on man. Doctrinally deficient Christians will bear strange behavior-fruit as well. People who care little or could not care less about doctrine start to walk funny. Soon they go on all fours. They begin to see ninety-foot visions of Jesus. They start predicting Jesus will come in this year or the next, over here or over there. They welcome sweet transvestites. They divorce and remarry—once, twice, and some heading toward sixty-one.

And they start thinking gassing abortionists is righteousness.

Tell me: where do these people really abide? And what will become of the generation-branches? Strange evangelical doctrineless vineyard in 1998!

*** **

But truly doctrinal Christians bear good fruit. Jesus is the Vine and the source of the fruit. He leads His people further and further into the true knowledge of Himself. The Holy Spirit is His Agent for this—Christ's doctrinal Spirit. And, being spirited into

more and more truth, the people of God are sanctified (John 17:17). Where the Vine is, and the Spirit is, there are a people of truth and righteousness, of God-pleasing confession and life.

The secret of doctrine. That is one secret of the fruit of the Vine. There are many more. We will consider them in a future article. For now, let us focus on doctrine, and be found engaging in doctrinal, searching, humble, and thankful Bible study! As friends of God! To bear fruit!

For Study, Meditation, Discussion, and Doctrine!

1. What is the difference between the Word of God and Christian doctrine?
2. Is it possible to have too much doctrine?
3. How does one grow in the knowledge of sound doctrine?
4. What is the place of creeds in the development and defense of sound doctrine?
5. In preaching, what is the right "mix" of doctrine and application of the doctrine to the lives of the people? Consider a passage or verse in the Bible. What would be the doctrine and application in a sermon on this text? Say a minister were to preach from the same text once every year. How would it be the same every time? Why must it be different every time?
6. Is it proper to criticize false doctrine and/or preachers off the pulpit or in our conversations with others? What would be a tactful, wise, and compassionate way of defending the truth of the Lord's Day against a Seventh Day Adventist?
7. Principles (doctrine) work through, into our life. What we believe influences what we do. Give examples of how good doctrine produces good fruit, and bad doctrine produces bad fruit. Make a list of ten doctrines and cite ways these truths influence your life. Give examples of how the Lord Jesus or the apostle Paul or others apply truth to the lives of the people of God. (Think, for example, of Jesus teaching the woman at the well [John 4], or of how Paul draws practical conclusions from the doctrinal part of Romans [chapters 1-11] in chapters 12-16!).
8. What are the "spirits" of this age which influence men, women, young people, and children so that they will not endure sound doctrine (II Tim. 4:3), so that after their own lusts they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears...? Is it the spirit of "if it feels good it's right"? Is it the spirit of pluralism (all religions are equally valid)? Is it the spirit of worldliness? How can "things," such as television, and sports, and affluence affect our appreciation of doctrine?

9. Loving doctrine and truly growing in the knowledge of the truth require digging, studying, pondering, and continual examination of the Scriptures. Make a study of just one doctrine, say the doctrine

of God. List several of His attributes and what the Bible says of them. Then describe some of His works. Write down just one thing you learned that you had never thought of before, or that impressed you this time as you

thought on the God of our salvation. Then tell at least one other person—a believer or unbeliever. It's called sharing treasure. It's called building up the church.

Doctrinally! □

Contribution

Mr. Joel Sugg

An Outpost Falls

Synod was informed of the disbanding of Trinity Protestant Reformed Church in Houston, Texas.

This terse report was given in the summary of the activities of the PRC Synod 1998 recorded in the July 1998 *Standard Bearer*. It was a simple epitaph to 25 years of labor in the extension of God's Word from an outpost more than a thousand miles removed from our churches' well-established, flourishing congregations, schools, journals, and seminary. At different times during those years, nearly a score of families were a part of this congregation. In the end four families, including the pastor's and one individual, remained for the final service, Sunday evening, June 7, 1998.

A seed planted by a Protestant Reformed missionary in the early 1960s sprouted a dozen years later, giving rise to a second work of evangelism which would extend for a quarter century. It was clearly God's will that in that period a church be established and that five different ministers would lead the congregation in a vigorous witness of the Reformed faith, which is simply nothing but the truth, so help us God. It was His

purpose, too, that these instituted labors would be brought to an end just now. We know that this was all in God's foreordained counsel because this is what happened. What we don't know is all the reasons and purposes which lay within that counsel.

At such a time of failure (failure according to men's eyes, including our own) we cannot escape considering that the closing was, at least in part, God's chastisement upon the weakness of our human efforts. Our efforts *were* weak, but the labors were honest, committed, and constant in prayerful appeal to God for strength and for the fruit of growth, if it be His will. These labors were by no means limited to our tiny congregation. There was the faithful financial support of all our churches, joined by the regular and often extended presence of many individual families from other congregations, whom we regarded as an organic part of our own flock during their time with us. And what a marvelous support was the attendance of over one hundred and fifty Protestant Reformed people at the family conference on evangelism in 1995. Yet, beyond all this, we especially see the necessity for every one of us, in conduct and conversation, to

have drawn any and all whom we might contact in the world, to have drawn them to hear with us the pure preaching of the Word of God. We ought to have done this more, and so must each of us do in the way of being used of God in gathering the lost.

Now, for whatever reasons in the purpose of God, the outpost has fallen. For those who of necessity must remain for the present, the reality of that decision has sunk in sharply. We are learning by painful experience that the true character of the Word of God held by our churches is not even principally shared by anyone else that we know of in our area, except in part, and that often marked by flaws which may seem small to some, but which forebode critical error if their extension goes unchallenged. In earnest have we searched for such crucial distinctives of Scripture as:

The covenant of friendship with His people alone, elect out of all nations, tongues, and tribes, in a covenant established and maintained by God alone.

The grace of God's absolute sovereignty, unfailingly expressed in the tightly interlocking bands of the Five Points of Calvinism.

The witness of a congregation

Mr. Sugg was a member of the Trinity Protestant Reformed congregation.

seeking to live an antithetical life over against the threat of an engulfing worldliness from the surrounding culture without and from the abiding old man within.

The stoutly-buttressed but nearly solitary denial of "common grace" and the "well-intended offer," which are widely preached by the nominally Reformed, but which put forth a gospel which is no gospel.

The Bible's pure instruction on marriage, standing pristinely upon the Lord's loving, though sharp commands, given in the face of an outrageously adulterous generation.

These and others were the very truths so resolutely defended and which so few ultimately embraced who were touched in some way by our witness to them. For these basic distinctives our seeking has been thus far nearly fruitless. It is almost as though we have found ourselves in the very foredawn of the day when the faithful child of God will find no place to stand, will be even an outcast to church, state, and society.

Is it because we are oppressively narrow, even vainly proud of doctrines and church, that we dare to say such things? May God forbid, for we are humbly convinced that this is simply the case before us.

Our sadness, and that of many, is deep-felt and unmistakable. But God ... two of the most beautiful words that can fall on the ears of an anguished believer ... but God has providentially placed that lamentable announcement in the *Standard Bearer* between the stalwart exhortations of two devoted men of God standing on either side of that stark statement with a sustaining power stanching our wounds with the healing balm of Gilead, the Living and Written Word of God:

"Encouraged to Persevere in the Lord's Great Building Project"
and

"Mission Enthusiasm—Stimulated by Golden Opportunities"

These titles and the articles de-

veloped from them fall upon our ears with the mocking cackle of Satanic irony silenced by the resounding proclamation of Jehovah's victory —

"I will shake all nations and the desire of all nations shall come: And I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts."

And with the calmly resolute exhortation from an Israelite in whom there is no guile:

"The work of the gathering of the lost is a wonder of grace, and all of us stand humbly before God when it pleases Him to use us as instruments in His hand to perform this work. This is worth being enthusiastic about. I trust you are enthusiastic with the confidence that God also uses you."

We in Houston are thankful for these incisive articles and ask that you read them again with us, and with us be heartened by their instruction and exhortation. Let them, too, be our epitaph — God's call to arms and His certain victory, both shining above, beyond, and beside our fallen outpost. □

Guest Article

Rev. David Higgs

Introduction to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia (2)

In my previous article, by way of an introduction to the life of our denomination, I wrote concerning the history of settlement and early life in Australia. This was to set the scene, so that you

may understand something of the characteristics, weaknesses, and sins of Australia as a nation, and of her people, generally speaking, as individuals. There is much more involved in trying to understand us Australians. But the settlement of our country and its early history is embedded in our makeup, and certainly helps to explain why we are like we are.

In this article I want to speak again of things historical. This

time, however, I would like to write more directly about how God brought us into being as a visible manifestation of His bride on earth: the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia. To do this I rely heavily on a little booklet entitled "A Brief History of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia." This booklet was written in 1991, on the occasion of our thirtieth anniversary as a denomination.

Rev. Higgs is a minister in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia.

The origin of our churches really lies in the island state of Tasmania in the early 1950s. The mainline churches were riddled with apostasy. But God had His people in these churches, who chafed under the apostasy and lack of teaching. They were believers with little understanding of, but a hunger for, the truth. Or they were people whom God had yet to arrest by His grace. Most were largely inclined toward Arminianism, believing in man's ability and free will. All knew that something was wrong, but they did not know what. In their desperation to be fed they talked among themselves, and slowly began to form a loose network of fellowship groups.

The people whom God was so leading came primarily from baptistic churches: Baptist, Brethren, Congregational, and Methodist. There were also those from the Anglican and general Presbyterian churches, and some from the Salvation Army. These men and women first formed evangelical fellowships, and when God had brought them to the Reformed faith they came together to form the EPC.

Due to the fact that most of the people who formed the fellowship groups were from baptistic churches, the groups were baptistic as well. Not only so, but they formed these groups not with any positive understanding of the truth, but due to dissatisfaction with apostasy in their churches. Accordingly, they were still largely Arminian in their beliefs.

In the latter 1950s and early 1960s, however, a number of these "fellowship believers" discovered, in God's providence, a number of good, solid Reformed books. Included in the number were: the Westminster Confession of Faith; Warfield's *The Plan of Salvation*; Pink's *The Sovereignty of God*; Watson's *A Body of Divinity*; Luther's *Bondage of the Will*; and Edward's *Religious Affections*.

The truths espoused in these books were discussed and debated. Never had the people come across anything like this before. The more they read, and the more they learned, the more God gave them a hunger and thirst after the truth of His Word. More than this, they realized that they had been ensnared by a faith that had man as the center, and not God. Soon, for many in the fellowship groups, the doctrines of the Reformed faith were their life.

In July 1960 a conference was held with the purpose of moving toward combining a number of fellowship groups, scattered around Tasmania, into a denomination of churches. It was at first thought that this would be the Baptist Reformed Church of Tasmania, using the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. At about this time, however, the fellowship groups had been in contact with Rev. E. Lee, a minister in the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (PCEA). This denomination has its heritage in the Reformed faith, and this minister proved to be a friend of the fellowship groups. Largely under his guidance those involved came to see that the Westminster standards most faithfully systematized the truths of Scripture.

More study, prayer, and discussions ensued. Many soon became convinced that the original Reformed Church of Scotland was the most scripturally consistent in its doctrine and practice. Approaches were made to several Scottish Reformed churches, as well as some Continental Reformed churches, with a view to becoming part of them. There were, though, always problems of one description or another. The Reformed Churches of Australia, for example, had adopted the Kuyperian doctrine of presumptive regeneration. Despite considerable help and encouragement from various officebearers of the PCEA, the fellowship leaders did not feel able

to proceed with an actual union with them. It appears, also, that the enthusiasm and zeal of the fellowship believers was too much for the PCEA, so the latter did not actively encourage such a union.

Nevertheless, the PCEA continued to help the fellowship people. On September 28, 1961, three ministers of the PCEA, including Rev. Lee, formed a special Presbytery, and ordained three men into the gospel ministry. These men were inducted into the ministry in Launceston, Penguin, and Winnaleah. Upon their ordination they constituted themselves into a Presbytery, and the Reformed Evangelical Church was born, later to be called the EPC. At this Presbytery the constitution of the denomination was accepted. Essentially this constitution consisted of the Westminster standards: the Confession of Faith; the Larger and Shorter Catechisms; the Form of Presbyterial Church Government, and the Directory of Public Worship, as originally accepted by the Church of Scotland.

Soon the EPC was to grow. Congregations were added from Taranna and Hobart in Tasmania, and Rockhampton and Brisbane in Queensland. Soon also, many were to depart. The most significant early split came in 1964, just three years after the constitution of our denomination. A controversy arose between the EPC and the PCEA. Various ministers of the PCEA and lecturers in their theological school were teaching the doctrine of the well-meant gospel offer. At the time, two of our students were studying at the theological school and became aware of the teaching.

At this stage we had not even heard of the PRC. But God, in His grace, led many of our people to see that the false doctrine of the well-meant gospel offer was just that—false doctrine. This caused much heartache, however, in a practical sense. As a consequence of our ongoing debate with the PCEA on this issue, the vast ma-

jority of the Penguin congregation left us to become part of the PCEA, and the Winnaleah congregation was split in two. Those who had once been our friends had now hurt us badly.

It seems, from that time onwards, there has been nothing but hardship, divisions, schisms, and a slow but constant trickle of departures from our churches. People, many in your own denomination, have often asked me why this is so. I believe there are three main reasons for the strife that has occurred in our denomination since its beginning.

In the first place, and ultimately, it is the will of God. This is not some blasé, offhand, "pat" answer. We are denominations who believe that Jehovah controls all things. Not only so, but our God controls all things for the good of His church. We are committed to the scriptural teaching that God is sovereign. This is a commitment that is not confined to a doctrinal head-knowledge. Rather, it is something that we believe in our hearts, and is evidenced by the way we live our lives. When things happen to us, therefore, we accept it willingly, submissively, and joyfully as being the will of God.

Secondly, God's will for us is always for the good of His church. We are His bride in Christ. He loves us with an infinite love. We are the apple of His eye. He desires to fellowship with us for eternity. His salvation of us, therefore, is not a part salvation but a complete salvation. He will bring us to heaven, spotless, as the church triumphant. And so Jehovah brings trials upon us to prepare us

better for heaven: so that we progress in sanctification, as individuals, in other words; and so that we become more pure (continue reforming) as churches.

And thirdly, this is what God did for us as a denomination. You will have noticed that the first beginnings of our churches brought people from many different denominations, most of which were baptistic in nature. You will have noticed, also, that the initial stages of our development were reactionary: people were not satisfied with the teaching in their various churches. Positively, they did not have a unified understanding of the truth upon which to form a stable union. Indeed, at the beginning there was no understanding of the Reformed faith at all!

In God's grace this situation changed. But there was still an underlying lack of unity, so that there was not total agreement in all matters of doctrine. Different emphases on one point of doctrine or another continued to be expressed. Sometimes these differences would erupt and people would leave—regularly, it seemed; or, on one or two occasions, divisions and schisms occurred. It appeared that peace would never come to Israel, as she was manifested in Australia in the EPC.

The thing is, though, that all the disruptions that God brought about in our denomination, from about 1964 to the late 80s, were the means of purifying us as churches. Due to the different beliefs and emphases of a number of the founding members of our denomination, there was continual bickering among us. As a consequence of

this we could not be positive, nor could we move forward. We could not set forth our doctrinal position with vigor and strength. We could not progress. All our efforts were taken up with "infighting" and survival. The more God removed those who were the cause of these differences and disruptions, however, the more we could get about the business of developing doctrine and moving forward.

There is, of course, more to the unsettled nature of our history than I have outlined briefly above. There has been disruption due to personality clashes, and desire for prominence and recognition within the denomination. There has been disruption due to nothing other than a hatred for the truth. There has been schism due to false doctrine and false practices. But in it all God has been reforming us as a denomination.

Not only is this true, but in the last eight to ten years there has been a remarkable peace in our midst. This is not to say that there have not been any problems. But, since coming back from studying in your seminary, I have heard faithful founding-members of our denomination repeatedly and joyously state that they have never known a period of such harmony. More, though, they comment on the positiveness of the courts of the church and are delighted by the efforts to advance in the knowledge of our most holy faith.

And this is all of God. He has brought it to pass, from the beginning to end. In this we may not look at ourselves with any pride. Rather we must praise our great and holy God. □

News From Our Churches

Mr. Benjamin Wigger

Young People's Activities

As many of our readers know, next year's Young People's Convention will be held, the Lord willing, in southern California, with the congregation of the Hope

PRC in Redlands, CA serving as host.

As you might imagine, this congregation of about 60 families is already hard at work with plans for that important event next sum-

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

mer. Fund raising, always an important part of any convention, got under way earlier this year, when Hope's young people took advantage of a problem facing their church. It seems that there were three eucalyptus trees growing by their parsonage that simply had gotten so large that there was an increasing danger of large branches breaking off and falling on a neighbor's property. Hope's consistory proposed that they accept a bid from a tree cutting company and have the trees cut down. This was done. It was then decided that the young people would get together, split the wood, and make it available for sale, with the anticipated income serving as a fundraiser for the 1999 Young People's Convention.

However, not all money raised this past summer in Redlands went for next year's convention. The young people also sponsored a special singspiration after their evening worship service on July 5. There were special numbers from the young people and also from a men's chorus. Funds received from a free will offering went to help those of Hope's young people who went to this year's convention at Grand Valley State University.

Congregation Activities

With mission work gearing up in Pittsburgh, PA, it was in-

teresting to note that our Southwest PRC in Grandville, MI, the calling church for that particular work, decided that the money collected during this past Sunday School season would be used to buy Sunday School materials for the group in Pittsburgh, which seemed like a good way to encourage the children of Southwest to give of their own money for this cause.

Ground-breaking for the sanctuary of the Georgetown PRC in Hudsonville, MI took place on August 4. We learned from a couple of recent bulletins that Georgetown's building committee was informed that their architect's drawings were finished. This, of course, allowed for work to begin. Some top-grading was done, masonry bids were received, and block was selected.

In late June the congregation of the Kalamazoo, MI PRC was informed by their consistory that they had decided to install two wall-mounted air conditioners in their auditorium. The money to fund this project was donated by an anonymous giver. It was hoped that these units would be installed before the end of July.

Mission Activities

As reported here last time, Rev. A.J. Mahtani was installed as missionary to Pittsburgh on August 9 at the Southwest PRC in

Grandville, MI.

He, his wife Esther, and their children then moved to Pittsburgh, PA on the 11th. A house has been purchased in the area. However, the Mahtanis will not be able to move in until around September 11. Until then they are living together in a couple of "small" adjoining rooms in a local Holiday Inn.

The Foreign Mission Committee of our churches is attempting to expedite inquiries concerning the requirements of registration within the country of Ghana, so that in the near future we may begin to call a missionary to this country.

Sister-church Activities

Our sister church, the Covenant Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore, has lost the right to use its building for worship services. They have a year to vacate their premises.

Because of the real estate situation in Singapore, finding another place of worship will be very difficult.

Food For Thought

With school just started, consider the words of John Hus (1369-1415, burned at the stake).

"Search the truth, hear the truth, learn the truth, hold the truth till death." □

Index to Volume 74

Textual Index

Genesis 3.....	HCH	204
Genesis 3:15.....	HCH	236
Genesis 3:16-19.....	HCH	277
Genesis 3:21-24.....	HCH	348
Genesis 5:24.....	CH	194
II Chronicles 20:12.....	RGM	146
Psalms 15:1.....	CH	242
Psalms 23:1.....	MDV	434
Psalms 96:9.....	SRK	172
Proverbs 31.....	AdH	225
Isaiah 52:7.....	JP	26
Amos 8:11, 12.....	DB	404

Haggai 2:1-9.....	KK	410
Matthew 1:21.....	SRK	67
Matthew 5:17-19.....	AdH	156
Matthew 19:9.....	DJE	271
Matthew 27:9.....	RGM	314
Mark 6:18.....	ER	390
Luke 1:30, 31.....	CH	122
Luke 2:1-14.....	JC	126
Luke 2:21-38.....	CJT	162
John 10:22-42.....	MCD	11
John 11.....	MCD	60
John 11.....	MCD	105
John 12:1-19.....	MCD	136
John 12:20-33.....	MCD	160

John 12:20, 23.....	CH	362
John 12:34-50.....	MCD	207
John 13:1-17.....	MCD	230
John 13:18-38.....	MCD	280
John 14:1-14.....	MCD	300
John 14:15-31.....	MCD	351
John 15.....	MCD	490
Acts 1:1-4.....	RGM	386
Acts 2:22-24.....	JC	266
Acts 2:39.....	BW	20
Romans 2:28, 29.....	HH	2
Romans 3:3, 4a.....	HH	50
Romans 3:7, 8.....	HH	74
Romans 4:16.....	BW	450

I Corinthians 14:8	BW	303	I Timothy 1:18	CH	290	I Peter 2:9	SRK	199
II Corinthians 6:14-18	WGB	331	I Timothy 2:4	CG	56	I Peter 2:20	SRH	218
Galatians 6:1	SRH	482	Philippians 2:1-3	BW	128	I Peter 3:5	MJ	458
Colossians 1:13, 14	RGM	98	Philippians 2:9-11	CH	338	II Peter 1:9	GB	295

Book Reviews

Title	Author	Reviewer	page
<i>Baptism: Meaning, Mode & Subjects</i>	Michael Kimmitt	DJE	428
<i>Believers and Their Seed</i> , Herman Hoeksema ..		DJE	79
<i>Believers and Their Seed: Children in the Covenant</i>	Herman Hoeksema ..	DHK	262
<i>Bondage and Liberation of the Will: A Defence of the Orthodox Doctrine of Human Choice against Pighius</i>	John Calvin	DJE	308
<i>By His Grace and for His Glory: A Historical, Theological, and Practical Study of the Doctrines of Grace in Baptist Life</i> ..	Thomas J. Nettles	HH	309
<i>God the Almighty: Power, Wisdom, Holiness, Love</i>	Donald G. Bloesch	DJE	381
<i>I Believe ... Living the Apostles Creed</i>	Lester DeKoster	DJE	334
<i>New Hearing for the Authorized Version</i>	Theodore P. Letus	DJE	335
<i>On Being a Theologian of the Cross: Reflections on Luther's Heidelberg Disputation, 1518</i>	Gerhard O. Forde	DJE	292

Title	Author	Reviewer	page
<i>One Purpose of God: An Answer to the Doctrine of Eternal Punishment</i> ...	Jan Bonda	DJE	439
<i>Princeton Seminary: Faith and Learning, 1812-1868</i>	David B. Calhoun	RDD	453
<i>Princeton Seminary: The Majestic Testimony 1869-1929</i>	David B. Calhoun	RDD	453
<i>Question of Woman: The Collected Writings of Charlotte von Kirschbaum</i>	E. Jackson	DJE	166
<i>Ready to Give an Answer</i>	H. Hoeksema, H. Hanko	DJE	79
<i>Sermons on the Deity of Christ</i>	John Calvin	DJE	285
<i>Sincerity Meets the Truth</i>	John Pedersen	DJE	118
<i>Spirit Wars: Pagan Revival in Christian America</i>	Peter Jones	DJE	453
<i>Today's Gospel and Apostolic Exhortations: A Study in Presentation of the Gospel</i>	A.G. Randalls	DJE	117
<i>Westminster Standards (An Original Facsimile)</i>		DJE	382

Title Index

Title	Author	page
About II Peter 1:9	GB	295
Administration of the Lord's Supper	RLC	88
Animism	AJB	68
Basil the Great on Psalm Singing	Basil	356
Battle Against Heresy	HH	251
Behold These Glorifications!	MCD	160
Birth of Jesus: Particular Grace	DJE	124
Blessedness of Christ's Glorification	CH	362
Born of a Woman	AM	273
Brief Declaration of Principles	BW	209
But Our Eyes Are Upon Thee	RGM	146
Chief of Sinners	CH	290
Christ, Our King (1)	SRK	396
Christ, Our King (2)	SRK	426
Christ, Our Priest (1)	SRK	306
Christ, Our Priest (2)	SRK	353
Christ Our Prophet	SRK	234
Christ, the Anointed of God	SRK	199
Christian Apology	MJ	458
Covenant Children — the Organic View	RJD	402
Covenant of Marriage (2): Courtship Within the Covenant	WB	108
Covenant of Marriage (2): Courtship Within the Covenant	WB	258

Title	Author	page
Covenant of Marriage (2): Courtship Within the Covenant	WB	331
Covenant: The Life of the Preaching	RJD	445
Cross & Double-cross!	MCD	280
Damnable Inference	HH	74
Decidedly Unbiblical Teaching	HD	439
Decision Making and the Will of God	AdH	464
Declaration — Unclear (?)	BW	303
Desire	DHK	284
Discipline of Officebearers (1)	RDD	400
Discipline of Officebearers (2)	RDD	448
Dordt — Set for the Defense of the Gospel (an overview of the Canons)	KK	40
Dwelling With God	CH	242
Editorial in the Christmas Cards	PB	199
Elders and <i>Censura Morum</i>	RDD	474
Elders and Discipline (2)	RDD	110
Elders and Discipline (3)	RDD	154
Encouraged to Persevere in the Lord's Great Building Project	KK	410
Enoch Walked With God	CH	194
Events Leading up to the Great Synod	RDD	31
Extra-Scriptural Binding (?)	BW	138
Extreme Remedy	RDD	232
Faith of God	HH	50
Fall's Effect on Language	DJK	7

Title	Author	page
Famine in the Land	DB.....	404
Fight the Good Fight.....	JF.....	378
Filled With the Spirit	RGM.....	386
Following Where He Leads.....	DD	374
Force of the Second Commandment in Worship	RVO	184
Funeral Services.....	RLC	228
Further Application of "Bert Zandstra"	RN	295
Gnosticism and Synthesis Religion	HH.....	344
God's Covenant: The Heart of the Protestant Reformed Pastor's Life and Walk	RJD	422
Hanukkah & Temple Truth.....	MCD	11
Herman Hoeksema: Theologian and Reformer (1)	HH.....	9
Herman Hoeksema: Theologian and Reformer (2)	HH.....	58
Herman Hoeksema: Theologian and Reformer (3)	HH.....	112
Hinduism	AJB	164
How Beautiful Are the Feet	JP	26
Ignorance, Misapplication, or Another Explanation	ER	390
Implications of "The Sad Case of Bert Zandstra" for the Young People.....	NH.....	152
Impossibility of Religious Work-Righteousness	HH.....	2
Introduction to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia.....	DH	472
Introduction to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia (2)	DH	493
Jehovah, Our Shepherd	MDV	434
Jesus, Jehovah-Salvation.....	SRK	15
Jesus, Jehovah-Salvation (2)	SRK	67
John Calvin on Singing Psalms in Church	JC	355
Language and Salvation	DJK	86
Love and the Footwashing	MCD	230
Marcion: First Bible Critic	HH.....	298
Marriage, a Calling	DJE	340
Marriage: A Lifelong Bond	DJE	317
Mary the Mother of Our Savior	CH	122
McSocieties, McVansma, & You	MCD	476
Men at Dordt	HH.....	34
Mission Enthusiasm, A Self-Analysis	JLK	212
Mission Enthusiasm — Our Solemn Duty	JLK	328
Mission Enthusiasm — Stimulated by Golden Opportunities	JLK	416
Montanus: First Charismatic	HH.....	391
More Light on Divorce and Remarriage: Matthew 19:9	DJE	271
Name Above All Names	CH	338
Nativity of Jesus Christ.....	JC	126
Necessity of the Strict Preaching of the Law in Church	AdH	156
New/Old Rubric	RJD	249
1998 BRF Family Holiday Conference	DJE	148
1998 Synod of the PRC	DJE	388

Title	Author	page
On Whose Side is Billy Graham?	BVW	199
Our Debt to Dordt	RLC	42
Our Work in Myanmar	JK	91
Our Work in Myanmar (2)	JK	114
Our Work in Myanmar (3)	JK	129
Outpost Falls	JS	492
Pain of Divorce for the Children	KE	153
Participating Pew	BLG	187
Philippines, an Open Door?	AdH	253
Poisonous Petals of the Arminian LILAC	CJT	37
PRC Synod 1998.....	DJE	414
Preaching and Missions Without a Debilitating Offer (1)	TCM	17
Preaching and Missions Without a Debilitating Offer (2)	TCM	246
Preaching in Worship: Voice of God, Voice of Christ (1)	DJE	170
Preaching in Worship: Voice of God, Voice of Christ (2)	DJE	196
Preaching in Worship: Voice of God, Voice of Christ (3)	DJE	221
Preaching in Worship: Voice of God, Voice of Christ (4)	DJE	244
Preaching the Gospel to the Nations	AJB	272
Preiluvian Period: From the Protevangel to the Flood (intro.)	HCH	398
Promise and/or Law	BW	450
Raising of Lazarus (1)	MCD	60
Raising of Lazarus (2)	MCD	105
RCA and "The Formula of Agreement"	JM	80
Read on the Web.....	RZ	103
Reaping	DHK	296
Reconciliation of Excommunicated Sinners ..	RDD	357
Reconciliation of Repentant Sinners	RDD	319
Redemption Through Christ's Blood	RGM	98
Reformed Family: The Church Picnic.....	MBL	443
Reformed Worldview	DJE	364
Reformed Worldview (2): The Failure of Common Grace.....	DJE	436
Reformed Worldview (3): The Failure of Common Grace (cont.).....	DJE	460
Reformed Worldview (4): The Failure of Common Grace (concl.)	DJE	485
Reformed Worship: Fellowship with the Holy One.....	SRK	172
Religious Holidays	RLC	369
Remarriage of the Guilty Party	DJE	100
Remnant Shall Be Saved	AdH	83
Restoring a Sinful Brother	SRH	482
Revelation of the Wonder of Grace in Paradise.....	HCH	204
Revelation of the Wonder of Grace in Paradise (cont.).....	HCH	236
Reverend John A. Heys	BLG	275
RFPFA and Religious Stew (1).....	MCD	62
RFPFA and Religious Stew (2).....	MCD	80

Title	Author	page
Sabellius the Unitarian	HH	469
Sacraments Are Still an Issue	DJE	5
Sad Case of Bert Zandstra	DJE	53
Scandal and Children	SP	152
Scandal and Silence	DJE	77
Secret of the Fruit of the Vine (1): Doctrine Fruit	MCD	490
Secret of the Spirit	MCD	351
Secret of the Way	MCD	300
Secretary's Report	BV	65
Seminary Newsletter	RDD	302
Setting of the Stage of History	HCH	277
Setting of the Stage of History (cont.)	HCH	323
Setting of the Stage of History (cont.)	HCH	348
Significance of Dordt for Today	DJE	29
Songs of Zion: What Shall the Church Sing?	HH	178
Sound Works on Amillennialism	ZG	55
Source of the Liberated Covenant View	BW	20
Special Days of Prayer	RLC	260
Spikenard Saturday, Palm Sunday	MCD	136
Spirit's Testimony to the Christ of God	JC	266
Spiritual House for God	CJT	486

Title	Author	page
Studies in the Life of Christ (1): Christ Circumcised and Presented to the Lord	CJT	162
Suffering For Well-Doing	SRH	218
Supreme Court Upholds Ban on Physician-assisted Suicide — No Constitutional "Right to Die"	JL	141
That Parenthesis in the Third Question	DHK	468
Theological Honesty Regarding Infant Baptism	JK	150
Timely Issue on Worship	MP	273
To Believe or Not to Believe	MCD	207
Travail	DHK	14
True Thanks	AJ	90
Universalism in the Reformed Churches	DJE	439
Valued in Contempt	RGM	314
Virtuous Woman of Proverbs 31	AdH	225
When a Soul Waits	JJ	343
Where are the Theologians of the Cross?	DJE	292
Why "Covenant Children"?	RJD	367
Why Reformed, Christian Schools	RJD	321
Worthwhile Books and Materials on the Synod of Dordt and Its Canons	DJE	44

Subject Index

Title	Author	page
ABORTION		
All Around Us	GVB	57
ADULTERY		
All Around Us	GVB	327
Ignorance, Misapplication, or Another Explanation	ER	390
Sad Case of Bert Zandstra	DJE	53
ADVENT		
Mary the Mother of Our Savior	CH	122
AMILLENNIALISM		
Sound Works on Amillennialism	ZG	55
ANIMISM		
Animism	AJB	68
ANNUAL REPORTS		
Secretary's Report	BV	65
APOSTASY		
All Around Us	GVB	223
ARMINIUS, JACOB		
Men at Dordt	HH	34
ASH WEDNESDAY		
All Around Us	GVB	326
BAPTISM FORM		
That Parenthesis in the Third Question	DHK	468
BATTLE OF FAITH		
Fight the Good Fight	JF	378
BIBLE STUDIES		
Behold These Glorifications!	MCD	160
Hanukkah & Temple Truth	MCD	11
Love and the Footwashing	MCD	230

Title	Author	page
BIBLE STUDIES (cont.)		
Raising of Lazarus (1)	MCD	60
Raising of Lazarus (2)	MCD	105
Secret of the Fruit of the Vine (1): Doctrine Fruit	MCD	490
Spikenard Saturday, Palm Sunday	MCD	136
To Believe or Not to Believe	MCD	207
BOGERMAN, JOHANNES		
Men at Dordt	HH	34
CANONS OF DORDRECHT		
Dordt — Set for the Defense of the Gospel (an overview of the Canons)	KK	40
CENSURA MORUM		
The Elders and <i>Censura Morum</i>	RDD	474
CHARISMATICS		
Montanus: First Charismatic	HH	391
CHRIST		
Birth of Jesus: Particular Grace	DJE	124
Born of a Woman	AM	273
Christ, Our King (1)	SRK	396
Christ, Our King (2)	SRK	426
Christ, Our Priest (1)	SRK	306
Christ, Our Priest (2)	SRK	353
Christ, our Prophet	SRK	234
Christ, the Anointed of God	SRK	199
Cross & Double-cross!	MCD	280
Nativity of Jesus Christ	JC	126
Studies in the Life of Christ (1): Christ Circumcised and Presented to the Lord	CJT	162

Title	Author	page
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION		
Why Reformed, Christian Schools	RJD	321
New/Old Rubric	RJD	249
CHRISTMAS CARDS		
Editorial in the Christmas Cards	PB	199
CHURCH		
Spiritual House for God	CJT	486
CHURCH ATTENDANCE		
Famine in the Land	DB	404
CHURCH HISTORY		
Battle Against Heresy	HH	251
Herman Hoeksema: Theologian and Reformer (1)	HH	9
Herman Hoeksema: Theologian and Reformer (2)	HH	58
Herman Hoeksema: Theologian and Reformer (3)	HH	112
Marcion: First Bible Critic	HH	298
Men at Dordt	HH	34
Montanus: First Charismatic	HH	391
CHURCH ORDER, Article 31		
Extra-Scriptural Binding (?)	BW	138
CHURCH ORDER, Article 65		
Funeral Services	RLC	228
CHURCH ORDER, Article 66		
Special Days of Prayer	RLC	260
CHURCH ORDER, Article 67		
Religious Holidays	RLC	369
CHURCH ORDER, Article 75		
Reconciliation of Repentant Sinners	RDD	319
CHURCH ORDER, Article 76		
Extreme Remedy	RDD	232
CHURCH ORDER, Article 78		
Reconciliation of Excommunicated Sinners	RDD	357
CHURCH ORDER, Article 79		
Discipline of Officebearers (2)	RDD	448
CHURCH ORDER, Articles 63, 64		
Administration of the Lord's Supper	RLC	88
CHURCH ORDER, Articles 72, 73, 74		
Elders and Discipline (2)	RDD	110
CHURCH ORDER, Articles 74, 76, 77		
Elders and Discipline (3)	RDD	154
CHURCH ORDER, Articles 79, 80		
Discipline of Officebearers (1)	RDD	400
CHURCH PICNIC		
Reformed Family: The Church Picnic	MBL	443
COMMON GRACE		
Reformed Worldview (2): The Failure of Common Grace	DJE	436
Reformed Worldview (3): The Failure of Common Grace (cont.)	DJE	460
Reformed Worldview (4): The Failure of Common Grace (concl.)	DJE	485
COMMUNICATION		
Fall's Effect on Language	DJK	7

Title	Author	page
CONFERENCES		
1998 BRF Family Holiday Conference	DJE	148
COURTSHIP		
Covenant of Marriage (2): Courtship Within the Covenant	WB	108
Covenant of Marriage (2): Courtship Within the Covenant	WB	258
Covenant of Marriage (2): Courtship Within the Covenant	WB	331
COVENANT		
Covenant Children — the Organic View	RJD	402
Covenant of Marriage (2): Courtship Within the Covenant	WB	108
Covenant of Marriage (2): Courtship Within the Covenant	WB	258
Covenant of Marriage (2): Courtship Within the Covenant	WB	331
Covenant: The Life of the Preaching	RJD	445
God's Covenant: The Heart of the Protestant Reformed Pastor's Life and Walk	RJD	422
Source of the Liberated Covenant View .	BW	20
Theological Honesty Regarding Infant Baptism	JK	150
Why "Covenant Children"?	RJD	367
COVENANT OF GRACE		
Revelation of the Wonder of Grace in Paradise (cont.)	HCH	236
Setting of the Stage of History	HCH	277
CPRC in NORTHERN IRELAND		
Following Where He Leads	DD	374
CREMATION		
Funeral Services	RLC	228
DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES		
Brief Declaration of Principles	BW	209
Declaration — Unclear(?)	BW	303
Extra-Scriptural Binding (?)	BW	138
Promise and/or Law	BW	450
DESIRE		
Desire	DHK	284
DISCIPLINE		
Discipline of Officebearers (1)	RDD	400
Discipline of Officebearers (2)	RDD	448
Elders and Discipline (2)	RDD	110
Elders and Discipline (3)	RDD	154
DIVORCE		
All Around Us	GVB	57
All Around Us	GVB	394
Further Application of "Bert Zandstra" .	RN	295
DIVORCE/REMARRIAGE		
Implications of "The Sad Case of Bert Zandstra" for the Young People	NH	152
More Light on Divorce and Remarriage: Matthew 19:9	DJE	271
Pain of Divorce for the Children	KE	153
Remarriage of the Guilty Party	DJE	100
Sad Case of Bert Zandstra	DJE	53

Title	Author	page	Title	Author	page
DIVORCE/REMARRIAGE (cont.)			GOMARUS, FRANCIS		
Scandal and Children	SP	152	Men at Dordt.....	HH	34
Scandal and Silence	DJE	77	GRACE		
DOCTRINE			Birth of Jesus: Particular Grace	DJE	124
The Secret of the Fruit of the Vine (1):			Revelation of the Wonder of Grace in		
Doctrine Fruit	MCD	490	Paradise	HCH	204
DOMESTIC MISSIONS			Significance of Dordt for Today	DJE	29
Following Where He Leads	DD	374	HEIDELBERG CATECHISM, LD 12		
DORDT			Christ, our Prophet	SRK	234
Synod of Dordt, 1618-1619		25	HEIDELBERG CATECHISM, LD 44		
ECUMENICITY			Necessity of the Strict Preaching of the		
All Around Us	GVB	56	Law in Church	AdH	156
RCA and "The Formula of Agreement" .	JM	80	HERESIES		
Sacraments Are Still an Issue	DJE	5	Gnosticism and Synthesis Religion	HH	344
EDUCATION			HERESY HUNTING		
All Around Us	GVB	203	Battle Against Heresy	HH	251
END TIMES			HERETICS		
All Around Us	GVB	424	Marcion: First Bible Critic	HH	298
All Around Us	GVB	441	Montanus: First Charismatic.....	HH	391
ENOCH			Sabellius the Unitarian	HH	469
Enoch Walked With God	CH	194	HEYS, JOHN A.		
EPISCOPIUS, SIMON			Reverend John A. Heys	BLG	275
Men at Dordt.....	HH	34	HINDUISM		
EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH			Hinduism	AJB	164
OF AUSTRALIA			HOEKSEMA, HERMAN		
Introduction to the EPC of Australia	DH	472	Herman Hoeksema: Theologian and		
Introduction to the EPC of Australia (2)	DH	493	Reformer (1)	HH	9
EVOLUTION			Herman Hoeksema: Theologian and		
All Around Us	GVB	463	Reformer (2)	HH	58
EXCOMMUNICATION			Herman Hoeksema: Theologian and		
Extreme Remedy	RDD	232	Reformer (3)	HH	112
Reconciliation of Excommunicated			HOLIDAYS		
Sinners	RDD	357	Religious Holidays	RLC	369
FAITHFULNESS OF GOD			HOMOSEXUALITY		
Faith of God	HH	50	All Around Us	GVB	202
FAMILY			HOUSTON, TX		
Reformed Family: The Church Picnic	MBL	443	Following Where He Leads	DD	374
FASTING			News From Our Churches	BW	478
Special Days of Prayer	RLC	260	Outpost Falls	JS	492
FOOT WASHING			JESUS		
Love and the Footwashing	MCD	230	Birth of Jesus: Particular Grace	DJE	124
FOREIGN MISSIONS			Born of a Woman	AM	273
Preaching the Gospel to the Nations	AJB	272	Jesus, Jehovah-Salvation	SRK	15
FREE OFFER			Jesus, Jehovah-Salvation (2)	SRK	67
Preaching and Missions without a			KUYPER, ABRAHAM		
Debilitating Offer (1)	TCM	17	Reformed Worldview	DJE	364
Preaching and Missions without a			Reformed Worldview (2): The Failure of		
Debilitating Offer (2)	TCM	246	Common Grace	DJE	436
FREE SPEECH			LANGUAGE		
All Around Us	GVB	395	Fall's Effect on Language	DJK	7
FUNERALS			Language and Salvation	DJK	86
Funeral Services	RLC	228	LAW		
GHANA			Necessity of the Strict Preaching of the		
Preaching the Gospel to the Nations	ABJ	372	Law in Church	AdH	156
GNOSTICISM					
Gnosticism and Synthesis Religion	HH	344			

Title	Author	page
LILAC		
Poisonous Petals of the Arminian		
LILAC	CJT	37
LORD'S SUPPER		
Administration of the Lord's Supper	RLC	88
RCA and "The Formula of Agreement"	JM	80
Sacraments Are Still an Issue	DJE	5
LORD'S SUPPER, ADMINISTRATION OF		
Letters	RV	198
LUTHER, MARTIN, THEOLOGY of		
Where are the Theologians of the Cross?	DJE	292
MARCION		
Marcion: First Bible Critic	HH	298
MARIOLOGY		
All Around Us	GVB	103
MARRIAGE		
Covenant of Marriage (2): Courtship Within the		
Covenant	WB	108
Covenant of Marriage (2): Courtship Within the		
Covenant	WB	258
Covenant of Marriage (2): Courtship Within the		
Covenant	WB	331
Marriage, a Calling	DJE	340
Marriage: a Lifelong Bond	DJE	317
When a Soul Waits	JJ	343
MARY		
Mary the Mother of Our Savior	CH	122
MISSIONS		
Following Where He Leads	DD	374
Mission Enthusiasm, a Self-Analysis	JLK	212
Mission Enthusiasm —		
Our Solemn Duty	JLK	328
Mission Enthusiasm — Stimulated by		
Golden Opportunities	JLK	416
Our work in Myanmar	JK	91
Our Work in Myanmar (2)	JK	114
Our Work in Myanmar (3)	JK	129
Philippines, an Open Door?	AdH	253
Preaching and Missions without a		
Debilitating Offer (1)	TCM	17
Preaching and Missions without a		
Debilitating Offer (2)	TCM	246
Preaching the Gospel to the Nations	AJB	372
MIXED MARRIAGES		
All Around Us	GVB	224
MONTANUS		
Montanus: First Charismatic	HH	391
MORALITY		
All Around Us	GVB	282
MYANMAR		
Our Work in Myanmar	JK	91
Our Work in Myanmar (2)	JK	129
Our Work in Myanmar (3)	JK	129
NAPARC		
All Around Us	GVB	201

Title	Author	page
NEW YEAR		
But Our Eyes Are Upon Thee	RGM	146
OFFICEBEARERS		
Discipline of Officebearers (1)	RDD	400
Elders and <i>Censura Morum</i>	RDD	474
Elders and Discipline (2)	RDD	110
Elders and Discipline (3)	RDD	154
OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY		
Prediluvian Period: From the Protevangel		
to the Flood (intro.)	HCH	398
Revelation of the Wonder of Grace in		
Paradise	HCH	204
Revelation of the Wonder of Grace in		
Paradise (cont.)	HCH	236
Setting of the Stage of History	HCH	277
Setting of the Stage of History (cont.)	HCH	323
PALM SUNDAY		
Spikenard Saturday, Palm Sunday	MCD	136
PARADISE		
Revelation of the Wonder of Grace in		
Paradise	HCH	204
Revelation of the Wonder of Grace in		
Paradise (cont.)	HCH	236
Setting of the Stage of History	HCH	277
Setting of the Stage of History (cont.)	HCH	323
PARANORMAL		
All Around Us	GVB	394
PENTECOST		
Blessedness of Christ's Glorification	CH	362
Filled with the Spirit	RGM	386
PHILIPPINES		
Philippines an Open Door?	AdH	253
Preaching the Gospel to the Nations	AJB	372
PITTSBURGH, PA		
Following Where He Leads	DD	374
PLANCIUS, PIETER		
Men at Dordt	HH	34
PLURALISM		
RFPa and Religious Stew (1)	MCD	62
RFPa and Religious Stew (2)	MCD	80
POLYGAMY		
Reader Asks	JK	274
PRAYER DAY		
Special Days of Prayer	RLC	260
PRE-SYNODICAL SERMON		
Encouraged to Persevere in the Lord's		
Great Building Project	KK	410
PREACHING		
Covenant: The Life of the Preaching	RJD	445
Famine in the Land	DB	404
Mission Enthusiasm —		
Our Solemn Duty	JLK	328
Necessity of the Strict Preaching of the		
Law in Church	AdH	156
Preaching and Missions without a		
Debilitating Offer (1)	TCM	17

Title	Author	page
PREACHING (cont.)		
Preaching and Missions without a Debilitating Offer (2)	TCM	246
Preaching in Worship: Voice of God, Voice of Christ (1)	DJE	196
Preaching in Worship: Voice of God, Voice of Christ (2)	DJE	196
Preaching in Worship: Voice of God, Voice of Christ (3)	DJE	221
Preaching in Worship: Voice of God, Voice of Christ (4)	DJE	244
PROMISE KEEPERS		
All Around Us	GVB	135
All Around Us	GVB	326
PSALM-SINGING		
Basil the Great on Psalm Singing	Basil	356
John Calvin on Singing Psalms in Church	JC	355
Songs of Zion: What Shall the Church Sing?	HH	178
REAPING		
Reaping	DHK	296
RECONCILIATION		
Reconciliation of Repentant Sinners	RDD	319
REGENERATION		
Why "Covenant Children"?	RJD	367
REMARRIAGE		
Remarriage of the Guilty Party	DJE	100
RESTORATION		
Restoring a Sinful Brother	SRH	482
RFPA		
Secretary's Report	BV	65
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCHES		
All Around Us	GVB	425
SABELLIUS		
Sabellius the Unitarian	HH	469
SACRAMENTS		
Administration of the Lord's Supper	RLC	88
RCA and "The Formula of Agreement" ..	JM	80
Sacraments Are Still an Issue	DJE	5
SALVATION		
All Around Us	GVB	133
Jesus, Jehovah-Salvation	SRK	15
Language and Salvation	DJK	86
On Whose Side is Billy Graham?	BVW	199
Redemption Through Christ's Blood	RGM	98
Remnant Shall Be Saved	AdH	83
SAN LUIS VALLEY, CO		
Following Where He Leads	DD	374
SECOND COMMANDMENT		
Force of the Second Commandment in Worship	RVO	184
SEMINARY		
Seminary Newsletter	RDD	302

Title	Author	page
SEMINARY GRADUATION		
God's Covenant: The Heart of the Protestant Reformed Pastor's Life and Walk	RJD	422
SHEPHERD		
Jehovah, Our Shepherd	MDV	434
SOCIETIES		
McSocieties, McVansma, & You	MCD	476
SPECIAL ISSUE		
Reformed Worship		169
Synod of Dordt, 1618-1619		25
SUFFERING FOR CHRIST		
Suffering For Well-Doing	SRH	218
SUICIDE		
Supreme Court Upholds Ban on Physician-assisted Suicide — No Constitutional "Right to Die"	JL	141
SYNOD		
All Around Us	GVB	425
1998 Synod of the PRC	DJE	388
PRC Synod 1998	DJE	414
SYNOD OF DORDT		
Dordt — Set for the Defense of the Gospel (an overview of the Canons)	KK	40
Events Leading up to the Great Synod ...	RJD	31
Men at Dordt	HH	34
Our Debt to Dordt	RLC	42
Poisonous Petals of the Arminian LILAC	CJT	37
Significance of Dordt for Today	DJE	29
Synod of Dordt, 1618-1619		25
Worthwhile Books and Materials on the Synod of Dordt and Its Canons	DJE	44
SYNTHESIS		
Gnosticism and Synthesis Religion	HH	344
THANKSGIVING		
True Thanks	AJ	90
THEOLOGY		
Where are the Theologians of the Cross? DJE		292
TRAVAIL		
Travail	DHK	14
TULIP		
Poisonous Petals of the Arminian LILAC	CJT	37
UNIVERSALISM		
Universalism in the Reformed Churches DJE		439
UYTENBOGAERT, JAN		
Men at Dordt	HH	34
VALENTIUS		
Gnosticism and Synthesis Religion	HH	344
WEB PAGE		
Read on the Web	RZ	103
WELL-MEANT OFFER		
Decidedly Unbiblical Teaching	HD	439
WILL OF GOD		
Decision Making and the Will of God	AdH	464

Title	Author	page
WITNESSING		
Mission Enthusiasm — Our Solemn Duty	JLK	328
WOMEN		
Virtuous Woman of Proverbs 31	AdH	225
WORD STUDIES		
Desire	DHK	284
Reaping	DHK	296
Travail	DHK	14
WORK-RIGHTEOUSNESS		
Impossibility of Religious Work-Righteousness	HH	2
WORLD VIEW		
Reformed Worldview	DJE	364
Reformed Worldview (2): The Failure of Common Grace	DJE	436
Reformed Worldview (3): The Failure of Common Grace (cont.)	DJE	460
Reformed Worldview (4): The Failure of Common Grace (concl.)	DJE	485

Title	Author	page
WORSHIP		
Force of the Second Commandment in Worship	RVO	184
WORSHIP (Cont.)		
Participating Pew	BLG	187
Preaching in Worship: Voice of God, Voice of Christ (1)	DJE	170
Preaching in Worship: Voice of God, Voice of Christ (2)	DJE	196
Preaching in Worship: Voice of God, Voice of Christ (3)	DJE	221
Preaching in Worship: Voice of God, Voice of Christ (4)	DJE	244
Reformed Worship		169
Reformed Worship: Fellowship with the Holy One	SRK	172
Timely Issue on Worship	MP	273
WWJD		
All Around Us	GVB	327

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Sr. Mr. and Mrs. Society of Hope PRC (Walker) expresses its Christian sympathy to Bob and Kathy Knott and their family in the death of Kathy's mother,

MRS. KAY LAMBREGTSE.

As we read in Psalm 34, may our covenant God, who is so good, be their hope and their comfort: "Oh taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him" (v. 8); "The LORD is high unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (v. 18).

Rev. J. Laning, Pres.
Connie Meyer, Sec'y.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On September 4, 1998

MR. and MRS. JACK VANDYKE celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary.

We thank our heavenly Father for them and for His love, care, and instruction given us through them.

We pray that God will continue to bless them and keep them in His care. "For the Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting and his truth endureth to all generations" (Psalm 100:5).

- ❖ Ken and Sheri Pastoor
 - ❖ Dave and Nancy VanBaren
 - ❖ Dave and Julie VanOverloop
 - ❖ Jim and Kim VanDyke
- 11 grand children

Grand Rapids, Michigan

Parents of college students who live away from home during the school year are reminded that the RFPA will send free *Standard Bearers* to the students if we are informed of their college addresses.

NOTICE!!

The issue of September 15 is the last in Volume 74. Bound volumes will be made available for \$20.00 (+postage) each. Or, if you bring or send to the SB business office soon your own loose issues for binding, you can obtain the bound volume for just \$12.00. (The latter service can be provided if we have your copies by October 15.)

REMINDER

The annual meeting of the RFPA will be held in Grace PRC on September 24. Rev. Key will be speaking on the topic: "Reading, Writing, and Heretics." Hope to see our subscribers from the west Michigan area in attendance.