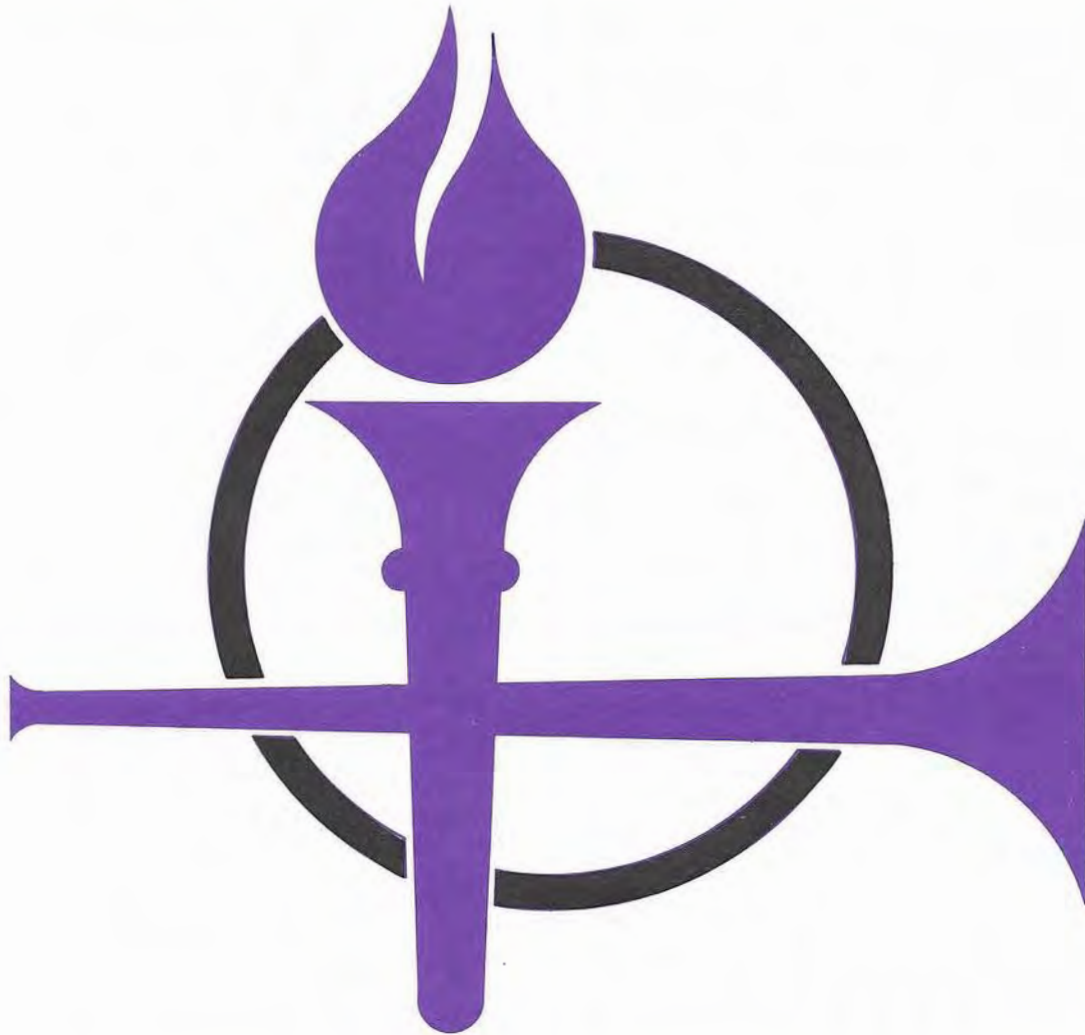


THE OUTLOOK

DEVOTED TO THE EXPOSITION AND DEFENSE OF THE REFORMED FAITH

JULY 1980



**OUR HERITAGE FOR A SONG
A BREAK OVERDUE
WOMEN IN THE BIBLE**

SELL OUR HERITAGE FOR A SONG?

John R. Jackson

A few years ago, I was invited to conduct the worship services at a Christian Reformed church in western Michigan. Before the evening service, as I sat in the consistory room, one of the elders informed me that a vocal group from a local Baptist church would be presenting some "special music" before and during the service. I was further advised that it was the custom in that church for the pastor to thank the group for their renditions.

My sermon that evening dealt with the second coming of our Lord. Evidently, the musical group had been informed of my sermon theme, since they had selected a song that also dealt with Christ's return. But as the group performed, it was obvious that their views regarding the last things were radically different from those which I would soon be presenting in my message. The number they had chosen reflected a dispensational, premillarian eschatology or doctrine of the last things.

Clearly, I was in a difficult position. I had been asked in advance to publicly thank people who had, in song, set forth views that were heretical. Fumbling for words, I thanked them for being present that evening, avoiding any mention of their music and its faulty theology.

It was a curious situation, and regrettably, one which other pastors have also experienced. If I had set forth in my sermon the same views the quartet had presented in song, I would have been liable to the discipline of the church, and rightly so. I would like to think that the elders of the congregation would have done their duty and demanded a public retraction and apology had I abused my privileges as a guest by proclaiming an un-Reformed eschatology. But since the heresy came in the form of a song instead of a sermon, it was not only to be tolerated, I was to express appreciation to the vocal group for contradicting the Reformed position and my sermon!

The Problem of "Special Music"

This points up a problem faced by many congregations in these days, the problem of "special music." All too often, both in terms of the quality of the music and the doctrinal content of the words, special music is an embarrassment to any congregation that identifies herself with the Reformed heritage. Music is a very important part of the worship service, one which, if properly used, is a real blessing to those who have gathered for worship. But, as all good things, music can be abused.

Church music has become one of the most controversial issues within the local church today. The consistory's music committee has a difficult and thankless task as it attempts to conscientiously supervise music in the worship services, particularly if it tries to follow the "Statement of Principle for Music in Church" as found in the front of the *Psalter Hymnal*.

There is pressure from the congregation to schedule more "special music" like the church down the road does. Many members will be very unhappy if the song service leader is required to limit his selections to numbers coming from the *Psalter Hymnal*, instead of using a paper bound edition of "favorite hymns," many of which are blatantly Arminian.

Endorsement by Silence

Our current situation regarding music is especially serious since few people today recognize any of the perils presented by the trends in church music today. Even churches that are in other ways very conservative are often very liberal and permissive as far as music is concerned. It is very difficult to correct a problem when no one sees it for what it is.

What are the dangers of today's musical trends? First, as illustrated before, via the music which we allow in our worship services, we often bring in teachings that are Arminian, dispensational and subjectivistic. Many of the songs in "song service hymnals" speak of man as having free will, of Christ's atonement as if it were general instead of particular, and of the rapture and tribulation, to cite but a few teachings we are convinced are unbiblical. "Special musicians" many times choose numbers with the same weaknesses, and preface the rendition with a subjectivistic, often shallow "testimony." Through our silence, we endorse these views.

Arminian View of Worship

While there is no valid justification for such practices, an appeal is often made to the musical tastes and preferences of the congregation. It is argued that if a large enough segment within the church "enjoys" such music, it ought to be allowed. But the question must be asked: Is the consistory to lead the church in these matters, or is it simply to follow the clamorings of a vocal minority (or even a majority, for that matter)?

This line of thought also illustrates a second danger, one which threatens our worship services in general. In many cases, the worship service has degenerated into mere entertainment, and faulty "music" deserves a large part of the blame. If one comes to church merely to be "entertained," he will have the wrong perspective on all that takes place in the service. We come to church to worship the living God and to be nourished by His Word as proclaimed. Thus, the focus and emphasis must be on God and His Word, not on man and his enjoyment. Whenever this man-centered or Arminian view of worship infects people, there will be a decided preference for outward show to the neglect of solid, Biblical content both in music and in sermons.

Further Effects of "Special Music"

In evaluating music today, we must not overlook the potential consequences of "special music" on the local church and the musicians themselves. When music committees insist on frequently bringing in groups from other churches, they often stifle budding talent within their own congregations — talent which would be far easier for the consistory to supervise with regard to song selections. One must also ask about the spiritual consequences for musicians and their families, when they must be in a different church every Sunday evening. I would suggest that those consequences are far from beneficial.

Necessary Guidelines

If special music is to be part of our worship services, it must focus on the worship of God and the edification of His people, and not on the entertainment of man or the exhibition of the talents of a person or group. In this light, some churches require that special music be rendered from the balcony so that it is less likely to become a performance or to detract from the orderliness of the service.

Furthermore, special music must not in any way detract from the preaching of the Word. The content of music presented should not contradict or detract from the Reformed conception of the Truth, but should rather be an integral part of the service and should suit the theme chosen by the pastor whenever possible. It goes without saying that no one should expect the minister to cut short his message in order to conclude the service within an hour under any circumstances, least of all because "special music" took up ten minutes of the service.

It is for good reason that the Church Order requires consistories to supervise the music of the church (Article 52, h and c). The theology implicit in the songs used within the worship service has a way of making an impression on the minds of worshipers, just as do the shoddy morals of rock and country music when heard in daily situations. Is it any wonder that many church members today cannot distinguish an Arminian from an armadillo when we allow man-centered hymns to have a part in our worship? Our fathers broke from the Reformed Church in America in part over this issue of church music. In so doing, they were not being "picky" or overly critical. They recognized the subtle power of music to lead spiritual lambs astray.

It behooves consistories everywhere to redouble their efforts to screen all church music in the light of Reformed principles. Our Reformed heritage is too precious to be sold for a song. ●

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THE OUTLOOK

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"And the three companies blew the trumpets . . . and held THE TORCHES in their left hands, and THE TRUMPETS in their right hands . . . and they cried, The sword of Jehovah and of Gideon" (Judges 7:20).

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THE CONDITION OF REAL FREEDOM

Peter De Jong

"If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

"If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:31, 32, 38).

July 4 is commonly considered to be our nation's birthday. That was the date on which the Declaration of Independence was signed 204 years ago, announcing our freedom from the rule of the King of England. It is significant that this freedom from outside rule should be considered to be the beginning of the country. It has over the years prided itself on being the land of freedom or "liberty." It has also been so regarded by others. At the moment tens of thousands of Cubans are hazarding their lives in order to reach it in a flight from Communist oppression.

Freedom Is Possible Only Under Law: An Early Lesson

Far too usually overlooked throughout the nation's history, has been the principle that real freedom is possible only under law. We are apt to forget that the new nation almost fell apart before it was 12 years old because enthusiasts for freedom who had led it failed to provide in their "Articles of Confederation" an adequate structure of laws to bind the squabbling, self-seeking colonies which became its "states" together into one country. Especially C. Gregg Singer in his book, *A Theological Interpretation of American History*, has called attention to the way the fatal defects of the early government compelled the calling of a constitutional convention, with different leaders, men more appreciative of the indispensability of law and order, to write the Constitution which has fixed the form of our government since 1789. It is said that Alexander Hamilton in writing the Constitution of a stronger, more effective government, had before him the Calvinistic, Presbyterian, order of church government as his pattern.

A Needed Lesson Today

Our nation, like others through the centuries, enjoys a freedom that depends on law and its observance. Where the law is generally broken or ignored, freedom is threatened or destroyed. Ancient Israel had to learn that lesson by bitter experience. The account of that bitter experience forms the history of the Book of Judges. When it turned from God and His laws it was given over to the oppression of neighboring enemies or, having lost its bond of union, fell into self-destructive civil war. Our nation is being rudely awakened to realize that we are threatened by exactly the same kind of judgments. Our disgrace in the deserts of Iran is one of the more recent reminders which the Lord has given us that He is "not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

Only Christ Gives Real Freedom

Especially the Lord Jesus pointed out that real freedom has to have a spiritual foundation and that He is the only one who can give that. The story has a contemporary flavor as we read of the resentment of His hearers at what seemed to them to be the arrogance of His claim. "Jesus . . . said to those Jews who had believed him, If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." It is apparent that His hearers resented this. "They answered . . . , We are Abraham's seed, and have never yet been in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Everyone that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin." The real problem of these people was that while they were proud of their imagined freedom as privileged Jewish people, they were really strangers to and in revolt against God and His laws, and as such were the slaves of sin. They were enslaved to that inspirer of revolt, their spiritual "father, the devil" (vs. 44). As such they did not know what the real freedom of God's children was. And they had no real hope for the future. Jesus went on to say, "And the bondservant abideth not in the house for ever; the son abideth for ever. If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Christ, the Son, came as the great Liberator to save men from the hopeless slavery to sin, Satan, and death, for the "glorious liberty of the children of God." One can only be free to really live by coming to know and believe in Him through receiving and following His word. This is the lesson of the gospel of Christ. It is addressed to each one of us. Each is called to turn, from his or her own self-willed way of living, to the Lord, in repentance and surrender to Him. The gospel gives *personal* freedom to be children of God. The new life as children of God also transforms all kinds of social, economic and political relationships, as obedient believers begin to experience the fulfillment of Christ's promise, "if the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." ●

PUBLICAN OR PHARISEE?

THE PHARISEE,

Proud, Deceitful, Judgmental, Unregenerate!

THE PUBLICAN,

(Humble, Burdened, Unworthy, Penitent)

Thank God, I am not like the Pharisee! (the hypocrite)

I Live my life for the Lord

Try to help others

Do not condone gross sins

Such as Drunkenness, Immorality, Murder

MY LIFE Is clean, Respectable, Exemplary

Thank God, I am not like the Pharisee!

OR AM I?

Annetta Jansen
Dorr, Michigan

CHRISTIAN SCHOOL FOUNDERS' AIMS

Robert VanderLaan

Senator Robert VanderLaan, Minority Leader of the Michigan State Senate, is a former Christian School teacher and a member of the Millbrook Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids. One of the first board members of the Dutton Christian School, he was the speaker at its 25th anniversary celebration on March 18, 1980. In a brief address he outlined nine ways in which the aim of the Christian Schools' founders had differed from that of the conventional wisdom of the time, and in which today's educational developments and problems are vindicating their Christian vision. Senator VanderLaan kindly provided us with this outline of his address for our readers.

Twenty-five years ago, in the mid-fifties, when the founders established Dutton Christian School, the conventional wisdom of the times differed from the founders' opinions. As we look back over the twenty-five years, we find that conventional wisdom was wrong and the position taken by the founders was correct. For example:

- A. Conventional wisdom was saying: God is dead. The founders decided: to build and establish a school that was God centered. Today, the God is dead theory is dead.
- B. Conventional wisdom was saying: We must meet people where they are. Education is for the masses — must appeal to the average student. The founders believed: We must strive for excellence. Today, people are demanding excellence in the schools.
- C. Conventional wisdom said: We must present all sides of the issues impartially as not to offend anyone. The founders said: We must measure everything we do by God's eternal standards.

D. Conventional wisdom said: We must allow complete freedom for the students. Do not restrain or inhibit freedom or even license, not only tolerate but encourage.

The founders said: We are free only in so far as we obey God's law.

E. Conventional wisdom believed: We must educate the child to understand what life is.

The founders said: We must educate the child so he/she knows what life should be.

F. Conventional wisdom said: We must allow our children to taste all of life's experiences, including all the frills.

The founders said: We must equip our students with the basic tools which are necessary to cope with all of life's experiences.

G. Conventional wisdom said: We must set aside religion and philosophical differences which are inherent and divisive. Separatism is evil.

The founders said: We are a part of the world, but we have distinct world and life views which must be taught.

H. Conventional wisdom said: We have new morality, social and moral issues. New freedom with social and moral issues — life, marriage, sex, etc. The founders said: Biblical morality is neither old or new — it is timeless and changeless.

I. Conventional wisdom said: We would see the decline of private, religious education — costs too much, the commitment is not there.

The founders said: We know the price, have considered the cost and are willing to make the sacrifice.

As we look back, we know that private, religious education schools, particularly at the K-12 level, are the fastest growing part of the educational community today. ●

A BREAK OVERDUE!

H. Vander Kam

"Appalling Decisions"

The Banner of April 25, 1980 contained an excellent and informative guest editorial by Rev. W. Haverkamp entitled: "The Dutch Decisions Regarding Homosexuals." The writer speaks of "appalling decisions" which the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands have taken concerning the matter of homosexuals and the failure of this denomination to consult with others, with whom they stand in close ecclesiastical fellowship, about this matter. He concludes that "the time has come to take steps to sever the existing relationship with the Gereformeerde

Kerken in the Netherlands." He does not advocate this severing of relations without a deep sense of grief. His roots were there. It was the church in which he was baptized. One gets the feeling that his proposal was wrung from his heart. But, the "appalling decisions" taken by this church permit no other conclusion.

A Church No Longer Reformed

The decisions of the GKN regarding homosexuals is, however, only one instance in a long list of difficulties which we have in our relation to them. There is the view of Scripture held by many of their scholars. There are the questions regarding creation, the

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resurrection and the atonement. There has been a lack of discipline of those who contradict the confessions we hold in common. There is the membership in the World Council, etc. One can indeed weep when he sees how this church has lost its Reformed character and that it is no longer a vital force in the lives of many of its members.

Consider the History

It is high time that we consider the history which lies behind the present state of affairs in this church so that we will also be able to understand why we cannot persuade the Vrijgemaakte Kerken in the Netherlands and the Canadian Reformed Churches to enter into closer fellowship with us unless we terminate our fellowship with the GKN. These churches left the GKN in 1944. This happened, therefore, while the second World War was still raging in Europe and Holland was still conquered territory. We did not know what had taken place until after the war was ended. In 1946 the First Reformed Ecumenical Synod met in Grand Rapids. Prof. Aalders, of the Free University, informed the RES of the things which had happened in the years 1942-1944 which led to the split in the church. The other side was not heard! The Christian Reformed Church simply continued its former relations with the GKN while those who had left the GKN maintained that they were the true continuation of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland.

New Leaders After 1920

For the understanding of the situation in the GKN of recent years, it may be well to follow the events which have taken place since 1920. In that year Dr. A. Kuyper died. In 1921 the great dogmatician, Dr. H. Bavinck, died. These had been two of the greatest lights in the Reformed firmament. Upon their death a new generation of leaders were called upon to give direction to the church and the Reformed community. There was a tremendous output of theological works during the 20s and 30s of this century. Yet, there was something lacking. Bavinck had written his dogmatics, and even he did not write further in this field but restricted himself almost entirely to subjects dealing with psychology and education. His successor at the Free University, Dr. V. Hepp, produced little in the field of systematic theology. Prof. Honig, at Kampen, wrote a handbook on dogmatics. There almost seemed to be the feeling that the last word had been said when Bavinck's great work had been published. This led to a certain amount of scholasticism in the church.

During the 1920s there were two notable heresy trials in the church. The first one was the case of Dr. Netelenbos and dealt with the historicity of the events recorded in Genesis, etc. The second dealt with the view of Dr. Geelkerken who was not assured of the historicity of the events recorded in Genesis 3. In both of these cases the Synod took a very firm stand and both these brethren were deposed.

Enter Dr. Schilder

Dr. Geelkerken had been deposed in 1926. Dr. V. Hepp was the editor-in-chief of *De Reformatie* and

Dr. K. Schilder was one of the associate editors. In 1929 Dr. Hepp began to work on a "Calvinistenbond." This was to be an organization for Calvinists from various countries. Dr. Geelkerken was asked to join and to take a leading part in this organization. Schilder objected that a person whose Reformed position had been condemned by the Synod could not be recognized as a Calvinist. By far the larger part of the religious press sided with Schilder. The debate became so heated that Dr. Hepp resigned as editor of "De Reformatie."

In 1930 the opportunity opened for Schilder to pursue post-graduate study. He was interested in studying systematic theology and went to the University of Erlangen in Germany because he did not feel comfortable in studying under Dr. Hepp with whom he was in principal disagreement. Schilder obtained his degree "summa cum laude" and was unanimously elected to the chair of Dogmatic Theology at Kampen by the Synod of 1933.

On the 17th of January, 1934, Prof. Schilder assumed his task as professor at the Theological School at Kampen. Less than a month later Dr. Hepp wrote an article in an almanac of the Free University in which he attacked the views of Schilder on the doctrine of the church, writing under the caption: "Pluriformiteitsleer-gebruik en epigonisme." By the latter term he meant one who is not equal to the task of carrying on the work of former generations. One who is not able to deal with a whole concept but looks only at a part. Dr. Schilder replied extensively and sharply! He saw it not, first of all, as a personal attack but an attack on the view of the church which he had developed over the span of several years and which he considered to be of utmost importance to the church. But, it should also be clear that the lines were being drawn sharply — also between persons.

Schilder engaged in polemics. He was editor of *De Reformatie* with two others for a few years (1930-1935) and in April of 1935 he became sole editor of this influential paper. He wrote many an article against the Barthian Theology which had already made its inroads in Holland and had an able spokesman in Prof. Haitjema of Groningen. Schilder did not cease to warn. He wrote many articles against the mystical strain in *De Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk*. Having studied in Germany when Hitler came to power, he warned against the party of the National Socialists in the Netherlands before anyone else had dared to touch this subject. He wrote about a multitude of subjects and his "Persschouw" revealed that he had read virtually everything which had been written in both the religious and secular press.

Opposition to Schilder

But, although he had awakened the church as no one had done for many years, the opposition was not lacking. Various writers found fault with the sharpness of his polemics. Envy also was not lacking. Whereas the Free University had played the leading role for many years, some of its leaders were beginning to see that the influence of Kampen, and especially its dogmatician, was being felt throughout the

church and that Schilder had many disciples. His students realized the greatness of this man and the preaching gave evidence of more life. The Scriptures were being opened as they had not been for some time. Schilder advocated the right of Kampen to give graduate degrees and the men of the Free University opposed it with all their might.

The Synod of 1936 was a very important one. For one thing, it required the churches to deal disciplinarily with those who belonged to the National Socialist Party. Another matter which came up at this Synod, though it did not come from a minor assembly and was therefore really not legally before Synod, was the matter of polemics and "Differences of Opinion" which became "Doctrinal Differences." This matter was simply brought up by two delegates to this Synod. Amazingly, the Synod decided to go into the matter and finally appointed a committee to study various doctrinal issues which were under discussion in the press. Both Schilder and Hepp were members of this committee. While the Synod was still in session, Dr. Hepp published the first of a series of brochures dealing with "Dreigende Deformatie" (Threatening Deformation). In these brochures he did not mention names nor cite pages of works he was quoting although everyone knew who were the objects of his attacks. He attacked Vollenhoven and De Graaf and Schilder, among others. This manner of procedure on his part made it virtually impossible for the committee to do its work. Dr. S. Greijdanus resigned from the committee because of Hepp's action. Drs. Vollenhoven and Schilder did not resign, but they did not meet with the committee the last two years. The unity was broken.

During the years after 1936 Schilder continued to write as he had done earlier. Not only Dr. Hepp, but also Dr. H. H. Kuyper attacked him again and again. Twice he wrote an "open letter" to Dr. Kuyper. He warned against the peril of Nazism and unmasked Dr. Vande Vaart Smit, a minister in the GKN who had become the director of the Nazi Press Bureau in Holland. He was untiring in showing the dangers of the Barthian Theology and the glories of the Reformed faith.

In 1938 Dr. M. Bouwman wrote a doctoral dissertation under the guidance of Prof. H. H. Kuyper in which he advocated a disciplinary power to the major assemblies which they had never had before in Reformed Church Government. Prof. S. Greijdanus wrote several articles against this position. This dissertation is important because it would be used a few years later.

Late in the year 1938 Schilder was invited to come to the United States and lecture and preach in various places. The then editor of *The Banner* wrote that he thought it would be better if he did not come! This was printed in several papers in the Netherlands, e.g., *De Heraut*, the paper of H. H. Kuyper. The tensions in the Netherlands were becoming very strong. Nevertheless, Schilder came and received a marvelous welcome throughout this country and people stood in awe of his brilliance.

When the Synod of 1938 met the war had broken out in Europe. In May, 1940, the Netherlands was conquered within the space of five days. The editori-

als written by Schilder after the occupation of the country must rank with some of the most courageous articles which have ever been written. In August of 1940 he was arrested and placed in a concentration camp in the Netherlands. His paper, *De Reformatie* was completely destroyed. *De Heraut*, under the editorship of H. H. Kuyper was allowed to be published because it was friendly to the Germans. Schilder remained in prison until December 1940 and was then forbidden to write. Several times during the war he was almost arrested but he stayed in hiding.

Mass Depositions

During the war, 1944, while Schilder was not able to defend himself, the Synod of 1942!!!, which was still meeting in 1944, first suspended him and three months later deposed him as a minister and professor of theology. On what grounds? On none of the points of doctrine given to the committee in 1936 for study! Rather, on the ground of his refusal to subscribe to the doctrine of Assumed Regeneration! This was one of the points adopted by the Synod of the GKN in 1905. It belongs to the Conclusions of Utrecht which were a compromise to bring the people of the Afscheiding and Doleantie together. This one point was now elevated to the status of a creedal statement which he had to sign! He, of course, refused stating that he was only called to sign the Confessions. Dr. Berkouwer was president of this Synod. Although Schilder had a great respect for the ability of Berkouwer, he never let him forget that his name was on the notification of Schilder's deposition.

Dr. Greijdanus, who had already retired because of age, was also deposed by this Synod. A candidate would not sign and he was refused ordination. When another church called him and ordained him, he, together with the whole congregation were expelled from the denomination. In one place fifty office bearers were deposed! Hundreds of office bearers, ministers, elders and deacons were deposed. Almost one hundred thousand (100,000) people left to follow those who had liberated themselves from this tyranny. It was a much larger group which left the GKN than the group who had left the State Church in either 1834 or 1886!

The Liberated Churches

A "new" denomination was formed called "De Vrijgemaakte Kerk," "De Gereformeerde Kerk Onderhoudende Art. 31" and, simply, De Gereformeerde Kerken" because they considered themselves the continuation of the historic Gereformeerde Kerken. The Theological School at Kampen was continued. Dr. Greijdanus came out of retirement to teach New Testament again. At their first Synod they appointed three new professors, namely, Holwerda, Veenhof and Deddens.

It became clear later that the ground used for deposing Schilder was not so important to the GKN. Two years later much of it was taken back, but it had served the purpose! H. H. Kuyper was *restored* to honor by a later Synod posthumously even though he had been friendly to the Germans during their oppressive rule in Holland. Schilder, however,

had no place in the GKN. Later history has shown that the decline of the GKN can be traced to 1944.

Out Inter-Church Relations: Who Are Our Relatives?

The CRC continued its relationship to the GKN. In fact, when Schilder again came to the U.S. in 1947, the denomination was warned by the "Synodical Committee" not to invite him to preach or speak in our churches! Today the Synodalen (GKN) meet for worship with the Hervormden and Catholics!

But Schilder, whose Reformed character was never questioned, had no place in those churches!

Do we wonder why the Vrijgemaakten and the Canadian Reformed Churches ask us to terminate our fellowship with the GKN before they will have fellowship with us? With which church should we stand in ecclesiastical fellowship? "The time has come to take steps to sever the existing relationship with the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands" (*The Banner* 4-25-80). These steps should have been taken long ago. ●

Reformed Women Speak

SEPARATION AND DIVORCE

Shirley W. Madany

We are all in agreement that there has to be a separation of church and state, but not a divorce between the two. What hothers us these days is to observe the way in which that concept has changed from "separateness" or "distinctiveness" to a situation which resembles the breakdown of a marriage. We notice the disappearance of what was meant to be a working relationship. Separation of church and state was never meant to lead to a divorce between Christian tradition and the various aspects of community life.

If, for example, a Muslim from the Middle East wanted proof that we as a nation have forgotten our God, he need only read our newspapers or weekly news magazines. It is small wonder that we have this confusion in the State Department of our country over how to talk with the Iranians. What an embarrassment to have an international issue turn into a moral and spiritual issue! How does a western state, divorced from its Christian heritage, talk to the leaders of a country who are unable to understand such a separation? That word isn't in the vocabulary of Islam.

In a recent article, William R. Brown, of Central Connecticut State College and author of *The Last Crusade: A Middle East Negotiator's Handbook*, said: "In U.S. government circles, for some reason, there is embarrassment over suggesting that our policies are tied to someone's idea of God." He went on to suggest that our officials, and we notice some of our public speakers, have decided to deal with the question as if the whole thing is just one more Communist plot. Certainly the chaos of a popular revolution such as we have in Iran, and the dramatic changes going on in that country, will at the outset weaken her and we may see Russia reaping the benefit. But the power and drive of Islam has to be reckoned with, apart from Communist influences.

Surprising as it may sound, Marxism and Islam can co-exist. We see this in Algeria and the People's

Democratic Republic of Yemen, for example. The sad thing is that we are not aware that it is Christianity and Islam which are not compatible.

If the issue between the USA and Iran is a moral issue then we must look to our morals. If our weakness is moral, then in repentance and a national turning to God are where we will find our strength. We can think of Biblical proof texts for that.

There was a glaring example recently, of our moral weakness, in a series of articles which ran in our local newspaper. The subject was teen pregnancies and the conclusion was that we are suffering from a new set of values! The reporter had done a lot of research in order to write the articles. She had talked with the hospitals and various agencies in the area which become involved in this alarming national problem. She had interviewed boys and girls in their early teens, as to their attitude toward "sexual activity." She had consulted with educators in the public schools with regard to sex education. A separate piece brought words of debatable wisdom from a marriage counselor. But, not one church leader was consulted.

It was sad to see that such a subject could be treated only in a "clinical" way, even when it involved morality. It was sad also that the future looks very gloomy. Apparently nothing can be done about these "new values" by which society is living, and everyone admitted that young teenagers just cannot cope with them. The major concern of the articles was on how we can help teens adapt to this situation. There was no hint of immorality or sin! No linking of this "sexual activity before marriage" to its definition — fornication. The voice of the church was silent.

We still have the freedom to express our opinions through letters to the editor. Let's not wait for someone to organize us. There is nothing better than a spontaneous Christian witness. Let's stand up and be counted as Christians who care about their country; care enough to point out a wrong when they see it.

As Christians we are a part of the body of Christ, and hence we are the church. Let's do our part to get church and state back on speaking terms.

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THE WRITINGS OF AUGUSTINE

Sharon Hulse

Augustine of Hippo lived and worked in the intermediate age after the decline of classical civilisation before the beginning of western culture. Though this period is sometimes neglected, it was the era of the first great doctrinal controversies and theological definitions. By the time of his death in 430 Augustine had become well known as one of the foremost defenders of the faith. As a Bishop of the Church in Africa he had to deal with one breakaway Donatist sect who used violent methods to assert their exclusive claims. More wellknown is the long drawn out controversy against the Pelagians who held that man by his free will could merit grace. The writings of Augustine form the response of a great Christian thinker to the pressing needs and problems of his day, yet they contain much that is of interest and profit to us now. And learning from one of the early church fathers can balance out any tendency to consider church history as having started with the Reformation!

The Confessions

This is perhaps the most widely read of Augustine's works. Here if anywhere is a convincing account of God's irresistible grace reaching out to save and to use one who, with Paul and later Bunyan, regarded himself as the chief among sinners. We have Augustine's own account of how as a brilliant young teacher of rhetoric he engaged on a search for 'truth', but in reality was fighting against the Holy Spirit. God however honoured the persistent prayers of Augustine's mother, and used the preaching of Ambrose as well as the reading of Scripture to bring him to repentance. It is to be hoped that the recent publication of a 'modern English' translation¹ will encourage many more Christians to read and profit from the testimony of this fourth century Christian. This book could also be given to our non-Christian friends who are searching, as Augustine himself did, for truth. It is a powerful witness to the fact that God has indeed made us for himself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in him.²

The City of God³

This second book is a work on a different scale altogether. If the *Confessions* are a heartwarming demonstration of the truths of salvation, we find in the *City of God* the theological foundation for these truths. 'I have taken upon myself the task of defending the glorious City of God against those who prefer their own gods to the founder of that City'

Reformation Today is a bi-monthly magazine published by the Cuckfield Baptist Church, Sussex, England. It recently celebrated its 10th birthday and is edited by Rev. Erroll Hulse, who in 1966 published the little book, Billy Graham — the Pastor's Dilemma. It presents a Reformed Baptist viewpoint and contains many excellent articles. This article by Sharon Hulse, daughter of the editor, who is graduating from a B.A. honors program in History at Cambridge University, is reprinted by permission from the November-December, 1979 issue of Reformation Today.

wrote Augustine at the beginning of this massive work. He was writing in response to the sack of Rome by barbarians in 410 BC, which had triggered off a pagan reaction towards Christians, as it was thought that pagan gods had protected Rome in the past. This traumatic event also resulted in deep uncertainty among many Christians who had begun to identify the kingdom of God with the Roman Empire.⁴ Now their whole world seemed to be crumbling. Augustine encourages them — and any Christians who see themselves as standing at the end of a civilisation — by showing that the City of God is eternal. In defending it he found himself expounding the central truths of God's redemptive and creative work. And so, amidst many polemical and topical sections, some fascinating, and some frankly boring digressions, we find gems of biblical exposition and wonderfully clear statements of truth.

All is seen in terms of the contrast between 'the two cities, one of God, the other of this world'. One definition is as follows: 'I classify the human race into two branches; the one consists of those who live by human standards, the other of those who live according to God's will. . . . By the two cities I mean two societies of human beings, one of which is predestined to reign with God from all eternity, the other doomed to undergo eternal punishment with the devil.'⁵

The City of this World

Some have thought of Augustine as a complete pessimist because he clearly stated the absolute inability of any political, legal, economic or social system to bring about the ultimate good of man; all these things being part of the City of this world. In fact his was only the 'pessimism' of one who recognises the consequences of man's fall into sin. God created man perfect, but when his will was transgressed man died, in that every faculty was to some degree corrupted. 'God created man aright, for God is the author of natures, though he is certainly not responsible for their defects. But man was willingly perverted and justly condemned.'⁶ After the fall, Cain founded a city,⁷ a forerunner of all earthly states, founded on self love,⁸ and beset with quarrels, wars, battles, death.⁹ Augustine sets out to prove decisively that the world can never provide true justice, justice being the conformity to order that God wills for all men.¹⁰ Nor can the world give real happiness, which comes from serving God.¹¹ In practical terms the members of the earthly city show themselves by living for temporal concerns alone.¹²

The City of God

Given the utter depravity of man, his only hope of salvation is found in the free grace of God extended to those he has elected in eternity.¹³ If Cain belonged to the city of man, 'the other son Abel belonged to the City of God . . . one who was a pilgrim

and stranger in the world. . . . He was predestined by grace, and chosen by grace, by grace a pilgrim below, and by grace a citizen above. As far as he himself is concerned he has his origin from the same lump which was condemned as a whole lump at the beginning. But God like a potter made 'out of the same lump one vessel destined for honour and another for dishonour'.^{14 15} And how are citizens of this Heavenly City made? Augustine gives the answer in many places. For instance: 'When we were overwhelmed by the load of our sins when we had turned away from the contemplation of his light and had been blinded by our love of darkness . . . even then he did not abandon us. He sent to us his Word, who is his only Son, who was born and who suffered in the flesh which he assumed for our sake . . . so that we might be purified from all our sins by that unique sacrifice.'¹⁶

Anyone, 'if he is reborn into Christ and makes progress'¹⁷ is a member of 'that Republic whose founder and ruler is Christ'.¹⁸ Augustine made it clear that those who are reborn are not necessarily all members of the church — he thus made the distinction between the visible church and the invisible City of God. Ultimately only God knows his elect. 'While the City of God is on pilgrimage in this world, she has in her midst some who are united with her in participation in the sacraments but who will not join her in the eternal destiny of the saints.'¹⁹

The Grace of God Shown Even in the Earthly City

God shows a particular love to the elect, but Augustine shows that grace is extended to maintain an order that embraces even the unrighteous.²⁰ Without this restraint man could not survive, for his fallen instincts would inexorably lead to anarchy. Order is achieved through means adapted to man's unrighteousness — the state, government, slavery, property. God is in absolute control of all these affairs. If he has taken meticulous care in creating the physical world 'it is beyond anything incredible that he should have willed the kingdoms of men, their dominions and their servitudes to be outside the range of the laws of his providence'.²¹ The beauty of the created world is to the advantage of all mankind, saved and unsaved. Of such beauty Augustine showed a keen appreciation, writing of: 'The manifold diversity of beauty in sky and earth and sea, the abundance of light, and its miraculous loveliness, in sun and moon and stars, the dark shades of woods, the colour and fragrance of flowers; the multitudinous varieties of birds, with their songs and their bright plumage, the countless different species of living creatures. . . . Then there is the mighty spectacle of the sea itself, putting on its changing colours like different garments, now green, with all the many varied shades, now purple, now blue.'²³

The Christian in the World

The common grace extended to the whole world ensures a certain order, so that the children of God may worship him in peace without fear of anarchy. But what is our rule as believers in this present order? Augustine had much to say on this subject.²⁴

(a) 'God is to be worshipped as well for temporal as for eternal benefits'²⁵ he wrote. We are to appreciate the beauty of God's creation; have gratitude for a measure of peace and restraint on evil; depend on God for all earthly goods. Such temporal blessings are not to be underestimated. 'Anyone who exalts the soul as the Supreme Good and censures the nature of flesh as something evil is in fact carnal alike in his cult of the soul and in his revulsion from the flesh.'²⁶

(b) However, the Christian must have a transformed and spiritual attitude to these earthly things. We must always know that 'the inferior goods of the world, although essential for this transitory life, are to be despised in comparison with the eternal blessings of that other life'.²⁷ Citizens of the Heavenly city may be discerned in that they 'refer those (earthly) concerns to the enjoyment of eternal peace'.

In certain cases a passive attitude to the ordering of earthly affairs is called for: 'the servants of Christ are enjoined to endure even the most wicked and vicious commonwealth, if so it must be, that so they may by this endurance purchase for themselves an eminent place in that most holy and august Parliament of angels and in the celestial republic where the will of God is law'.²⁸ Such submission will, says Augustine, be a consistent and positive witness to the transforming power of Christ.

(c) In more favourable circumstances it is God's will that his people play an active part in the maintenance of order and peace in the world. A believer may participate in political activities,²⁹ wrote Augustine, as long as he remembers that the aim of these activities is fundamentally different to the aim of spiritual activities. In participating in state affairs a Christian cannot expect to change the hearts of other men and he has to use 'rough' means of justice; law courts, sentences, even the death sentence; remembering that they are part of God's providence to the sustaining of order in the universe among unrighteous men. Such means, suitable for the city of this Earth, are very different to the means appropriate in the city of our God, where tenderness rather than coercion is the rule.

(d) Augustine does not therefore enjoin Christians to abdicate responsibility in the Earthly city. His very clear conception of two cities in no way involves a 'sociological separation' in this world because until the Judgement men are being saved from Babylon to Jerusalem. Indeed it was a sect against whom Augustine contended for most of his life (the Donatists) who envisaged the Christians' separation from the world in literal terms. We are to regard the world as a temporary abode, but while in it we should contribute as we are able to the maintenance of the order ordained for it by God. That this order exists at all is a sign of the forbearance of God, though it is only an 'image of justice' compared with the 'vera justitia' in God's kingdom. It is to this eternal kingdom that the believer's ultimate allegiance must be given. So while we must be salt and light in the world, with Augustine we look forward to 'the eternal rest not only of the spirit but of the body also. There we shall be still and see; we shall

see and we shall love; we shall love and we shall praise. Behold what will be, in the end, without end! For what is our end but to reach that kingdom which has no end?³⁰

NOTES

1. *The Confessions of Augustine in Modern English* translated by Sherwood Eliot Wirt. Asian Lion Paperback 1978. £1.75.
2. *Confessions* 1.1.
3. It is certainly not to be recommended that the attempt be made to read this 'cover to cover' but some may find, as I did, that to invest £3.50 in Henry Betterson's translation (*Penguin Classics* 1972) is well worthwhile. All quotations are from this translation.
4. This tendency had reached a peak with Eusebius who spoke of Christian Emperors in almost messianic terms.
5. *City of God* 15.1.
6. 8.14.
7. 15.5.
8. 14.28.
9. 15.4.
10. 19.
11. 14.25 and 5.24.

12. 14.28.
13. 15.1.
14. Rom. 9:21.
15. *City of God* 15.1.
16. 7.31.
17. 15.1.
18. 2.21.
19. 1.35.
20. 5.11.
21. 5.11.
22. 22.24.
23. 19.13.
24. Esp. 19.14.
25. 11.14 cf. 22.24 for a wonderful list of 'the good things of which this life is full even though it is subject to condemnation.'
26. 14.5. Augustine had himself been associated before his conversion with the Manicheans. This sect held a dualist view of the universe such as it here and elsewhere refuted.
27. 19.13.
28. 2.19.
29. 19.17.
30. 22.30.

Spotlighting the Issues

V. A GODLY LIFE

Peter De Jong

These articles are an effort to focus attention on some basic issues which trouble our churches, by presenting side-by-side (1) the historic, Biblical Reformed view, and (2) the emerging, changing, broadening view held by many in the churches. This article deals with a *godly life*.

(1) The Biblical Reformed View

God's Word teaches us that we are saved by faith in Christ for a godly life (Eph. 2:10; Titus 2:11-14). Gospel "doctrine" is not only true but "sound," or, literally "healthful." "We are redeemed from sin and shame and called to holiness," "called to be saints" (1 Cor. 1:2). This holy living means simply separation from every kind of sin and dedication to the Lord. Sin is defined and exposed by God's law, which demands both the motive of love for God and fellowmen, and behavior according to His will as revealed in that law. As the Lord by His Word and Spirit saves us from sin and reconciles us to Himself, He makes us eager to do His will. He tells us, "If ye love me keep my commandments" (John 14:15). We are warned that "He who says 'I know him' but disobeys his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:5). Godly living requires separation from sin (2 Cor. 6:14-7:7). We must "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). This separation is not from all contacts with the world, but rather from its way of thought and life, in order to be a "light" and a "salt" in it (Rom. 12:2; John 17:14-18, Matt. 5:13, 14). If the "salt" loses its flavor it is worthless and will be discarded. Our commanded holy living, while imperfect in this life, is, by God's grace, a continuing race toward perfection (Phil. 3:12-14). In it we are called, "as we have ... opportunity" to "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10).

(2) The Broadening View

Christ came as the great Liberator to free mankind from all kinds of restraints and inhibitions which prevent each from realizing his or her true potential as human beings. The old, static, traditional notions of fixed doctrines and unchanging laws do not do justice to the historical character of the Christian faith. They fail to adequately recognize that the Bible as revelation is also a human document conditioned by the historical setting and limitation of its times, and that it, in turn, has to be interpreted in the changing structures and framework of our times. Our tradition not only fails to reckon with these important principles, but labors under the additional handicap of an immigrant, separatist mentality. Instead of trying to separate from the community and world, Christians should sympathetically identify with the world and its troubles and seek to serve it in the name of Christ. The norm for such service is love, not an antiquated set of unchanging commandments. Social structures change and therefore the Christian stance in moral matters must adapt itself to the changing society. Our guide in ethical matters is not only the Bible, but also the discoveries of science, the changing mores of society, and especially our own experience. We must join the efforts to correct social, economic and political injustices and to renew the antiquated structures of society, and be less concerned about individualistic and traditional moral taboos. We must trust the Holy Spirit to guide us in contributing to the progress and improvement of society and in redeeming all its activities.

The Place of Women in the Bible

A Critique

Ronald Scheuers

You may have noticed the publicity recently received by *The Place of Women in the Bible*, a Bible Study Series by Rev. Verlyn Verbrugge. This pamphlet deals with the place of women in the church, and more particularly women in ecclesiastical office. Surrounded by the intense discussion concerning women in church office, you may have wondered whether there is any trustworthy guide through the Bible's teaching on this subject. If you are looking for such a sound guide, this is not one of them.

An Unbiased Approach?

Although the six brief series of Bible studies contained in this 40 page pamphlet are, according to the foreword, "not first of all intended to convince anyone of a particular position," and claim "to let the Scriptures speak for themselves," they present a very prejudicial approach in favor of women in church office. By a series of introductions, discussion questions, and concluding suggestions, the author covers the following topics: God and the Creation of Human Beings, The Fall and Redemption, The Marriage Relationship, Women in God's Service, Jesus and Women, and Those Texts That Deal More Specifically with Women in Office. However, in most of the studies the questions and conclusions are so leading and loaded one cannot miss them. For example, on page 36 the author is suggesting that I Corinthians 11 and 14, and I Timothy 2 may be interpreted as no longer in force because of cultural relativism going on in the Bible. He suggests, "suppose that we discover places where God explicitly takes a cultural situation into account and gives certain regulations with that in mind, whereas his ideal is something quite different. Then we may legitimately question whether the same thing is happening here, namely whether God allowed the instruction for women to keep silent to be given in that culture, whereas his ideal is something different." Nowhere, however, does the author mention specifically the reasons put forward in I Timothy 2:13-14 for the exclusion of women in office, namely the creation order and the nature of the fall. Why does the author not openly bring these matters to bear on the question? This biased approach is apparent throughout.

I am not surprised, therefore, that this pamphlet, printed in 1979, has been published, distributed, and promoted by the Committee for Women in the Christian Reformed Church. This group, organized in June of 1975, has a distinct purpose. I quote the June, 1978 Newsletter of the Committee: "The basis for organizing the committee is our belief that the ordination of women to ecclesiastical office is

Rev. Ronald Scheuers, pastor of the Christian Reformed Church of Baldwin, Wisconsin was asked to provide us with the review of this widely publicized piece of propaganda for women in church office.

the spirit-directed outcome of the teachings of Scripture."

A Biblical Study?

We must appreciate the author's concluding statement in the foreword: "If the issue is faced squarely with the Word, rather than letting the discussion develop with a host of emotional and extraneous (often secular) arguments or even degenerate into an attack on personalities, the church will be strengthened and God's truth will prevail." I too am convinced that our study of this issue facing the church must be thoroughly Biblical. In fact the church must oppose man's changing culture if and when it tries to overturn the standards of God's Word. But what disturbs me is that some, even in our circles, who claim to submit to God's Word on this subject, seem quite willing to quote passages which seem to support their position, while minimizing, overlooking, and declaring culturally relative and therefore not normative, other texts that claim to be normative and not culturally relative. In an excellent article called "Male and Female Related He Them" (*Christianity Today*, Vol. XX, No. 14, April 9, 1976, pp. 13-17), George W. Knight III shows how such authors as Scanzoni, Hardesty, and Paul Jewett, who claim to write from an evangelical perspective, have come "to disavow any role of submission by women to men in the marriage relationship or in the ruling/teaching functions in the church." The study material before us by Rev. Verbrugge seeks in many ways to promote some of the ideas regarding the role of women presented by such so-called evangelical writers. However, the question we must face is, "Are these presentations *Biblical*?"

Some Arguments Examined

1. *Slavery and Women.* It is frequently argued by advocates of women in church office that since the Bible talks about slavery in the same context as the women's issue, we ought to oppose the restriction against women in office just as strongly as we oppose slavery. The author of this Bible Study Series would like us "to draw a parallel between the issue of slavery as seen a century ago and the women's issue today" (p. 38). He argues that "some of the obvious commands of Scripture have been set aside because of a change in cultural situation" (p. 38). In that context he asks, "Is it possible that God's ideal for his people is quite different from what the words of Scripture expressly say (a literal interpretation)" (p. 38)?

Dr. Knight, in the above mentioned article deals with this argument in a fine manner. He acknowledges the obvious fact that both Paul and Peter deal with slaves in close proximity to husbands and wives, and therefore with the issue of women and

their ruling/teaching functions in the church. But unlike the slave relationship, the marriage relationship and the ruling/teaching functions of women in the church are regulated by explicit reference to the creation order and God's moral law. Knight concludes, "Not once does Paul appeal to either God's creation order or God's moral law as the grounds for the institution of slavery. This radically distinguishes the treatment of slavery from that of marriage and the family." The parallel, therefore, between the two issues cannot be justly drawn, for Paul *does* argue that the roles of husbands and wives and the ruling/teaching function are God-ordained roles established by God Himself.

2. *Equality and Inferiority.* Another popular argument proposed today is that since both males and females are equally created in God's image there is to be no subordination on the part of women. And conversely, it is argued, if there is subordination of women, then to that extent one holds to the inferiority of females. Question 7 of chapter 1 (p. 6) in our series of studies attempts to deal with this facet of the issue when it asks, "There are those who insist that because Eve was created from Adam, she was, therefore, subordinate to him, and, to that extent, inferior. How do you react to this?"

At this point the author could have led his readers to understand that the Bible indicates that "subordination does not imply inferiority or make any one inferior . . .", as Knight again writes in the same article. Jesus Christ was not inferior to God, the Father, and yet He submits as the Son and the Incarnate One who is obedient even unto death. "Likewise," says Dr. Knight, "that the woman submits as woman does not mean therefore she is inferior or that her humanity as an image-bearer is in doubt or threatened."

3. *Women, the Fall, and Galatians 3:28.* In chapter II the author of this pamphlet covers the topic of "The Fall and Redemption of Mankind." Like many today, he would have his readers believe that "God allowed the effects of the curse to be felt during Old Testament times. Women were not regarded as equal, nor did they receive 'equal rights' with men. But what resounds through the New Testament so clearly is that Christ has come to remove the curse of God against sin and restore things to their original, pre-fall situation" (p. 11). Galatians 3:28 is then sometimes quoted, as it is in this study series, to bolster the argument that now, on this side of the cross, sexual differences must go, particularly differences in teaching and authoritative offices in the church. This study series then quotes the 1973 Synodical Study Committee on Women in Ecclesiastical Office which identified four areas of equality implied by Galatians 3:28, one of which is, that both men and women are called to "leadership." "In this new relationship in which Christ has placed us, sex is something totally irrelevant (cf. Gal. 3:28 . . .)." (*Acts of Synod, 1973, pp. 546-551*).

It is important to notice, however, that the Bible never indicates that the removal of the effects of sin on the husband-wife relationship or the ruling/teaching functions in the church includes the removal of those relationships and functions. In fact, the Bible

appeals to the *pre-fall* creation order precisely in those places where it speaks of these relationships and functions. See Ephesians 5, I Corinthians 11 and 14, and I Timothy 2. The removal of the effects of the curse does not imply the removal of the distinctive roles God has given husbands and wives in marriage, and men and women in their ruling/teaching functions in the church. In the discussions regarding church office, Galatians 3:28 has been so abused, I fear, that almost any proof for freedom from any structure can be attempted by quoting it. That is not God's purpose for including it in Scripture.

4. *Those "Sticky" Texts.* What about those texts, particularly I Corinthians 11:2-16, 14:33-36, and I Timothy 2:8-15, which deal especially with women in church office? Chapter VI of this study series attempts to examine these passages. This is perhaps the most disappointing chapter presented. I find a double emphasis here, as well as in other writings on this subject, first that these texts are most unclear, and at the same time surely these are not binding rules for the church today. However, an in-depth attempt to understand the reasons *why* the Bible gives these rules is often avoided. These reasons cannot be easily dismissed.

In I Timothy 2:13 Paul clearly asserts that the issue of women in the ruling/teaching function of the church is founded on the creation order. In I Corinthians 11:16 and 14:33 the Apostle affirms that this is to be the uniform practice of all the churches. I Corinthians 14:34 tells us that this is what "the law says." Verse 37 of that same chapter informs us that what Paul has written "are the Lord's commandments." The full weight of these parts of the text must *also* be part of our considerations on this issue.

I think a great deal more work needs to be done on I Timothy 2. The context clearly has the church situation in view. There is good reason, and I feel convincing reason, to see verses 11-14 as prohibiting women from the ruling/teaching function in the church, or what we may call the special offices. In verses 11 and 12 "silence" or "quietness" occurs both at the beginning of verse 11 and at the end of verse 12. In both cases it is connected to one or the other kind of authority and teaching. We are told in verse 11 that the woman is to quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness, while in verse 12 she is not to teach or exercise authority, but to remain quiet. Both verses seem to be saying the same thing from a different angle. We may say these verses have the same message, but come to us from different perspectives. The woman is to receive instruction quietly (vs. 11), not being permitted to be a teacher, but to remain quiet (vs. 12). She is to receive instruction with entire submissiveness (vs. 11) and not exercise authority over the man (vs. 12). Paul is covering the subject from both sides of the argument, both positively and negatively. He is concerned with both her receiving and her giving.

When we examine this word for "silence" in the original, it is clear that this word has to do with something verbal, something I do with my mouth. It is used here as the opposite of "teaching." There is good reason to conclude that this does not mean she may never teach a man anything, (for Priscilla in-

structed Apollos, a preacher of the gospel in Acts 18), but that she may not hold the office of one who teaches or bears authority. The original verbs used here provide a probable and good case to indicate that a woman may not hold or perform the particular duties of the one who holds the office of a teacher, or of an authority-bearer. This restriction of women in the ruling/teaching function of the church is based on the creation order. Now unless we are prepared to say Paul's teaching is a reflection of an erroneous rabbinical view, or some other error, we do well to take these considerations seriously in our discussion on the subject of women in church office. The study series under consideration deals with these concerns most inadequately.

A Wider Question

In conclusion, these studies have been promoted as "excellent material for group study and discussion." You will be the ultimate judge. But in the final sense our conclusions on this matter must be thoroughly, honestly, and completely Biblical. I am becoming more and more convinced that this is not so

much a question of women in office as it is a question of Biblical authority. Even some who promote women in ecclesiastical office readily admit that Paul prohibited such action. The question is, do we take the Bible to be authoritative at that point. I believe we must. ●

In view of the extensive interest in the subject and the amount of unrest and confusion surrounding it the Reformed Fellowship is also printing a careful study of the Biblical teaching and the questions about it. It is written by Paul Ingeneri and is entitled, *A Decade of Unrest: The Issue of Women in Church Office in the Christian Reformed Church*. It should be available by the time that this issue of the OUTLOOK appears or shortly thereafter. Written for the average reader, it should be helpful to individuals and may also be of interest to groups who might like to use it, as it is in part designed, for a series of studies.

Meditation

Sheba's Queen Marveling at Solomon's Glory

John Blankespoor

And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem (II Chron. 9:1-9).

"The ends of all the earth shall hear,
And turn unto the Lord in fear."

Those words were already being fulfilled in the visit of this stranger at Jerusalem. Isn't Solomon a type of Christ in His glorious kingdom? And won't saved sinners come from the north and south, east and west to hear of the wisdom and to see the riches of the greater than Solomon? And they will forever be amazed at the wisdom and riches and glory of Christ Jesus our Lord.

The queen of Sheba came principally for one thing, to hear of and to see the wisdom of this famous king of Israel. In at least six different places mention is made that she came to hear of this great wisdom. But when she came to the capital city she heard not only of his wisdom but was also utterly amazed at his riches, and glory.

What kind of wisdom was that? Surely, it was more than what we usually call wisdom, and different from mere intellectual acumen. When Solomon became king he asked for wisdom that he might be able to discern between good and bad because he wanted to do what was right in the eyes of the Lord. Who, being acquainted with Scripture, does not think of Solomon's proverbs in this connection? Isn't

the fear of the Lord the beginning, the very principle of wisdom? "Happy is he that findeth wisdom and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver and the gain thereof than fine gold." All this wisdom therefore had to do with serving the Lord, the fear of His name. When this queen approached him with many difficult questions and problems, taken right out of real life, Solomon no doubt answered them in such a way that the fear of the Lord was the answer and gave the solution to all the basic problems of life.

Where Sheba was we don't know. Possibly in Africa. If so, she may have been colored. But surely that would have made no difference to the Lord. In fact, it would have given the entire history added meaning, foreshadowing the bringing in of the Gentiles. Jesus does say later that she came from the ends of the earth, indicating that she did travel a great distance. The point is that Solomon was so famous that people, at least this queen, traveled such a tremendous distance to hear of this king's wisdom and to see his glory.

We may also conclude from the sacred narrative that her conversations with the king were not principally about secular or political matters, but about spiritual truths, the things that pertain to the Lord and to the fear of His great name.

And doesn't the Lord always bless those who fear Him. The queen must also see this. She came to hear of Solomon's wisdom but, in connection with it, she

also saw his riches and glory. When she saw it all there was no spirit left in her. She just couldn't believe it. It was "out of this world." It just didn't seem possible to her, it just wasn't real. But then, there it all was, right before her eyes. Utter amazement and overwhelming astonishment were the reaction. The half of it had not been told her. Usually in life, the opposite is true, rumors are greatly exaggerated compared with the reality. But never so with the blessings of the Lord.

And, according to custom then already, the queen brought Solomon many gifts.

From all this we certainly may consider her to have been a child of God. Isn't she already the fulfillment of Psalm 72, when it speaks of people coming from Sheba to worship the Lord. But the strongest proof we find in Jesus' words later, that she will rise up in judgment against the generation of His day. Surely, unbelieving, wicked people will not rise in judgment against other unbelievers!

* * * * *

But we must see Christ in all this. Don't all things in the Old Testament either work towards His coming or point directly to Him?

The glory of Solomon's kingdom certainly is typical of the glory of Christ in His kingdom. Isn't all wisdom found with God as it is revealed in His Son? And is there really any wisdom outside of Him? He alone has the answers to all the riddles and problems of life. He alone can explain life and give it true meaning. The riches of Solomon are only a shadow of the riches and glory of Christ in His exaltation. And what is a shadow compared with the reality? The glories of heaven surely cannot be described in human words. The coming of this queen is the beginning of saved sinners coming from the ends of the earth to adore that wisdom of God's salvation in Christ Jesus our Savior. They will come from all nations, from Greenland's icy mountains as well as from India's coral strand, and also from where Africa's sunny fountains roll down their golden sand.

That kind of glory awaits all who are in Christ Jesus. Our glory will be to know Him in His glory and enjoy Him forever. The queen of Sheba being overwhelmed said that not the half of Solomon's glory was told her, but of the glory of heaven we surely can say that not one thousandth has been told us. Human language cannot begin to describe it. Such glory awaits us. The Scriptures tell us that there is no searching of His understanding (wisdom). Also, in speaking of His forgiving grace that it is as far as the east is from the west (not as far as north is from south, which is measurable). Also, as high as the heavens are upon the earth, so great is His mercy towards them that fear Him. And how far is that? No one really knows. All told, when Paul approaches this subject, and tries to put into human words how rich that love and wisdom of God is, he says that it is something that no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever arisen in the heart of any man. This really means that no human eye can see it, no human ear can hear it, nor can any human being begin to imagine its greatness. That is awaiting all those who are in Christ and love Him.

And our glory will be to worship and to adore Him in all that greatness and beauty.

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And what a testimony this queen gives to the church throughout the ages!

Jesus speaks of her in Matthew 12, stating that she will rise up in judgment with the generation of His day and condemn it. First of all, the people of that day must realize that the greater than Solomon is right in their midst. But it also means that we, of the New Testament, have so much more than the queen of Sheba ever had or saw. In fact there is no comparison. We have the full Bible, and we also know about the wisdom of the cross, and the glory of the empty tomb and the blessings of Pentecost with the fulness of the Spirit. This queen came a long way, no doubt hundreds of miles, traveling with her primitive means of transportation, to see Solomon, while we have right with us, in our homes, the full Bible which tells us about this great Son of God.

Look at her faith . . . and the unbelief of many of Jesus' day, and of so many thousands who in the New Testament know about Him, but reject and negate Him. In the judgment day they will be condemned.

What does all this mean for us? That the greater than Solomon is right in our midst in the complete revelation of the Word and in the preaching of the Word every Sunday. Possessing this Word we find the true wisdom that is in Christ, in His blood and Spirit.

And if the queen of Sheba traveled hundreds of miles to see the shadow, how enthusiastic we should be to witness of Him to those right next to us! And also to bring our gifts to Him, not just material things but dedicated Christian lives.

Blessed be His great and glorious Name.

Evermore, Amen,

And let His glory fill the earth

From shore to shore, Amen.

And many "blacks" and "whites" and "reds" and "yellows," from the ends of the world in singing that song will rise up in judgment, condemning thousands who lived and died in unbelief with the greater than Solomon in their very midst.

Believe, therefore, in Him. ●

PRAYER FOR MISSIONARIES

Be with the missionaries, Lord, Wherever they may be:

In jungle hut, on desert sand, Upon the land or sea.

Give to their loved ones here at home

An inward calm and peace;

In knowing that in serving, There Are joys that never cease.

Be with the pilots in the air, Who drop thy blessed Word

O'er all the little villages, To those who have not heard.

We have thy promise that the Word, Shall never void return.

Lord, grant that those in darkness still

Of Jesus too may learn.

Be with them in their trials, Lord, When they are put to test:

Should troubles come, grant they may know

Thy way is always best.

Give fruit upon their labors, Lord, And on That blessed day

May they come, bearing with them sheaves—

In Jesus' name, we pray.

Annetta Jansen

CANADIAN CR CHURCH GROWTH

Neal Hegeman

In this second article on "Church Growth," Neal Hegeman, a graduate of Calvin Theological Seminary, with a Canadian background and missionary interest and some experience in Latin America, surveys the CR churches' growth in Canada.

I. Introduction

In the first article of this series on church growth in the CRC I suggested that we should observe numerical growth and loss in the church as a means of *reflection* on the condition of the church. Whereas some Protestant theologians such as McGavran and others associated with the Church Growth Movement, use numbers as a *motivation* for church growth, the Scriptures do not push us to that extreme. As one pastor in the CRC put it, "Our obsession with numbers is fast becoming THE American Protestant heresy."

Despite the misuse of numbers we still speak of numbers. Numerical growth does not just refer to statistics but people with whom God is visibly working. Numerical growth in the church is evidence of the Father's grace upon us, a sign that the Holy Spirit is moving in and around us, and assurance that Christ's Body, the Church, is alive. Numerical growth and loss also reminds the Christian of his responsibility in the church. A wise old elder said: "There are two types of Christians, those who build up and those who break down the Church." We are inevitably involved in the growth and loss of the church. Finally, we speak of numerical growth and loss simply because the Bible does. In Acts we are reminded that the early church grew from a handful of apostles and disciples to 3,000-5,000 within the first days of her empowerment by the Holy Spirit. The church has not stopped counting since.

II. A Brief Historical and Theological Overview of the CCRC (Canadian CRC)

The growth of the Canadian segment of the CRC (CCRC) is an interesting witness to God's providential use of historical events, political situations, economic conditions and theological trends, in forming and developing the CCRC. The CRC, which finds her roots in the Netherlands, came into existence through immigration. The Netherlands was experiencing economic hardships, political tension between church and state, and religious revival which led to the secession in 1843 of the Afscheiding Kerk. Some of the members of this seceding church migrated to the United States and formed the Nederlandsche Gereformeerde Kerk in 1857. From the small group of the secession church in the Netherlands and the United States, immigrants came to Canada around the turn of the 20th century.

In 1908 there were three congregations of the CRC in Canada, with a total membership of 240 persons. The CCRC did not grow very fast for the next

40 years; by 1948 she had 18 congregations and a total membership of 4769. Generally church growth was biological and from transfers from other Reformed churches.

World War II became the turning point for the CCRC, not so much because her members were fighting in the war, but because the CRC received a wave of post-WW II immigrants. By 1958 there were 111 congregations and a total membership of 42,787. The first Canadian classes were formed, which included Ontario (1951), Alberta (1953), Chatham (1954), Eastern Ontario (1954) and Hamilton (1954). Some of the Canadian churches still belonged to American classes, because of their geographical distances from other Canadian CR churches.

The CRC in the United States provided the backbone for the fast-growing Canadian segment of the CRC. It provided home missionaries, classical and synodical administration, theological education, encouragement for Christian Day schools, Christian literature, and a variety of other services. Even today the Canadian churches look south for much of their theological training, administrative functioning and personnel recruitment for both churches and schools.

The Canadian Christian Reformed Church is generally a post-WW II church, with most of her members and leaders coming from the Dutch Calvinistic tradition. Even though the beginning of the CRC in the Netherlands in 1834 and the U.S. in 1857 were very pietistic and separatistic, a subsequent theological movement in Holland, the Doleantie, spearheaded by A. Kuyper, led to a more scholastic and social involvement emphasis in the CRC. Post-WW II immigrants were more representative of Kuyperianism than pietism. The Kuyperian influence inspired such movements as the CLAC, AACS, Christian school movement and strong support for CRWRC. The CCRC can be theologically categorized in different ways, but historically we can trace two distinct movements within her ranks, the pietist and Kuyperian. The pietists had their number bolstered by the transfer in of American Fundamentalists and other Reformed pietists, while the Kuyperians were benefited by transfers from social-gospel orientated churches which emphasized the Christians' responsibility in society.

III. Analysis of CCRC Growth in the 1970's

Being a strong homogeneous group, both theologically and ethnically, the CCRC grew strong but not large. During the 1970's evangelism growth in all of Canada amounted to 1596. Total membership of the CCRC in 1978 was 77,445. Classis British Columbia recorded the highest total of evangelism growth (336), while Classis Quinte in Eastern Ontario had the lowest number of evangelism growth (74) during the 70's. Evangelism growth in one year was the most successful in British Columbia, with 50 in 1973. Classis Huron in Western Ontario recorded no gain in 1972, Quinte recorded one gain in 1972 and 1974

and two in 1978. In 1959, 70 people were brought into the church through evangelism while in 1979 there were 169. This figure is low if we consider that evangelism growth consists of adult and children baptisms and re-affirmations of faith. On the other hand, there can be evangelism growth which is not measured by the CRC Yearbook but which appears in the numerical growth of other denominations. Persons come to a living faith in Christ through the witness of a CRC person or preaching, yet they do not join the CRC.

The strength of the CCRC can also be her weakness in certain areas of church life. The strong Kuyperian influences in the church sometimes leads to an emphasis on social change at the expense of dealing with personal change and commitment to Christ. The Kuyperian is tempted to explain Christianity in terms of a European scholastic world-and-life view (Dooyeweerdism), which is too complicated for many people and sometimes contradictory to the Scriptures. The pietists on the other hand have been known to spend so much time in contemplating the eternal decrees of election and reprobation, and assurance of salvation that they have neglected to tell others about Christ. Both extremes must be avoided.

In Home Missions, 1979 recorded 10 unorganized churches served by seven ministers and seven campus ministries, two harbour chaplains and several institutional ministries. Ministries through secular structures are more popular than the mission-chapel approach. Again the Kuyperian/pietistic distinction comes into view where the Kuyperian seeks to have the church clergy and laity involved in the institutional secular structures while the pietist is more comfortable planting churches, developing the church in a community situation. The Kuyperian cry is to reach the politician, philosopher, educator and other influential people in all strategic areas of life, so that Christian policies can be made and Christ may be witnessed through the structures in society. The pietist primary aim is to reach the human heart, regardless of social and political status and consequence, and form the church. The CCRC shows a representation of both emphases, and this balance between the Cultural Mandate and Evangelism Mandate must be maintained.

The Christian Reformed World Missions' situation is very similar. Again the CCRC is better equipped to work at the structural institutional level as she tries to effect society as a whole. Christian educators, theological professors, and technicians are sent out into the mission field with more readiness than church planters, evangelists and teachers of the laity. This trend closely resembles the trend in the Netherlands. The GKN have virtually no missionaries involved in extending the church but have a number of church workers sent as medical missionaries and social workers.

The CCRC support for the CRWRC is very strong and her members readily participate in foreign fields. Church growth, however, lags. There are very few people becoming members of CRC related churches in such countries as Bangladesh. The CRC has not always combined Word and Deed ministries.

As a result, other denominations reap the harvest in which CRC members have faithfully laboured.

Transfer-growth during the 70's amounted to 4,035 received and 5,440 leaving. Even though in the last years the trend is slowly reversing, that is, more people are coming in, those received by transfer and gained through evangelism barely make up for those leaving the denomination. Many young people transfer out of the CCRC through cross-denominational marriages or non-Christian marriages, others move away or are employed in areas where there is no CRC. Whereas the historic growth of the CRC came through the church as institution following her members wherever they migrated, this trend is slowing down as members are assimilated into other denominations. Transferring out is easier to do than transferring in. The CRC stance on doctrinal purity, moral discipline and social issues such as lodge membership have discouraged some from joining the church.

The highest transfer-growth occurred in BC with 227 being received in 1979. Classis Hamilton received 187 from other denominations. These same classes lost the most members as well, Hamilton losing 150 and BC losing 117. On the whole more members left the CCRC than were received.

Natural growth is the largest source of church growth. In 1959, there were 1,907 baptisms while in 1979 there were 1,309. The birth rate is high but decreasing since the post-WW II baby boom. The death rate is very low, but increasing as the post-WW II immigrants are getting older. If it were not for its strong emphasis on Christian families and education, the CRC would be in sad shape.

Church membership growth and loss is measured by professions of faith on the growth side and membership reversions on the loss side. Professions continue to increase as do the reversions, with the professions tripling the reversions. There seems to be a renewed effort in the church to "clean up" its membership rolls. Lapsed membership was introduced in the 1974 statistics, and generally there is more concern in keeping an active membership role than a nominal one. The increase of profession can be attributed to the second generation immigrant covenant persons becoming adult members in the church. Profession of faith outside of the covenant context (such as in evangelism) is minimal.

The total numerical growth and loss in the church can be measured by adding evangelism growth, transfer-in growth and natural growth through births. Loss is measured by adding the transfer-out losses and membership reversions. In the 1970's the CCRC gained 19,804 and lost 10,380 which balances to a 9,519 gain.

The CCRC is growing, for which we can thank the Lord. The CCRC has also lost a lot of members, concerning which we must pray and examine ourselves. I am speaking as a Dutch-Canadian, who was evangelized through a campus ministry, became a Christian and transferred my baptismal papers to a local church. Even though the evangelism program was Kuyperian I became a pietist. How do you record that in church statistics? How do you account for it theologically? Was that evangelism or transfer?

Was it because of the local church or campus ministry? Whatever the answer I'm thankful to the Lord for being at least one statistic in the CCRC.

The Canadian and American CRC must reflect on the statistics of the church and thank God for the signs of growth. We must also confess to the Lord

our failures indicated in the losses and work and pray for our renewed faithfulness in the vineyard of the Lord. Not all the workers in the vineyard are the same, some prune the branches while others pick the fruit, but all should be working toward the same end and until the end. ●

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

Jerome M. Julien

THE STEPS OF EXALTATION

Our salvation is bound up with the precious work of Jesus Christ. Each step of His humiliation is important because each describes how He was brought low — so low that He stood in our place as guilty before God's law, thus satisfying God's wrath against our sin. But there is more: the salvation which He merited must be applied. Therefore, Christ had to be exalted. This began with the . . .

RESURRECTION — According to I Corinthians 15, Christ's resurrection was absolutely essential — "if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also vain . . . ye are yet in your sins . . . we are of all men most pitiable" (15:14, 17, 19).

Though some have tried to explain away this event, it is a fact of history which is at the heart of our faith. No eyewitness saw the Lord come from the tomb, but Matthew tells us the astounding events accompanying Christ's coming to life (28:2-4). After the resurrection Jesus appeared to prove that He was alive, as well as to teach of the kingdom (Acts 1:3). What was prophesied in the Old Testament (Psalm 16:10; cf. Acts 2:24-31) and by Jesus, Himself (Matthew 20:19; John 10:18), took place.

Scripture speaks of this resurrection in two different ways. We read that *He arose* — it was His own work (John 2:19; 10:18). He had personal victory over death and the grave. We also read that *He was raised up* — the work was done by the Father (Acts 13:33; Romans 10:9; I Corinthians 15:3) who had received Christ's work for our redemption.

What does this resurrection of Jesus Christ mean to the Christian?

First, it means that we are justified before God (Romans 4:25). Raising Him from the dead, God declared Him to be worthy of eternal life. God had accepted the sacrifice of Calvary. Therefore, God now sees us — those in Christ — as if we had never sinned and had completely satisfied God's justice. As the Holy Spirit applies this fruit of the resurrection to us we praise God because we know that we are not "yet in our sins"!

Second, it means that we in Christ know new life (John 5:21, 24, 25; Romans 6:3-5; Ephesians 2:5, 6; Colossians 3:1-3). Because He came forth, we in Him know what it is to be born again. Without His resurrection this would not be our experience.

Third, Christ's resurrection "is to us a sure pledge of our blessed resurrection" (*Heidelberg*

Catechism, q. 45). Because we lie in the midst of death we will die the temporal death. Yet, we will not die eternally. Jesus is the firstfruits of the resurrection (I Corinthians 15:20). The harvest is sure to follow. One day, because Jesus came forth from the tomb, we, too, will come forth (John 5:29). Therefore, Jesus would say,

I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die (John 11:25, 26).

ASCENSION — After forty days of appearances to prove that He was alive and to teach about the kingdom, Jesus' disciples gathered with Him on the Mount of Olives where He would be taken up into heaven. The most definite testimony of this is found in Acts 1:9-11. However, it is often mentioned in the Gospels (Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51; John 6:61, 62; 7:23; 14:1-3; 16:7; 20:17) and, also, elsewhere in the New Testament (Acts 3:21; Ephesians 4:8-10; I Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 4:14; 6:19, 20; 9:24; I Peter 3:22).

What really took place in the Ascension? Jesus Christ in His divine and human natures departed earth and went to heaven. His human nature is not ubiquitous (everywhere present) here while His divine nature is in heaven. Jesus Christ, the God-Man, went to heaven. Heaven is a place (not merely a condition) but, at the same time, a place different from earth. It is not bound by earthly laws of space and time. In the earthly sense of distance it cannot be far away because while the amazed disciples stared into heaven the angels appeared and said that the Lord was already there (Acts 1:11).

Is this teaching so important? Indeed, it is. What a shame that some see no value in worship on Ascension Day! We need what Jesus did in His ascension. He ascended "for our interest" (*Heidelberg Catechism*, q. 46).

Our ascended Lord is our Advocate before His Father (I John 2:1). He is more than our Intercessor — one who prays for us. As our Advocate He pleads our case before God. He is our High Priest in heaven. We still sin and any of our sins, even though they remain in us against our will, would make us damnable before God and deprive us of fellowship with the Father. But we have an Advocate who pleads our cause and obtains justification from the Father for us. In a sense, He says of me, "Father, he has sinned but see him through my perfect work."

Also, our Ascended Lord — our flesh — is there as a pledge that He will take us to be with Him (Ephesians 2:4-6). He is there as the Head of the Body, His Church. We will never be separated from Him. He will draw us — soul *and* body — unto Himself. In our glorified body we will know that blessed fellowship.

The Scottish theologian John Dick, wrote:

To his followers, it is a source of high consolation to know, that he has not laid aside their nature, but retains it amidst his glory; because they can look up to him with confidence, in the full assurance of his sympathy, and see, in his exaltation, an earnest of their future glory (*Lectures on Theology*, II:112).

Finally, our Lord ascended so that He could send the Holy Spirit to be God's Advocate to us (the word translated "advocate" in I John 2:1 is the same word translated "comforter" in John 14:16). He has come to plead God's case to us by applying Christ's work. How wonderful is His testimony (Romans 8:16, 17)!

Even *now* — present tense — Jesus Christ having ascended is

SEATED AT GOD'S RIGHT HAND — Scripture uses this expression (Psalm 110:1; Matthew 26:64; Acts 2:33-36; 5:30-36, 7:56; Romans 8:34; I Peter 3:22) in a figurative way. Obviously, God does not have a right hand. He is spirit. Nor are we to think of some particular spot in heaven which is known as "the right hand of God." Rather, this is a way of saying that the result of Christ's ascension is that He is now reigning. He is in a position of power and might having all authority and dominion over the whole creation. His is the position of greatest honor.

This can be illustrated right from Scripture, as well as from our daily experience. If a king would invite someone to sit at his right hand a great honor was being bestowed. After Solomon ascended to the throne his mother Bathsheba was seated at his right hand — a place of honor (I Kings 2:19). Today, still, at properly arranged dinner parties the guest of honor is seated at the host's right.

Perhaps a word is in order because we read of Christ being *seated* and also *standing* at God's right hand. John Dick wrote: "Sitting is the posture of a sovereign, or a judge, or a person who has finished his labors, and is enjoying ease; standing is the posture of a man who waits to receive a friend, or is prepared to defend him" (*Lectures on Theology*, II:116). How clearly we see all of this in our reigning Savior!

But has not Christ always reigned? Yes, as the Son of God He has always been at the right hand of God. He is God and thus has always had a position of authority.

Why, then, is it said that because He ascended Christ now sits at God's right hand? He is now reigning as the God-man. Whereas He has always ruled in the Divine nature, now He rules in the human nature, also. During His humiliation for us He concealed the glory that is His. In the high priestly prayer He prayed that He might once again show the glory that was His: "And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5). Later, after the resurrection, Jesus explained what

had happened, to the two on the road to Emmaus, "Behooved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26). Because of His obedience, Jesus, the Savior of sinners, is now at God's right hand reigning as the representative of God over all, in the name of the Triune God.

How beautiful! Charles Hodge wrote:

... this supreme ruler of the universe is a perfect man as well as a perfect God; ... He still has all human sympathies and affections, and can be touched with a sense of our infirmities. That a person in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and who is filled with all the love, tenderness, compassion, meekness, and forbearance, which Christ manifested while here on earth, has all power in heaven and earth committed to his hands, and is not far from any one of us, is an unspeakable delight to all his people" (*Systematic Theology*, II:637).

And He is *there for us*. This rule over all things is for us! One day we will reign with Him as servants of God (II Timothy 2:12; Revelation 3:21). Unto that day He is *now* working. What has He done, and what is He doing? 1) He established the Church by the ministry of His apostles (Ephesians 4:1-16). 2) He prescribed the form and order of His Church (Matthew 28:19, 20; Pastoral Epistles). 3) He maintains His Church throughout the generations (Psalm 22:29-31). 4) He defends His Church (John 4:4; Isaiah 54:17).

As the Head of the Church He is putting all the Church's enemies under His feet (I Corinthians 15:25). He is frustrating their plans. He is governing all matters, national, international, social. He rules over Satan and his wicked plans. "And when the last enemy is subdued He will deliver up this kingdom unto the Father, and reign forever as King over the redeemed" (C. Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, II:638). All of this is being done so that by the power of the Word and Spirit God's people may be made glad and willing servants of the Lord. As A. A. Hodge commented on this step: "Seated upon that throne He, during the present dispensation, as Mediator, effectually applies to his people, through his Spirit, that salvation which he had previously achieved for them in his estate of humiliation" (*Outlines in Theology*, 443). Further, as a result of this rule, the fulness of the elect will be brought in and everything made ready for that Last Day for which the Church has prayed, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

To be sure, during the wait for that prayer's answer it seems as if God's promise of perpetual care is not true. However, the promise is not that we will be free from persecution but that we will be kept in salvation so that we will live and reign with Christ. This is the believer's hope: Jesus Christ shall

RETURN — This is the last step in his exaltation. He who was arraigned as a criminal at the bar of Pilate; who was unrighteously condemned, and who amid cruel mockings, was crucified with malefactors, is to come again with power and great glory; before Him are to be gathered all nations and all the generations of men, to receive from his lips their final sentence. He will then be exalted before all intel-

ligences, as visibly their sovereign judge (C. Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, II:638).

When this return will take place we do not know — no one but the Father does (Matthew 24:36) — but it will be a physical and visible return (Matthew 24:30; Acts 1:11).

Christ's return will mean: 1) the condemnation of unbelievers to eternal hell, and 2) the entrance of God's own to the fulness of the joy of the Lord (Matthew 25:31-45). Sad to say, oftentimes, this second purpose is forgotten, or not emphasized, and the be-

liever's blessed hope (Titus 2:13) becomes a fearful prospect.

For the believer, Christ's return will be the application to him of complete victory. Full deliverance will be our experience. Release from all of sin's effects will be known (I Corinthians 15:51-57). Covenant fellowship will be fully known (Revelation 21:1-8). How wonderful, then,

... Christ ... shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation (Hebrews 9:28). ●

Let The Church Be Church . . .

A "congregation of believers" (4)

Peter Y. De Jong

(Translation of Prof. C. Veenhof's *Om Verk te Blijven*)

The Son of God accomplishes the threefold work of gathering, defending and preserving the church — so Reformed churches testify in their catechism — by His Spirit and Word.

By the Holy Spirit Christ executes all that He must accomplish from Pentecost to the last day for the salvation of the world. This work the Spirit does through the Word, specifically the Gospel which He receives from Christ in order to proclaim it to men.

This gathering, defending and preserving of the church is actualized in the way of faith.

By the preaching of the Gospel the Holy Spirit works faith in the hearts of those whom God in grace chooses to be His children. By such faith believers are implanted or ingrafted into Christ.¹ According to this manner Christ imparts Himself to His people and so is appropriated and received by them.²

Faith embraces Jesus Christ and all His merits and lays hold upon Him. The Holy Spirit, dwelling both in Christ and in believers, unites believers by faith more and more with Christ so that they, although He is in heaven and they are on earth, nevertheless are bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh. By that one Spirit they live forever and are governed, even as the members of one body are by one soul.³

This happens to *all* who come to faith.

Believers — each and every one — are members of the Lord Jesus Christ and have communion with all His gifts and treasures.⁴

According to the catechism, therefore, *all* true believers are implanted and ingrafted into Christ.

All are members of His body... *Together* they constitute by the working of the Spirit and the Word the body of which Christ is Head.⁵ And according to the express declaration of Paul that body of Christ is the church!⁶

The Reformed churches testify to that same truth in their confession. Therein they declare that they believe and confess one only catholic or universal church, which is a holy congregation of *all* true Christ-believers expecting the whole of their salvation in Jesus Christ, being washed by His blood, sanctified and sealed by the Holy Spirit.

This church has existed since the beginning of time, for it is preserved and upheld by God against all the rage of the world. Indeed, at times this church appears to be very small and seems threatened by destruction. But in spite of all this God sustains it. In Ahab's time the LORD gathered and preserved in and in spite of apostate Israel — that is to say, in the midst of the false church of those days — the seven thousand who did not bend the knee to Baal.

This one catholic church, moreover, is not established in and restricted to one place or bound to specific persons. Rather it is spread and scattered throughout the whole world. But always by the power of faith it is joined together and united with heart and will in one and the same Spirit.⁷

We also find this confession that the church is the congregation of *all* true believers in the *Canons of Dort*. There it is affirmed that God's counsel, flowing from His eternal love for the elect, is being powerfully accomplished from the beginning of the world even to the present day despite all the raging of hell. Therefore all the elect are being gathered together into one in His time. Thus there always will be a "congregation of believers," the foundation of which is laid in Christ's blood.⁸

So the Reformed churches testify concerning Christ's church — and this they confess before aught else — *that the church is the communion of ALL true believers*. Or to say the same thing in other words: *that ALL true believers are members of Christ's body, that is, of His church*.

1. *Heidelberg Catechism*; qu. 20, 64, and 80
2. *Belgic Confession*; art. 22 and 35
3. *Heidelberg Catechism*; qu. 70 and 76
4. *ibid*; qu. 49, 51 and 55
5. The oldest commentator on the *Heidelberg Catechism*, Casper Olevianus, wrote in his explanation of I believe one holy catholic Church: "Warum nennst du sie eine allgemeine Kirche? Darum, dass, gleichwie nur ein Haupt der Kirche ist nämlich Christus, also auch alle Gläubigen von Adam an bis zum Ende der Welt, sind seine Glieder, sind ein Leib durch den heiligen Geist, sind alle durch ein Haupt erlöst, einem

Haupte eingeleibt und werden an einem Haupte erhalten durch den Glauben an ihn." *Fester Grund christlicher Lehre*, ed. Karl Sudhoff, Frankfurt am Main, 1857; S. 160. And Ursinus wrote in his *Corpus Doctrinae Christianae* (his "Schatboek" or well-known commentary), ed. MDCLI, p. 302: "Definitio ecclesiae in quaestione talis continetur: Ecclesia est coetus hominum ab aeterno electus a Deo ad vitam aeternam."

6. Col. 1:17, 18: and He is the head of the body (soma), the congregation (ekklesia). Also Eph. 1:22: and has given Him (i.e. Christ) as Head over all to the church (ekklesia), which is his body (soma).
7. *Belgic Confession*, art. 27: The Latin translation of this article states: "Credimus et confitemur unicam Ecclesiam Catholicam seu universalem, quae est congregatio sancta seu coetus omnium vere fidelium Christianorum." Calvin writes in this connection about the church: "... that which is really such in the sight of God, into which none are received but those who by adoption and grace are the children of God, and by the sanctification of the Spirit are the true members of Christ." *Institutes*; Bk. IV, ch.1, 7. And Guido de Bres himself wrote, in complete agreement with Calvin, in his *Bastou*, p. 298: "L'Esriture parle de l'Eglise en deux sortes: car aucunes fois elle entend celle qui est devant Dieu, en la quelle ne sont compris sinon ceux par la grace d'adoption sont enfans de Dieu, et par la sanctification de son Esprit sont vrais membres de Jesus Christ ... Quelquefois elle en parle selon qu'elle est monstree exterieurement aux yeux de hommes." For translation into Dutch cf. C. Vonk: *De Voorzeide Leer*, III, B, p. 94.
8. *Canons of Dort*, II, 9. Prof. Greydanus accentuated sharply the confessional truth that every true believer is a member of Christ's church, and that true believers together constitute Christ's church. Cf. *Conges van Gereformeerden* (Referatenbundel) p. 38; idem (Verslag) p. 34.

TEXTUAL CATECHISM PREACHING

Peter De Jong

This suggested approach to catechism preaching was prepared for some seminary students and may interest our readers.

The Christian Reformed Church Order states (Art. 54b) "At one of the services each Lord's day, the minister shall ordinarily preach the Word as summarized in the Heidelberg Catechism, following its sequence." This article both reflects and maintains a practice in Reformed churches which dates back to Reformation times. Often such preaching has been done by simply explaining and applying the catechism questions and answers sometimes with little or only passing reference to the Bible passages which are suggested as basis for the doctrines. Some would even argue that this is the "proper" method of preaching the catechism. Today there are many indications that the historic practice is being neglected in spite of the Church Order requirement, and the doctrines expressed in the catechism and even the idea of a "system" of doctrine are being criticized and belittled.

In this situation the rightness and necessity of preaching the gospel's doctrines must be maintained and defended. God's Word, the Bible, is not merely a

loose collection of books and particular revelations. It conveys what the Apostle called "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27) including everything profitable for Christian faith and life (vs. 20) or as Peter expressed it "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3). This revelation is characterized by structure and order so that Paul must instruct Timothy to "Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee guard through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us" (2 Tim. 1:13 and 14), and this trust he in turn must "commit ... to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2:2). It is this trust of "sound" or, literally, "healthful" doctrine which the Christian Church through the centuries under the promised and given guidance of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16, 17; 15:26, 27; 16:13, 14) sought to preserve, teach and defend in its creeds. Those creeds are not, like the Bible, inspired, and they are subject to critical study, correction and improvement, but as we seek to be faithful to the Word of God we must hold to and learn from these official creeds, not ignore or disparage them. Although we, under the guidance of Word and Spirit may see something somewhat more clearly than our fathers did, we must hold, confess and defend the same unchanging truth of God stated in the creeds.

Seeing the relationship of Bible and creed in this way makes it appropriate that we in our method of "catechism preaching" try to make clear that these are the Bible's doctrines. That may be done in various ways. Forty years ago as a young minister recently graduated from the seminary I faced the problem of beginning this "catechism preaching." The situation was peculiar, a little struggling "orphan" congregation, 700 miles from the nearest other representative of the denomination, vacant for two years and rather critical of such Christian Reformed ideas as the Heidelberg Catechism. Having plenty of questions of my own, I set out to study each doctrine seeking to determine what Biblical ground could be found for it. (I worked through and outlined most of Kuyper's four volumes of *E Voto*, his collection of writings on the Catechism). Then in preaching I sought Bible passages which most directly and clearly presented and applied each point of doctrine, bringing in the church creed as simply confessing that. Not only did this approach meet the criticism "You are not preaching the Bible." It also had the positive advantages of showing that what was being presented was not merely a church tradition, but God's Word and showing from Scripture the practical implications and application of the Bible's doctrine. The exercise taught me (and I hope the people of the congregation), to appreciate those doctrines of the Bible. That approach to the doctrines I have continued to take in the succeeding 4 decades. Does it have disadvantages? Perhaps it does. Stressing the Bible text or texts may tend to slight the system and unity of the system of doctrine. That "system" may, however, be pointed out in the development of sermons and even more in the teaching of the catechism classes. Especially in our day of criticisms of old traditions we need, like the Reformers, to go back to and ground our and the churches' faith in the Bible, God's Word. Textual preaching of doctrines is one of the most forthright and effective ways of doing that.

Scripture Texts Used in Catechism Preaching (1939-1980)

INTRODUCTION:

2 Tim. 1:13, 14; Tit. 1:9; 2 John 8:11; 2 Peter 1:12-16, 19-21; 2 Chron. 17:7-9.

LORD'S DAY

I, 1: Phil. 1:21; Rom. 14:8, 9; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; Ps. 16:5, 6; Ps. 2:8; Acts 27:23, 24; 2 Cor. 1:5; Hos. 2:23.

I, 2: 1 John 1:1-2:6; Ps. 106:4-6, 47; Eph. 5:8.

II: Gal. 3:24; Rom. 3:20; 7:7; 2 Kings 22:8-14 (cf. 2 Chron. 34).

II, 4: Matt. 22:37-40. II, 5; III, 7, 8; Eph. 2:3, 4; Rom. 7:21-25; Ps. 51:5 III: Rom. 5:19, III, 6; Gen. 1:27, 31. III; Eccles. 7:29.

IV: Rom. 1:18; Lk. 13:6-9; Rom. 2:2; Ps. 5:4, 5, 6; Gal. 3:10; 6:7, 8; Nahum 1:2, 3; Lam. 1:18

V: Psalm 49:7-9, 15; Heb. 10:5-7, 9, 10; Hos. 13:4; Jer. 23:6; Gen. 22:7, 8; Job. 33:24.

VI: 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; Mt. 16:13-18; 22:41-45; Rm. 1:1-5; 8:2-5; Phil. 2:5-7; Heb. 1:1-8; 2:14-18; 4:14-16; Mk. 12:35-37.

VII: 2 Tim. 3:14-17; Rm. 10:9; Eph. 2:8-10; Acts 16:30, 31; Lk. 19:41-44; Heb. 11:7; Heb. 3:19-4:3; 1 Thess. 2:13.

VIII: Mt. 28:19-20; John 17:3; Eph. 2:18; Jude 20, 21; Tit. 3:4-7; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Cor. 6:11; Lk. 4:18, 19; 1 Pet. 1:2.

IX: John 14:6; Eccles. 12:1; Mt. 11:25-27; Ps. 24:1, 2; Rev. 4:11; Acts 17:24-31; Gal. 3:26; 4:4-7; Eph. 1:3, 5; 2:18; Lk. 10:21, 22; Gen. 1:1; Rev. 4:11; John 1:12; 20:17; Mt. 6:26.

X: Mt. 6:28-32; Job 1:21; Gen. 45:4, 5, 7, 8; Ps. 103:13; Gen. 50:20; Ps. 121:36; Deut. 8:3; Jonah 4:6-11; Isa. 10:5-27; 11:1-10.

XI: Mt. 1:21; Acts 4:12; 8:35; 10:43; Gal. 4:5; 1 Cor. 3:11

XII: John 1:41; Acts 10:36-44; Ps. 110:1-4; Isa. 61:1-3; Lk. 4:18, 19; Acts 4:26-28; Acts 17:3; Rev. 17:14; Acts 3:22, 23; 1 Cor. 1:30.

XII, 32: Acts 11:26; 26:28, 29; 1 Pet. 4:12-16; 1 Jn. 2:20.

XIII: 1 Jn. 2:23; 4:9, 15; Ps. 2:7, 8; Heb. 4:14; Rm. 1:4-6; Mt. 22:41-45; 1 Jn. 5:20, 21; Gal. 4:4, 5; Acts 2:36; Rm. 14:8, 9; Phil. 2:11; Acts 22:8, 10; Lk. 6:46.

XIV: L. 1:35; Mt. 1:20-24; Gal. 4:4, 5; Phil. 2:5-7.

XV: 1 Pet. 3:18; Isa. 53:4-6; Gal. 3:13, 14; 1 Pet. 2:24; Lk. 2:35.

XVI: 1 Cor. 15:3, 4; 1 Thess. 5:9, 10; Mt. 12:38-41; Heb. 9:27, 28; Col. 1:20; Heb. 2:14, 15; Mt. 20:28; Ps. 49:15;

XVI, 44: Mt. 25:41; Gal. 3:13, 14; Ps. 16:10

XVII: Eph. 2:4-7; 1 Cor. 15:54-57; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15:17, 20; Phil. 3:10, 11; Eph. 1:18-20; John 20:19, 20; Jn. 11:25; 1 Cor. 15:58.

XVIII: Heb. 9:24; Ps. 68:18, 19; Eph. 4:8; Dan. 7:13, 14; Mk. 16:19, 20; Jn. 14:1-3; Heb. 6:19-20; Rev. 12:5; Lk. 24:51; Mt. 28:19; Jn. 16:5-7.

XIX: Mt. 26:64; Eph. 1:20-23; Rm. 8:34, 35; Acts 2:33, 35;

XIX, 52: Mt. 16:27; Rev. 20:11-21:8; 22:12-15; 2 Thess. 1:6-9; Tit. 2:13; Mt. 25:31-34; 2 Pet. 3:8-13.

XX: Jn. 14:16-18; 15:26; 16:13-15; Lk. 24:48, 49; 1 Cor. 2:9-13; 3:16; Rm. 8:9;

XXI: 54, 55: Mt. 16:18; Eph. 1:4, 11-13; 1 Pet. 1:2, 5; Jn. 10:16; Eph. 5:18, 27-29; Heb. 12:22-25; Rev. 21:9-27; 2 Thess. 2:13-17; Eph. 4:1-16; Jn. 17:20-23; Mt. 12:30; Mk. 9:40; Rm. 1:6, 7; Philemon 4-7; Acts 2:44, 45.

XXI, 56: Eph. 1:7; 1 Jn. 4:10, 11; Heb. 10:17; Col. 1:14;

XXH: Phil. 1:21; 3:20, 21; Jn. 11:25, 26; Rm. 8:23; Eph. 2:4-7; 1 Tim. 6:12, 19; Rev. 22:1-5; Jn. 6:54;

XXIII: Rm. 5:1, 2; 3:21-26; Acts 13:38, 39; Gal. 2:16; 5:4; 3:10-14;

XXIV: Tit. 3:5, 7; 2:14; Lk. 19:17; 24:26; Eph. 2:8-10; 1 Cor. 3:11-15.

XXV: Rm. 10:13-15; Jas. 1:8, 21, 22; Jn. 6:44, 45; Acts 16:14, 15; 1 Cor. 1:21; 12:3; 1 Pet. 1:23; 2:1, 2; 1 Cor. 1:17; 2:2; Acts 14:27; Rm. 10:17; Acts 2:37-42; 1 Cor. 12:3; Acts 16:14, 15 Jn. 3:5.

XXVI, XXVII: Mt. 28:19; Jn. 13:8; Acts 22:16; Tit. 3:4-7.

XXVII, 74: Gen. 17:7, 10; Acts 2:38, 39; Gal. 3:29; Col. 2:11, 12; Mk. 10:13, 14; Isa. 44:1-3; Rm. 3:1, 2.

XXVIII-XXX: 1 Cor. 11:23-26; 17-34; 1 Cor. 10:14-21; Mt. 26:26-29; Jn. 6:35; 2 Kings 18:4, 5; Heb. 10:10, 14.

XXXI: Mt. 16:19; 1 Cor. 5:4-7; 2 Thess. 3:14, 15; 1 Tim. 3:4, 5, 12; Tit. 1:13; Acts 26:16-18.

XXXII: Rm. 12:1, 2; Jn. 3:3, 5; Jn. 15:1-11; Mt. 5:13-16; Lk. 1:74-75; Tit. 2:14, 1, 5; 3:8; Eph. 2:10; 1 Pet. 2:24, 25.

XXXIII: Col. 3:5-17; Acts 22:10; Rm. 6:1-11; Jn. 3:3; Lk. 15:11-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Isa. 55:7; Lk. 19:10.

XXXIII, 91-XXXIV, 93: Mt. 5:17-20; Ps. 1:2; Rm. 8:3, 4; Heb. 10:16; Ps. 119:18.

XXXIV: Ex. 20:3; Mt. 22:37, 38; 1 Sam. 15:22, 23; 1 Jn. 5:20, 21.

XXXV: Ex. 20:4-6.

XXXVI, XXXVII: Ex. 20:7; Mt. 5:33-37.

XXXVIII: Ex. 20:8-11; Mk. 2:28; Col. 2:16, 17; Heb. 4:9; Isa. 58:13, 14.

XXXIX: Ex. 20:12; Eph. 6:1-4; Eccles. 8:11; Pv. 6:23.

XL: Ex. 20:13; Gen. 9:6; Ps. 51:5-15; 1 Jn. 3:11-16.

XLI: Ex. 20:14; Eph. 5:1-10; Mt. 19:4-6; Gen. 1:27, 28; 2:18-25; Gen. 39:9; Mt. 5:27, 28.

XLII: Ex. 20:15; Eph. 4:17-24, 28.

XLIII: Ex. 20:16; Eph. 4:15, 25; Col. 3:9, 10.

XLIV: Ex. 20:17; Rm. 7:7; Eph. 5:5.

XLV, 114, 115: Jn. 3:3; Mt. 5:48; Heb. 12:14; 13:20, 21; Ps. 25:8-14; 119:33-38; 1 Jn. 1:8, 3:9.

XLV, 116: Ps. 50:14, 15; 116:12, 13; 1 Thess. 5:16-18.

XLV, 117-119: Jn. 14:13, 14; 15:7, 16; 1 Kings 18:36, 37; Dan. 9:18, 19; 1 Jn. 5:14; Jn. 4:22-24; Lk. 18:11-14; Jas. 1:5-7; Mt. 6:5-15; Jn. 16:23, 24.

XLVI: Mt. 6:9

XLVII: Mt. 6:9; Lk. 11:2;

XLVIII: Mt. 6:10; 16:18, 19; Mk. 10:13-16; Eph. 5:25-27; Lk. 11:2;

XLIX: Mt. 6:10;

L: Mt. 6:11;

LI: Mt. 6:12, 14, 15;

LII: Mt. 6:13; 2 Cor. 1:20.

CANONS OF DORDT

I: Eph. 1:3-6; 11-13; 1 Thess. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13-15; Rom. 8:28-34.

II: John 10:11, 14, 15, 26-30;

III and IV: Eph. 2:4-5; Mt. 19:24-26; Ezek. 36:1-14.

V: 2 Tim. 2:19; John 10:27-30; 1 Peter 1:5; John 6:36-40; 2 Peter 1:10, 11.

A LOOK AT BOOKS

THE RICHES OF JOHN BUNYAN by John Bunyan. Reprinted by Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. \$3.45. Reviewed by Rev. Harold Hollander.

Here is an opportunity for the scholar or avid reader of theological works to become acquainted with some of John Bunyan's theological writings. In the first he makes a good case for holding that the Lord told His disciples to begin at Jerusalem as the Jerusalem sinner was the vilest of men. I confess there are angles to this matter that I had never thought about, but the author progresses a little too slowly to hold me spellbound. After devoting 93 pages to that subject, he proceeds from page 95 to 243 to deal with "The Pharisee and the Publican." The last sixty pages or so are divided among the five remaining subjects. Not for everyone.

CHINA — A NEW DAY by W. Stanley Mooneyham. Published by Logos International, Plainfield, NJ 07060. 241 pages, paperback, \$2.50. Reviewed by John Vander Ploeg.

The importance and value of this 241-page paperback at a cost of only \$2.50 should not be underestimated. This volume by W. Stanley Mooneyham is, as Billy Graham states, "highly readable." Moreover, as a careful reading of the book reveals, it is chock-full of apparently authentic information about China, proclaimed by Mao-Tse Tung on October 1, 1949, to be the People's Republic of China. As president of World Vision International, Mooneyham has obviously had such a measure of exposure to Communist China, and it to him, that he knows whereof he speaks.

Mooneyham is by no means alone in stressing the need and the wisdom of keeping a close eye on developments in China. He quotes Napoleon Bonaparte as having once said: "China? There lies a sleeping giant — Let him sleep, for when he awakes he will move the world." Another quote reports the historian Arnold Toynbee as having said: "The twenty-first century will belong to China. They will be two-fifths of the human race by then."

China is a book packed with factual information, obviously gleaned by the author from first-hand contact with this land with its population of about one billion. The reader is left with no doubt that Mooneyham is factual and objective and that he is well-qualified to write *China — A New*

Day because he has had a great deal of exposure to the land and especially to the mind, the culture, and the ingrained traditions of the Chinese people.

For more than one good reason, *China* is a volume to be recommended for purchase and to be carefully read. Its value is far greater than the cost of it might suggest. The wealth of information about China in this "new day" has all the appearance of being authentic. If this sleeping giant, with a population of one billion, is really being aroused in our time, it would be inexcusable folly on our part if we are content to remain uninformed. At long last the bamboo curtain is being somewhat raised, and those who are wise will want to know what there is to know and to see through Mooneyham's eyes what there is to see.

Getting to know China of today is not merely something abstract or theoretical. Rather, it is an intensely practical matter. Before God, we are our "brother's keeper" whether he be red or yellow, black or white. Moreover, the recent "normalization of relations" between the U.S. and the People's Republic of China makes it of the utmost importance that we of the U.S. take advantage of every good opportunity to know with whom we are dealing. Also, the economic interests of both China, the U.S., and Canada as well, make it profitable, if not imperative, to know with whom we are doing business.

If the opening of some of China's doors today for international communications and exchanges should result in a new day also for Christian missions in Communist China, may the Lord grant that we may be found prepared to meet the challenge. Mooneyham's *China — A New Day* may very well be consulted as one means in this if access can be gained to China with its one quarter of the world's population.

THE PRESENCE OF THE FUTURE (The Eschatology of Biblical Realism) by George Eldon Ladd. Eerdmans Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1974. 339 pages, paperback, \$4.50. Reviewed by Rev. Morris H. Faber, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The odd and puzzling title of this book may be clarified by expansion: "The Current Presence of the Future Kingdom." The point of the book is that the kingdom of God (or of heaven, pages 110, 233) has been present with men since the time of John the Baptist and will come into fulness with a tremendous breakthrough at the end of time, pages 218, 307. Again and again the author presents this truth and does so with forcefulness hard to gainsay. He vigorously opposes the idea that the kingdom of God is to make no appearance on earth until history has ended. He equally opposes the idea that the kingdom will be consummated at time's end without any cataclysm.

The author's stance militates against postmillennialism, e.g., on page 126, because the teaching ignores the great upheaval to occur at Christ's return. The author does not devote much time or space to premillennialism, but he does show deviation from its strong contrast between Israel and the church, page 255. The term premillennialism, like postmillennialism and amillennialism, is nowhere mentioned, I be-

lieve. The term dispensationalism is mentioned once, pages 236, and then unfavorably. The Revelation 20:1-10 passage is not at all discussed or quoted, though it is referred to on page 119. I wish the author had used his great command of his subject to evaluate premillennialism explicitly rather than only by indirection.

The book is a revised and updated version of the author's 1964 *Jesus and the Kingdom*. After an opening chapter on the past and present debate relative to the doctrine of the last things, the author presents two chapters on the promise of the kingdom as found in the Old Testament and as (mis)understood in the later apocalyptic literature that includes the Apocrypha. Chapters 4-12 tell of the fulfillment of the kingdom promise and are followed by two final chapters on the end of time.

The reading of the book leaves one greatly impressed with the author's mastery of his subject and command of his material. It also reminds one of the marvel of the kingdom and the high privilege of membership in it. It likewise gives the reader interesting insights: that Christ's disciples are the true Israel, not a new one, page 255. Also that Jesus offered the people not just a teaching, but also Himself, and therefore His followers are His slaves, page 249. Also that the mystery of the kingdom is that it appears in history and time as well as at the consummation of the ages, page 222. Also that Jesus' parables do indeed conceal as well as reveal the truth, page 226. Also that the church is a means to the kingdom, not identical with it. Also that the Matthew 16 rock upon which Christ says He will build His church is, according to Ladd, the apostle Peter himself as representing the twelve confessors of Christ, page 260. (The difference between petros masculine and petra feminine is said to be unimportant.) Also that the fatherhood of God in Matthew 6 must be that over His disciples only, page 181. Otherwise it would be extended over even creatures. (So what if it is?)

Overall, not fast or easy reading, but worth reading!

MY STRENGTH

*Within my inner chamber
I find my place of prayer;
And always when I enter
My Savior's waiting there.*

*I come with steps that falter,
With spirit often weak;
But in His love and mercy
He knows just what I seek.*

*I bring by heavy burdens
And place them at His feet;
I rise a little stronger
A troubled world to meet.*

*Why should I fear tomorrow?
His love will yet abide!
Why should my heart be anxious
When He is at my side?*

*Within my inner chamber
I find my place of prayer;
And always when I enter
My Savior's waiting there.*

Annetta Jansen

Twelve Theses on Reprobation

Edwin H. Palmer*

This is an excellent article on the issue coming before synod this year. It is written clearly so that the layman can understand it. The Reformed Fellowship Editorial Committee was not able to place it in the Outlook due to its length. We do feel that each delegate to synod should read it and therefore we are printing a limited number of copies in separate pamphlet form. The following twelve subheads give a good indication of how this subject has been treated:

Twelve Theses on Reprobation

Edwin H. Palmer

Definition: Reprobation is God's eternal, sovereign, unconditional, immutable, wise, holy and mysterious decree whereby, in electing some to eternal life, he passes others by, and then justly condemns them for their own sin — all to his own glory.

1. The Bible is the infallible, inerrant Word of God and is the final arbiter in all teaching, including reprobation.
2. God is holy; he is the absolute antithesis of sin, and a hater of evil.
3. Although sin and unbelief are contrary to what God commands (his preceptive will), God has in-

- cluded them in his sovereign decree (ordained them, caused them to certainly come to pass).
4. Historically, many, but not all, theologians have spoken of two parts of reprobation: 1. preterition and 2. condemnation.
5. Reprobation as preterition is unconditional and as condemnation is conditional.
6. Preterition is the reverse side of election.
7. God does not effectuate sin and unbelief in the same way he effectuates good deeds and faith.
8. Objections to the teaching of reprobation are usually based on scholastic rationalism rather than humble submission to the Word of God.
9. It is wrong to expect the Bible to give a systematic theological treatise of reprobation.
10. A person does not know if he is reprobate but he may know if he is elect.
11. Reprobation should be preached.
12. Ignorance is learned.

Anyone who wishes may write for copies at \$1.50 each (while they last) to:

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4855 Starr St., S.E.
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*Dr. Palmer is Editor of the N.I.V. Bible.

Is This the "Bride" Christ Bought?

Mrs. Laurie Vanden Heuvel
and

Phooey on the Sermon and the Church Order

Edwin H. Palmer

are two very worthwhile articles reprinted from the "Outlook" several years ago in pamphlet form. They are under one cover and prove to be very prophetic in the light of what has transpired in our church during the past decade. A limited number of copies are still available at 50¢ each or 3 for a \$1.00. Special rates for larger quantities.

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