

IN THIS ISSUE

THE MINISTER AS A SHEPHERD

HENRY J. KUIPER

THE SYNOD ON BOY SCOUTS, BOYS' CLUBS, AND CHURCH COUNCILS

HENRY J. KUIPER

THE SYNODICAL DECISIONS OF 1924 ON COMMON GRACE

FRED H. KLOOSTER

DR. LEVER'S VIEW OF CREATION

NICHOLAS J. MONSMA

Gorch AND Trumpet



THE JOURNAL OF REFORMED FELLOWSHIP, INC.

VOLUME VIII — No. 6

NOVEMBER, 1958



Torch AND Trumpet



VOLUME VIII

NOVEMBER, 1958

No. 6

STRONG IN THE LORD.....	3
Leonard Greenway	
THE MINISTER AS A SHEPHERD.....	4
Henry J. Kuiper	
THE SYNOD ON BOY SCOUTS, BOYS' CLUBS, AND CHURCH COUNCILS	5
Henry J. Kuiper	
THREE POINTS OF COMMON GRACE.....	6
Synod of Christian Reformed Church	
THE SYNODICAL DECISIONS OF 1924 ON COMMON GRACE.....	7
Fred H. Klooster	
TEENERS' CORNER.....	11
Leonard Greenway	
DR. LEVER'S VIEW OF CREATION.....	12
Nicholas J. Monsma	
IMMORTALITY... WHAT IS IT?.....	15
William Hendriksen	
WHERE DO THE SPIRITS OF BELIEVERS GO AT DEATH?.....	16
William Hendriksen	
ARE THE SOULS OF THE REDEEMED IN HEAVEN CONSCIOUS?	18
William Hendriksen	
WHAT ARE THE SOULS IN HEAVEN DOING?.....	19
William Hendriksen	
THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE.....	21
Rousas Rushdoony	
BOOK REVIEWS	23
Martin Monsma, Cecil W. Tuininga	

This periodical is owned and published by Reformed Fellowship Inc., a group of ministers and laymen who hold to the Reformed faith. Its purpose is to give sharpened expression to this faith, stimulate the doctrinal sensitivity of those who profess this faith, help promote the spiritual welfare and the purity of Reformed Churches, and further the interests of all Kingdom institutions of Reformed caliber.

The publishers of this journal express their adherence to the Calvinistic creed as formulated in the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dort, and the Westminster Confession and Catechisms.

All contributions represent the personal views of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the members of Reformed Fellowship Inc.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Edward Heerema, Alexander C. De Jong, Henry J. Kuiper, Henry R. Van Til, Earl Zetterholm, Marvin Muller.

Send all copy and communications to Rev. H. J. Kuiper, Managing Editor, 2401 Paris Ave., S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Send all subscriptions to Mr. Leonard Kloet, Business Manager, 63 Jefferson Ave., S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan. Send all mail pertaining to advertising to Mr. Adrian Slings, c/o Wobbema Printing Co., 537 Hall Street, S. E., Grand Rapids 7, Michigan.

Entered as Second Class matter at Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Subscription price: Three dollars per year.

COMMENT ON THIS ISSUE

Fred H. Klooster, Th. D., is associate professor of Systematic Theology at Calvin Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan. His article on Common Grace is particularly timely in view of the discussions which are now taking place between representatives of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church and those of the Protestant Reformed Church (De Wolf) with a view to possible reunion.

Rev. Nicholas J. Monsma is the pastor of the Second Christian Reformed Church of Paterson, New Jersey. His article on the views of Dr. Lever of the Free University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands, is the second installment of his contribution: "Evolution - A Hypothesis Still."

Rev. Rousas Rushdoony is the pastor of a Presbyterian Church in Santa Cruz, California.

NOTICE

We regret we are unable to meet the request for copies of our September issue. The demand exceeded our expectations. Since that demand was especially for the article by Mr. Raymond J. Geerdes on *The Future of Our Christian Schools*, a reprint in pamphlet form is now on the press. Copies will be sent free of charge to all our Christian school teachers and board members. Others who wish to receive a free copy will please send a card to TORCH AND TRUMPET, Business Manager, 63 Jefferson Ave., S. E., or phone GL 9-6216, Grand Rapids, Michigan.



Strong in the Lord

Devotional Studies
in Ephesians

LEONARD GREENWAY

"Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God" Ephesians 6:10, 11a

WE HAVE BEEN meditating on the great blessings we have in Christ. The simple phrase "in Christ", and phrases similar to it, are at the center of Paul's teachings in this epistle. The very first verse brings us to that center — "to the saints that are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus". A Christian is a person who lives in Christ. That is his atmosphere, his sphere of spiritual being. He lives amid ordinary things, but his position in Christ is most extraordinary.

In chapter 4, verse 17, Paul begins what may be called the applicatory section of the epistle. He undertakes a fairly lengthy statement of Christian duties. A Christian, just because he lives in Christ and belongs to him, is under solemn obligation to magnify the grace that gave him that enviable position. He does not assume that obligation reluctantly, for the Holy Spirit makes him heartily willing and ready henceforth to live unto Christ. Christian conduct is not optional to the Christian. He is commanded by God to exhibit the power of grace in his life. This entails discipline, struggle, hardship, for we have an enemy who is the devil himself and who walketh about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (cf. I Peter 5:8).

Victory in this spiritual struggle is not won by escape. *There simply is no escape.* We must daily face the foe. Even Sunday, the "day of rest and gladness, the day of joy and peace", can be a day of temptation. Indeed, there are temptations peculiar to Sunday. Our entire way to heaven is beset with difficulties. It is a struggle to the end.

Some attacks of the tempter are

blasé and brutal. Some are subtle, but as sinister as they are subtle. Some sweep down on the soul like a tempest. Some creep on slowly, stealthily. There are temptations that strike out from an ambush, startlingly abrupt and catching the victim in a paralysis of surprise. And there are temptations that appear in the sun of the noontime, making an open bid for a man's integrity. While we are not all tried by the same lure, there are certain temptations that seem to be characteristic of our age. These are the bizarre enticements of our day, the glittering, gaudy allurements which are made so attractive by the movie industry and by popular fiction. The modern world has its tawdry baits especially designed for young people, and the sad fact is that too few of our young people experience a deep-seated revulsion against them.

From one point of view the situation is very discouraging. On the other hand, the Christian must remember what Jesus said: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world". Our victory is in him! He has the resources. His armor is all-sufficient. Hence Paul bids us, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might".

The resources we have in the Lord are strong enough for every eventuality, but they must be employed *in their fulness*. Put on the *whole* armor of God. Legends tell us how the mother of Achilles dipped him when a babe into a river that possessed the virtue of making anyone invulnerable who was so dipped. But, mother-like, she could not completely let go, and that portion of his body — the heel — to which she

clung, gave entrance later to the arrow which caused his death. Failure to put on the whole armor of God will leave us exposed at some "Achilles' heel." That is the point of defeat which so often brings shame upon us, and reproach upon the Kingdom we represent.

The Christian is to be known as a sojourner or pilgrim (I Peter 2:11), but never is he permitted to regard himself as a peaceful wayfaring man. A pilgrim? Yes, but also a *warrior!* A pilgrim warrior! On his journey to the heavenly land of promise he encounters many hostilities, both within and without. For that reason, the Bible, in describing his duties and labors, makes frequent use of imagery borrowed from military life. The Christian is called a "soldier" (2 Timothy 2:3); he has "weapons" (2 Corinthians 10:4); he is urged to fight the "good fight of faith" (2 Timothy 6:12). The Church of God is described in military language. Her leader is the great "captain of their salvation" (Hebrews 2:10). Many familiar hymns witness to this:

Like a mighty army
Moves the Church of God

O watch, and fight, and pray!
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.

— PRAYER —

O Jehovah of Hosts, our Sun and Shield, Thou hast promised not to withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly. Grant us to experience the blessedness of those whose strength is in Thee. Amen.

The Minister as a Shepherd

HENRY J. KUIPER

HAVING TAKEN part very recently in the installation of a minister, we find our thoughts revolving still around the work of a minister and the problems that confront him, particularly in the matter of finding time for study and the preparation of sermons.

MINISTERS ARE PASTORS

One of the paragraphs in the "Form for the Ordination (or Installation) of Ministers of God's Word" contains the charge to the minister. (Psalter Hymnal, page 101). This charge has a definite pattern. In fact, the entire Form proceeds from the thought that the minister is preeminently a pastor, or shepherd. The very first sentence, after the brief introduction, speaks of "the institution and the office of *pastors* and ministers of the Word." A few sentences farther the Form states that "the *pastoral* office is an institution of Christ." And then the paragraph that follows begins with the remarkable sentence: "Now, what this holy office requires we can easily deduce from the very name itself. For as the work of a common shepherd is to feed, guide, protect, and rule the flock entrusted to him, the same applies to the *spiritual shepherds*, who are placed over the Church..."

Turning to the Charge to the Minister on page 101, we could show that every statement made here, even the one about the minister being an *ensample* to them that believe, yes also the one about being a *good soldier* of Jesus Christ, proceeds from the fundamental thought that ministers are pastors, shepherds. For their task is in part, as "ensamples," to go before the flock that the flock may follow them, and as "good soldiers" to protect them with spiritual weapons against all false shepherds and wild beasts.

AN OLD-FASHIONED CONCEPT

It can hardly be said that the idea of the minister as being a shepherd is taken from modern life. It fits in much better with the prevailing rural and pastoral life of former centuries than with the commercial and industrial aspect of modern society. Perhaps very few of the readers of this paper ever saw a flock of sheep and their shepherd, except in pictures. It is not strange that the industrialization of society has resulted in a changed emphasis on the function of the church and its ministry. It is quite significant that churches today, especially large ones, are called *plants* and that their ministers serve especially as *administrators*, or superintendents.

This change of emphasis has not been for the real welfare of the Church. Even though we live in a vastly different world from that of our ancestors, human nature and human needs have not changed. Souls are still in need of shepherding and faithful ministers are still shepherds.

A COMPREHENSIVE TERM

The term "shepherd" is a very comprehensive one. It covers all the work of a minister, whether as teaching or ruling elder — not only his dealings with families and individuals, the sick and the sorrowing, the indifferent and the wayward, the infirm and the aged, but also his preaching and teaching. In each case the minister is the pastor, the shepherd, who feeds his sheep, whatever their circumstances may be, with the Word of God.

ALSO HIS FAMILY'S SHEPHERD

The pastor is the shepherd of the entire congregation, including his own

wife and children. These too need spiritual attention, not less than the other families of his church. In fact, they need special care because so much depends upon the example they set to the other members of the flock. It is no exaggeration to say that a minister's family can make or break him.

The minister is the pastor also of his wife and children. Every man of the cloth knows how easy it is to neglect the spiritual interests of his own family in view of the unceasing demands on his time and energy. Even family worship in the manse is in danger of being slighted since the telephone and the doorbell often disturb the meal or terminate it abruptly. Many a minister's family has suffered spiritual damage because of the relentless demands on the time and strength of its head. Pastors do well to make a firm resolve to give their own families special spiritual attention regardless of obstacles.

TIME FOR STUDY?

The Form already mentioned, built—as we have seen—around the concept of shepherding, quotes from the New Testament where it states: "Give heed to reading... neglect not the gift that is in thee." The minister is his own shepherd, as well as of his church and his own family! He must feed his own soul from the same Word in which he pastures his flock.

This inspired piece of advice to Timothy (I Tim. 4:13, 14) is needed as urgently in our day as in the apostolic age; and it is probably harder to follow because of the rush of modern life. Ministers do not escape the mad pace of today's world any more than their parishioners. Only those who are in the ministry know how difficult it is to find time for serious reading and restful preparation of sermons and Bible lessons. Some of us would perhaps dread to give an account of the number of books which we intended but failed to read throughout the year. A minister should be left alone as much as possible with his library at least two days a week. This is the very minimum even for older and more experienced

TIMELY TOPICS

ministers. It is just impossible to engage in serious and fruitful study in the midst of frequent interruptions and distractions. There are days when a minister tries to study and prepare a sermon but gives up in despair because his line of thought is broken repeatedly. He can only hope and pray that the next day will be a less distracting one. And yet — this is his dilemma — even on the days set aside for study and reflection no minister who has the heart of a shepherd will fail to respond to calls for help.

This problem of finding sufficient time for study and the preparation of sermons is by no means easily solved. Some ministers try to solve it by setting aside certain hours of the day for consultation with their members. How well they succeed in this way to save out more time for prayer, reading, and sermonizing we do not know, though we are not too optimistic about the results.

The minister himself can do at least one thing, in his hours and days for study, to lessen the demands on his attention by the congregation. He can let the congregation know about his study habits. Doubtless, many of his members will be sufficiently understanding to avoid disturbing him unnecessarily. For one thing, they can make it a point not to trouble him with inconsequential and trivial matters, as for example by inquiring when a meeting will start or what the address is of a certain individual. Information which can be obtained from a church bulletin, church directory, or telephone book should not be sought by a telephone call to the parsonage. And surely, the habit of some retired parishioners, especially in rustic communities, to visit the parsonage and claim an hour or more of the minister's precious morning or afternoon, without having a problem or a message, deserves to be rebuked.

Consistories can be of great help to the minister in his endeavor to find sufficient time for study, intercession, and the preparation of sermons. They can seek ways and means to protect him against unnecessary distractions.

They should not demand too much of him in the matter of leading society meetings. Neither should they ask him to do their work in visiting the wayward. Elders, too, are shepherds of the flock, according to Scripture. Disciplinary visits should not be made by the pastor. Moreover, there are weeks when one or more funerals or special services make it very desirable to give the minister some relief on the Lord's Day. Elders are wise if they reason that it is better to have one well-prepared sermon on Sunday than two that were produced under great pressure.

Above all, the pastor should form the habit of husbanding his time and "give every flying minute something to keep in store." One of the temptations to which especially ministers are subject is to follow lines of least resistance in the use of precious time. How realistic the admonition of Paul to Timothy: "...be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all."

The Synod on Boy Scouts, Boys' Clubs, and Church Councils

WE WERE greatly heartened by a number of decisions taken by the 1958 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. We wish to mention two of them in this article. The one pertains to the issue of Christian Boys' Clubs versus Boy Scouts. Three overtures were sent to Synod on the matter. Synod was asked for a more definite pronouncement regarding the undesirability of Boy Scout organizations in our churches, especially in view of "the growing agitation for affiliation with the Boy Scout movement" and

made certain suggestions for the strengthening of the Boys' Clubs organizations in our churches.

Regarding the Boy Scouts, the Synod of 1951 merely "discouraged" membership in this organization. The Synod of 1958 confirmed that decision, also repeating the ground that "Membership in this organization involves us in corporate responsibility for an organization whose program is based upon a philosophy evidently that of the Modernist, and which is basically inadequate and lacks the fundamental elements of Christianity." But Synod went further and added the significant article:

"Synod expresses its regret that some of our churches have allowed their boys to organize troops affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, contrary to the advice of Synod of 1951, and Synod urges our churches to implement the decisions of 1951 in regard to the Calvinist Cadet Corps" (the official name of our Boys' Club organizations-K).

We may now expect those few churches which have permitted the organization of Boy Scout troops to instruct these troops to disband and to reorganize as Boys' Clubs, if these consistories have not already done so. Moreover, our churches, generally speaking, should put forth special effort to foster and strengthen the Calvinist Cadet Corps. This movement has enjoyed encouraging growth especially during the past two or three years. Over 100 clubs are already in operation. These clubs can do much, under proper leadership, to help counteract the formation of lawless gangs among our young people in rural and urban communities. Sorry to say, this serious manifestation of juvenile and parental delinquency is making itself felt to at least some degree even among our own covenant youth.



The other decision which greatly encouraged us was the one which recorded Synod's reaction to a protest by a member of one of our churches on the West coast against its affiliation with a local Council of Churches of which liberals as well as

conservatives were members. The protest was formally against the decision of Classis California which upheld the affiliation of the Alameda Church with the Council in question. Classis defended the action of this church on the grounds that the Council concerned has been "an effective channel for the Alameda Church to extend its services and witness in the community, and that the consistory and congregation have unequivocally dissociated themselves from any activity of the Council not in keeping with the Reformed faith."

Synod decided as follows, in sustaining the protest of Mr. Oren:

"Although recognizing with appreciation the evangelistic zeal which motivated the Alameda Church in joining the Alameda Council initially, Synod declares that it does not approve of any consistory or congregation of our Church identifying itself by membership with any local council or agency of the National Council of Churches or a similar organization which included 'churches' that deny the orthodox faith and Scriptural teaching.

"Grounds:

"1. Scripture forbids such association with unbelievers and with those who preach another gospel (cf. II Corinthians 6:14-18 and Galatians 1:8-9).

"Synod has taken a position against membership in the National Council — after initially joining it also for reasons of gaining opportunities for service — on the ground that:

"a. Ecclesiastical alliances of any kind between orthodox and liberals are contrary to God's Word.

"b. Liberalism is strongly in evidence in the Federal (now National) Council.

"c. The Council stands committed to programs...which our churches...should not endorse (Acts 1924, Art. 95, pp. 111, 112).

"Synod declares this to be its answer to the entire appeal of Mr. Oren."



These are plain, uncompromising words for which we should be very thankful. There can be no uncertainty

regarding the judgment of Scripture about the evil of fraternizing with organizations which deny, or whose members deny, the basic truths of Scripture. Synod could have mentioned other Scripture passages besides the two it mentioned in support of its position — for example, II John: 10: "If any man cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting; for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works."

The principle to which Synod appealed also condemns all personal affiliation of our ministers with Ministers' Associations of which liberals are members, whether as a majority or a minority, and all participation in union services, as on Good Friday, in which liberal as well as evangelical ministers take part. Such participation implies that we regard them as brothers in Christ; but to acknowledge them as such is to extend the hand of fellowship to those whom Christ disowns, no matter how friendly or tolerant they may be toward their orthodox colleagues.

Three Points of Common Grace

OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED SYNOD OF 1924

"A. Concerning the first point, touching *the favorable attitude of God to mankind in general and not only toward the elect*, Synod declares that according to Scripture and Confession, it is certain that, in addition to the saving grace of God displayed to the elect unto eternal life, there is also a certain favor or grace (een zekere gunst of genade) of God which He shows to his creatures in general. This is evident from the quoted passages of Scripture and from the Canons of Dort II, 5 and III & IV, 8 and 9, where the general offer of the gospel is discussed; while the quoted statements from Reformed writers of the florescent period of Reformed theology show that our Reformed fathers have always (van oudsher) held this position."

(Scripture quoted in Committee report, to which First point refers: Ps. 145:9; Matt. 5:44, 45; Luke 6:35-36; Acts 14:16; 17:1; I Tim. 4:10; Rom. 2:4; Ezekiel 33:11; 18:23.) Reformed writers: Calvin, II, xi, 16; III, xiv, 2; Van Maastricht.

"B. Concerning the second point, touching *the restraint of sin in the life of the individual and of society*, Synod declares that according to Scripture and Confession there is such a restraint of sin. This is evident from the quoted Scripture passages and from the Belgic Confession, Art. 13 and Art. 36, where it is taught that by means of the general operations of His Spirit, without renewing the heart, God restrains sin in its unhindered breaking forth, as a result of which human society has remained possible; while it is evident from the quoted statements of Reformed writers from the florescent period of Reformed theology, that our Reformed fathers have always (van oudsher) championed this view."

(Scripture references in Committee report, to which the Second Point refers are: Gen. 6:3; Ps. 81:11, 12; Acts 7:42; Rom. 1:24, 26, 28; II Thess. 2:6, 7.) Reformed writers: Calvin II, iii, 3; Van Maastricht.

"C. Concerning the third point, touching *the performance of so-called civic righteousness by the unregenerate*, Synod declares that according to Scripture and Confession the unregenerate, although unable to do any saving good (Canons of Dort, III & IV, art. 4) can perform such civic good. This is evident from the quoted Scripture passages, and from the Canons of Dort, III & IV, art. 4, and the Belgic Confession Art. 36, where it is taught that God, without renewing the heart, exercises such influence upon man that he is enabled to perform civic good; while it is clear from the quoted statements of the Reformed writers from the florescent period of Reformed theology, that our Reformed fathers have championed this view from of old."

(Scripture referred to: II Kings 10:29, 30; 12:2 cf. II Chron. 24: 17-25; II Kgs. 14:3 cf. II Chron. 25:2, 14-16, 20, 27; Luke 6:33; Rom. 2:14 cf. vs. 13, 10:6, Gal. 3:12)

The Synodical Decisions of 1924 on Common Grace

FRED H. KLOOSTER

THE SYNOD of the Christian Reformed Church, which met in Kalamazoo from June 18 to July 8, 1924, will always be remembered for its famous three points — the decisions on common grace. However, the Synod of 1924 was not a common synod. It was the Synod which rejected an overture from Classis Hackensack to print the *Acts of Synod* in the English language, and therefore we must translate the common grace decisions today. (On the other hand, the Synod did accept, “met dankbaarheid”, an invitation from the three Kalamazoo congregations to take an “auto ride” through the city!)

The Synod of 1924 also took far-reaching action concerning Calvin Theological Seminary. Consideration was given to the question of shifting Professors Volbeda and Berkhof to other departments. While Dr. C. Bouma and Dr. M. J. Wyngaarden were appointed to the faculty, honorable emeritation was granted to Prof. F. M. Ten Hoor, who had given almost twenty-five years of service. The Synod heard appeals on the case of Prof. Janssen who had been deposed in 1922, and it was decided to expand the seminary by adding a sixth professorship in the field of apologetics and ethics. We smile today when we read that a resolution was passed which required that men considered for a professorship in the Seminary should have had a general scientific training at least equal to that of the incoming juniors. It was the Synod of 1924 which passed the resolution requiring students who have studied theology elsewhere to take at least one year at Calvin Seminary if they desire to enter the Christian Reformed ministry. And it was also the Synod of 1924 which severed our brief membership in the Federal Council of Churches.

One may be excused today for lack

of familiarity with all these decisions. However, the doctrinal decisions concerning common grace ought to be better known by all of us, not least by the ministers and theological students. These decisions are important because they concern doctrines confessed by our churches. They are important decisions because a most unfortunate separation developed in connection with them. A great deal of confusion has arisen concerning these decisions. Everyone who takes seriously the ecumenical duty of the Christian Reformed Church and the Protestant Reformed Churches will have to study the decisions of 1924 carefully. The 1957 communication from the Protestant Reformed Churches (De Wolf) admits that “the possibility exists that we have misinterpreted your position. If this is pointed out to us we assure you that we will correct it” (*Acts* 1957, p. 532). I am personally convinced that a great deal of misunderstanding does exist concerning the 1924 decisions on common grace. This paper is presented in order to describe the general tenor of those decisions which constitute the official position of the Church.

In the first section of this paper I will set forth the general features of the decisions of 1924. In the second section I will discuss the three points briefly, and in the final section I will try to indicate the genuinely Reformed character of those decisions.

General Features of the Decisions of 1924

The actual three-point decision of the Synod is, unfortunately, very brief. But the all too brief decision implies for its context the important Advisory Committee Report which precedes it. Since the three points are obviously dependent upon that Com-

mittee Report, a proper understanding of the three points will require close attention to this Report (*Acts*, pp. 113-137).

The membership of this advisory committee is worth noting. Its president was Rev. Y. P. De Jong and its reporter Dr. Clarence Bouma, while Professor L. Berkhof was the adviser. Other members of the Committee were E. F. J. Van Halsema, A. Bliet, T. Vander Ark, S. Dekker, J. Verbrugge and J. T. Brandsma. That this Committee was dealing with an issue of wide interest and concern within the denomination is evident from the fact that it had to consider approximately thirty documents of protest and appeal.² There were at least eleven points of dispute mentioned in the various protests (p. 121 f.). The Advisory Committee suggested that only three of these should be taken up by the Synod. These three, which were basic to the three points on common grace, were selected because the Committee believed that they were points on which the Revs. Danhof and Hoeksema had taken a clear stand, and because they concerned matters which were expressed in our Creeds. The Committee felt that the peace of the Church required that the Synod should take a clear stand on these disputed points (p. 124).

In the light of subsequent discussions, it is important to note that the Advisory Committee and the Synod realized that the three points did not constitute the whole doctrine of common grace. The three points were not even meant to constitute a well-rounded summary of the doctrine of common grace. They were simply a reassertion of three elements believed to be contained in our creeds and now called into dispute by Danhof and Hoeksema. Although a communication from Classis Muskegon requested Synod to make a “careful Scriptural, historical, and doctrinal investigation” which would lead to a specific formulation of the doctrine (p. 120), the Committee advised Synod not to do this since “such a declaration would presuppose that this doctrine had been thought through and developed in all its de-

tails, which is certainly not the case" (p. 134). The Committee specifically rejected the proposal that a committee be appointed "to study the matter of common grace in order to come to the formulation of a dogma which could be made a part of the Confession" (p. 134). But it did recommend that "the leaders of our people, ministers as well as professors, ... engage in further study of the doctrine of common grace and to discuss the problems involved in it carefully and present them to our people in lectures and articles. It is desirable," the Committee declared, "that many take part in this, not a few or only a small number" (p. 135). It was hoped that in this way the doctrine would be thoroughly investigated in all of its aspects and that eventually the time would be ripe for the "formulation of a dogma" of common grace. It is unfortunate that so little of this was actually done during the next quarter century. But these assertions of the Committee help us to understand how the three points were regarded. This, it seems to me, has significance in judging the creedal status of the three points, which seems to be a touchy problem in the current ecumenical discussions.

Another factor, important in understanding the general focus of the three points, is the concluding witness or testimony of the Synod. This testimony to the Churches constitutes a warning against worldliness and a possible misuse of the doctrine of common grace. While common grace and the antithesis are sometimes put in juxtaposition, the Synod called for the sturdy maintenance of both. I simply mention this testimony here, but will return to it later.

We must now turn to the three points on common grace and seek to understand their general tenor in the light of the matters mentioned above. Obviously we can refer only briefly to each point.

The Three Points in Particular

The first of the three points concerns the "favorable attitude of God to mankind in general and not only to the elect". The Synod asserted that "in addition to the saving grace of

God unto eternal life shown only unto the elect, there is also a certain favor or grace (gunst of genade) which he displays unto his creatures in general" (pp. 145 - 6).

Need for asserting this point arose from the fact that Hoeksema and Danhof had clearly taken position against it. The Committee quoted the following statement from *Zonde en Genade*: "Grace is not in things, but only in the good favor of God. Gold and silver, rain and sunshine, gifts and talents are not in themselves grace. But grace can certainly work in all those things, but it always remains particular and is given only to His people" (p. 125).³ Of the other quotations one of the clearest is a statement of Hoeksema in *The Banner*. After declaring that "such an attitude of God is utterly inconceivable," Hoeksema concludes: "Hence we deny that in any way or to any extent, for time or eternity, God assumes an attitude of positive favor or grace over against the reprobate" (pp. 125 - 6).

Now, for the assertion of a favorable attitude of God to all men, the Synod claimed support "in the quoted Scripture passages and in the *Canons of Dort* II, 5 and III-IV, 8 and 9, where the general offer of the Gospel is discussed" (p. 146). At this point one notes an unfortunate technical weakness in the Synodical decision — the kind all too frequent in our Synodical actions. The Scriptural passages to which reference is made are not part of the official decision. The passages can be found by turning back some twenty pages to the Advisory Committee Report (p. 126). It is obvious that those are the passages meant. And this, though an unfortunate technical weakness, does indicate that the Advisory Committee's Report was an integral and indispensable part of the official decisions.

The passages mentioned are Psalm 145:9; Matthew 5:44, 45; Luke 6:35, 36; Acts 14:16, 17; I Timothy 4:10; Romans 2:4; as well as the passages concerning the well-meant gospel offer, Ezekiel 33:11 and 18:23. Unfortunately, the Advisory Committee Report does no more than list the

passages in proof-text method. However, the problem involves divergent exegesis of each passage. It is not possible to evaluate each passage here. It must be admitted that they are not all equally valid. It seems to me that one of the strongest passages in defense of the Synodical decision is Luke 6:35, 36: "But love your enemies, and do them good and lend, never despairing; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be sons of the Most High: for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil. Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful." If this passage is parallel to Matthew 5:44, 45, as I believe it is, then this attitude of kindness and mercy is applied to the gifts of rain and sunshine given to all men as well.

The Synodical decision seeks support for the well-meant offer of the gospel by an appeal to the *Canons of Dort*. The Canons (III, IV, 8, 9) are indeed quite explicit in asserting the doctrine of the well-meant gospel call, for they say: "As many as are called by the gospel are unfeignedly called." But I do not think the Canons say much concerning the precise point at issue; namely, whether this well-meant offer of the gospel is evidence of an attitude of favor on God's part to mankind in general. Perhaps the statement that "God calls men by the gospel and confers upon them various gifts" (III — IV, 9) comes closest to the point at issue. The Synod claims further support for the first point by an appeal to the classic Reformed theologians who have maintained this doctrine.

The second and the third points were thought to be involved in the first. The Advisory Committee stated that it considered the first point to be "of central significance in the question which has caused so much unrest in the Church. The other two points are very closely related to this one and indeed are more or less contained in it" (p. 124).

* * * *

The second point concerns the restraint of sin. Synod declared "that God by means of the general operations of His Spirit, without the renewal of the heart, restrains (bridles) sin in its unhindered breaking forth,

as a result of which human society has remained possible . . ." (p. 146). The notion of a restraint of sin, which the Committee believed to be Scriptural and creedal, was rejected by Hoeksema and Danhof. This statement was quoted from *Niet Doopersch Maar Gereformeerd*: "We understand very well that sin has not yet reached its full ripeness. But we explain that this is so simply because of the organic development of things, and not from a restraining influence of God of which the Scripture and Creeds say nothing" (p. 128).

I regret to state that I believe the Synodical decision with its appeal to the Scripture passages mentioned in the Committee report is unfortunately weak at this point again. Not that I think the decision incorrect or that there are no valid Scriptural data. On the contrary, the Committee did not in my estimation adduce the strongest Scriptural evidence which was available. The passages are simply listed, and yet the difference between Hoeksema and the Committee concerned precisely the proper understanding of each passage quoted. Genesis 6:3 is quoted, for example, but such venerable exegetes as G. Vos and G. C. Aalders interpret the passage in such a way that it has no real bearing upon the second point of 1924. Although the passages quoted — Psalm 81:12, 13; Acts 7:42; Romans 1:24, 25, 28; II Thessalonians 2: 6, 7 — do have bearing on the question of the restraint of sin, they are not clear proof for the decision taken. It seems to me that an analysis of the restraint of sin resulting from the confusion of tongues at Babel would have been more significant. Further Scriptural analysis of this sort would substantially have strengthened the Biblical support for the second point.

I think the creedal support for the second point is more substantial, however. In the work *Niet Doopersch Maar Gereformeerd*, Hoeksema and Danhof wrote: "Where does it (the Confession) speak of a restraint upon the process of sin? Absolutely nowhere! (Immers nergens)" (p. 128). But the Synod had clear evidence in Article 13 of the *Belgic Confession* which speaks of God's providence,

asserting "that He so restrains the devil and all our enemies that without His will and permission they cannot hurt us." Article 36 of the *Belgic Confession* was also mentioned. Here the reference is to government which God ordained "to the end that the dissoluteness of men might be restrained . . ." and that he "invested the magistracy with the sword for the punishment of evil-doers and for the protection of them that do well." It seems to me that these Creedal references spoke precisely of the thing to which the second point referred and was denied by Hoeksema and Danhof.

There is an additional weakness in the second point, however, one against which Rev. Wassink, a delegate of the Synod of 1924, rightly protested (p. 192). The second point states that sin is restrained by "the general operations of the Holy Spirit." Although this may well be true, it is not precisely ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the passages of Scripture nor in the Creedal statements. That this work of the Holy Spirit did not involve the regenerating grace of God unto salvation is clear. The appeal to Calvin in this connection is worth noting: "But here we ought to remember that amidst this corruption of nature there is some room for Divine grace, not to purify it but internally to restrain its operations. For should the Lord permit the minds of all men to give up the reins to every lawless passion, there certainly would not be an individual in the world whose actions would not evince all the crimes for which Paul condemns human nature in general, to be most truly applicable to him . . . In his elect the Lord heals these maladies by a method which we shall hereafter describe. In others he restrains them, only to prevent their ebullitions so far as he sees to be necessary for the preservation of the universe" (*Institutes* II, iii, 3).

* * * *

The third point, "concerning the performance of civic righteousness by the unregenerate", is closely bound to the second point, as it is also in Calvin's statement. The Synod as-

serted that "the unregenerate, though incapable of any saving good, can perform such civic good . . . that God, without renewing the heart, exercises such influence upon man, that he is enabled to perform civic good . . ." (p. 146). The Scriptural passages to which appeal is made are again those listed in the Advisory Committee Report. They are the passages which refer to the deeds of Jehu, Jehoash, and Amaziah (II Kings 10:29, 30; 12:2; 14:3). Luke 6:33 speaks of sinners doing good to those that do good to them, and Romans 2:14 of the Gentiles who without the law do the things of the law.

Important again are the Creedal statements which the Advisory Committee felt were jeopardized by Revs. Hoeksema and Danhof. The third point appeals to the *Canons of Dort* III-IV, 4, and the Advisory Committee quoted this part of the article: "There remain, however, in man since the fall the glimmerings of natural light, whereby he retains some knowledge of God, of natural things and of the difference between good and evil, and shows some regard for virtue and for good outward behavior." This was to the point in support of the third point. In view of the misinterpretation sometimes given to the third point, it is unfortunate that the immediately following sentence from the *Canons* was not added: "But so far is this light of nature from being sufficient to bring him to a saving knowledge of God and to true conversion that he is incapable of using it aright even in things natural and civil. Nay further, this light, such as it is, man in various ways renders wholly polluted, and hinders in unrighteousness, by doing which he becomes inexcusable before God." All of this is in line with Calvin's explanation of how the restraint of sin operates. "Hence some by shame, and some by fear of the laws, are prevented from running into many kinds of pollutions, though they cannot in any great degree dissemble their impurity; others, because they think that a virtuous course of life is advantageous, entertain some languid desires after it, others go further, and display more than common excellence,

that by their majesty they may confine the vulgar to their duty. Thus God by His providence restrains the perverseness of our nature from breaking out into external acts but does not purify it within" (*Institutes*, II, iii, 3).

This all too brief and incomplete survey has shown that the three points do have Scriptural foundation and creedal basis. The theologians mentioned, especially Calvin, show that classic Reformed theologians have held this position earlier. At the same time we must admit that there are technical weaknesses in the decision as well as the more serious weaknesses of inapt Scriptural reference. Then too, the brevity of the decisions and the general imperfection of all human work is evident. The three points obviously do not contain the whole doctrine of common grace. It seems clear that the three points were not meant to be a new creed but only a defense of elements already in the creeds.

Now we turn to examine the Reformed character of the three points.

The Reformed Character of the Decisions of 1924

It is sometimes claimed that the three points undermine the Reformed doctrine of total depravity and constitute a rejection of the doctrine of the antithesis. Some maintain that a form of Arminianism is always involved in the doctrine of common grace. It is true that a certain doctrine of common grace does destroy the doctrines of the antithesis and total depravity and the absolute need of saving grace. Such views of common grace were, unfortunately, in the Christian Reformed Church in 1924, as the protest of Quirinus Breen indicates. However, I am convinced that the official decision of 1924 rejected that view of common grace and maintained the genuinely Reformed position. It is imperative that this be recognized and acknowledged in order that mutual understanding between Christian Reformed and Protestant Reformed may be fostered.

I shall seek to illustrate this thesis by referring to certain elements in the second and third points, to the

Testimony of Synod addressed to the churches, and to later actions of the Synod in reply to the protest of Rev. Breen.

Both the second and third points presuppose the doctrine of total depravity and the radical difference between the regenerate and the unregenerate. It is definitely said in the second point, e. g., that the restraint of sin by the action of God does not renew the heart. The second point is understandable only in the context of an insistence upon total depravity, which depravity is not lessened by God's restraining the unhindered breaking forth of sin. Precisely such a context is provided in Calvin's discussion of the restraint of sin to which the Synod of 1924 calls attention. A careful reading of Calvin's *Institutes*, II, iii, 3 will amply illustrate the point.

Furthermore, the doctrine of the antithesis seems to be definitely in mind when the civic righteousness of the unregenerate is termed a "so-called civic righteousness". It is also stated in just so many words that this unregenerate, in whom sin is restrained, and who is enabled to perform "so-called civic righteousness", is "unable to do any saving good". In support of this point and in an effort to show that it was saying no more than the Creeds already said, the Synod of 1924 mentioned the *Canons of Dort*, III-IV, 4. I know of no more clear-cut statement which recognizes common grace and yet maintains the antithesis. It is unfortunate that in the attempted brevity, the three points did not quote this creedal statement. But it is mentioned, nevertheless, and I shall quote it here again:

There remain, however, in man since the fall, the glimmerings of natural light, whereby he retains some knowledge of God, of natural things, and of the difference between good and evil, and shows some regard for virtue and for good outward behavior. But so far is this light of nature from being sufficient to bring him to a saving knowledge of God and to true conversion that *he is incapable of using it aright even in things natural and*

civil. Nay further, this light, such as it is, man in various ways *renders wholly polluted, and hinders in unrighteousness*, by doing which he becomes inexcusable before God. (*Canons*, III-IV, 4) (italics added).

The italicized lines are especially noteworthy. These are confessional statements endorsed by both Christian Reformed and Protestant Reformed and it is to these statements that the Synod of 1924 appealed in support of the third point.

In further explanation of the Reformed character of the decisions of 1924, it is important to notice the Testimony which was addressed to the churches. After reasserting what it considered to be creedal points in dispute on common grace, the Synod issued a warning. It asserted that the doctrine of common grace could easily be misused and therefore it emphasized the warnings of Revs. H. Danhof and H. Hoeksema against worldliness (Cf. *Acts* 1924, p. 147). The Synod indicated that this danger was more than imaginary and appealed furthermore to Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck for support. The churches were called to an alert defense of common grace in order to avoid *the danger of making it a bridge between the Church and the world*. The Synod admitted that there was more danger of becoming like the world than there was of fleeing from the world. The Synod asserted that "the awareness of a spiritual-moral antithesis was becoming increasingly vague in the consciousness of many people" and was being replaced by a general feeling of brotherhood. While reasserting the doctrine of common grace, the Synod at the same time called for a principal life in which the Church, while maintaining the points on common grace, would likewise "guard the spiritual-moral antithesis with tooth and nail" (p. 148).

Anyone who reads carefully the Committee Report and the official action of the Synod of 1924 will be impressed with Synod's desire to maintain common grace *and* the antithesis. But obviously this is more easily said than done. And some may even charge that reference to

the antithesis at this point is no real guarantee of its defense. With this in mind it is instructive to turn to other actions of the same Synod of 1924 after it had completed its action on the three points.

A statement in the Testimony mentioned above provides a good point of transition. In the midst of its warning the Synod stated that "*there is a strong desire to bring theology into conformity with a science which is in the service of unbelief*" (p. 148). By itself this statement appears rather vague. However, when one reads the later actions of Synod, he will discover that precisely such an attempt was made by Rev. Q. Breen in his protest against the deposition of Dr. Janssen. Rev. Q. Breen appealed to common grace to provide a common ground between believer and unbeliever, especially in the area of apologetics. Breen acknowledged that "unbelief as such can have no knowledge of the truth", but went on to say that "the unbeliever, because of common grace, can have some knowledge of it, and can, therefore, in the capacity of a scientist accept true definitions in theological science" (p. 201). The Committee reporting to Synod rejected this contention of Rev. Breen by saying that the first part was inconsistent with Paul's assertion in I Corinthians 2:14 and the second part was a "virtual denial of the antithesis in science. There can be no agreement, as to principles, between believing and unbelieving science..." (p. 202). This simply illustrates what was said in rebuttal at various points.

In thus rejecting the argumentation of Rev. Breen, the Synod indicated that its Testimony to maintain the antithesis was not mere idle talk. It practiced what it preached.

It must be admitted that the Synod of 1924 did not say the last thing nor all there is to say on common grace. The Synod acknowledged that it was speaking on just three points of a doctrine. Nor did the Synod carefully define what it meant by the antithesis and deal adequately with it. But it is instructive to note that the Synod of 1924 defended both the doctrine of common grace and the doctrine of

the antithesis. The Synod was theologically alert when it warned against a possible misuse of the doctrine of common grace, but it felt constrained in the light of Scripture to defend what it considered a correct doctrine nonetheless. The Synod's good judgment and Reformed consciousness is indicated in its defense of both common grace and the antithesis.

This brief study indicates that when the three points of 1924 are read in their context, the doctrines of total depravity and the antithesis are not endangered. The Communication from the De Wolf group has indicated a willingness to correct any misinterpretation to which they may hold. At the same time it is incumbent upon all of us, students, ministers, and laymen, to become intelligently aware of the contents of Synodical actions

which have been the source of so much discussion and confusion. We may be confident that such doctrinal consciousness will foster the cause of Reformed ecumenicity.

1. This paper is submitted at the request of the Managing Editor. In slightly altered form it was presented to the Holland-Zeeland *Inter Nos* and portions of it have appeared in print earlier.

2. I have not had access to these documents, nor do I care to enter now into the very complex historical and ecclesiastical question involved. I am interested here simply in setting forth the doctrinal problem involved. It seems to me that this is the important question which faces our churches at present. If there can be proper understanding of the doctrinal issues involved, I believe the ecumenical challenge which faces us will find a much happier settlement.

3. Regarding the quotations from Hoeksema and Danhof:

For the convenience of the reader, the page references are to the *Acts of Synod*, where these quotations are given in fuller form. The original work should, of course, be consulted for the context of each statement.

TEENERS' CORNER

LEONARD GREENWAY

In our September issue I suggested a change in our traditional school terms so as to allow for a winter vacation beginning with the Christmas holiday and extending through the month of January. This would bring the second semester to a close about the middle of July, leaving approximately six weeks for the summer vacation. And I asked whether six weeks wasn't a long enough vacation for most children.

There has been considerable response to this suggestion, and parents as well as children have expressed themselves about the matter. To date the reaction is four to one in favor of a winter vacation and a shorter summer vacation.

The more I think about it, the more convinced I am that something should be done about these unnecessarily long summer interruptions in the schooling of our children. Why should we close our schools during those months in the year when it is most economical to operate them? I am thinking here particularly of the fuel and light bills. Then, too, our children during the summer forget so much of what they have learned. If our teachers at the commencement of the fall term were given the same classes they had the previous semester, they would discover for themselves the dissipation in learning that occurs during the long summer vacation. The time spent in September reviewing the material given the previous semester is wasted time.

By the middle of the summer most of our children are bored with their vacation. They don't know what to do with themselves. And this boredom becomes a family irritation from which the parents suffer as much as their children.

Let's think it over some more. Perhaps additional comments will be forthcoming.

Dr. Lever's View of Creation

NICHOLAS J. MONSMA

THIS THEN BEING the situation, the question must be put whether evolutionism can be harmonized with Scripture. Dr. J. Lever insists that this is possible. He rejects the theory of a mechanical or materialistic evolution. Says he, "... for a Christian there can be no question of an autonomous evolution of the one into the other, but [we] have emphasized that all changes have fallen under the force of God's control and direction" (p. 171). Lever likewise admits the great inadequacies in the speculative structure produced by evolutionism. He writes, "Nothing is known to us concerning the first appearance of the main types which must be differentiated in flora and fauna [i. e. in plant and animal life], neither concerning the mutual relation of these phyla [i. e. the great divisions in the plant and animal kingdoms]." Again he states, "The origin of man appears to be a more complicated problem than it was thought to be initially. The relation of the fossil man-like forms is vigorously disputed (*sterk omstreden*), the criteria of human existence do not appear to lie in the area of fossils (*fossiliseerbaarheid*)." Also, "The evolution of the organism from inanimate material to man has not been proved" (pp. 168, 169).

However, these admissions notwithstanding, Dr. Lever makes the bold statements that, "... we may not reject the *possibility* beforehand that the origin of man has occurred by way of a being which according to its skeletal features and according to our norms and criteria was an animal" (p. 165). And likewise, "... that according to our opinion [i. e. Lever's opinion] we as a Christian, the cardinal lacunas [gaps] in our knowledge notwithstanding, need not have a principial objection against the general *hypothesis* of a genetical con-

tinuity of all living organisms, man not excluded" (p. 169).

Dr. Lever is able to make these assertions because he restricts the area covered by Scripture to three "realities," as he designates them. Genesis, so he contends, reveals to us first the *origin* of this world. Lever confesses *that* God created the world, but denies that the Bible tells us *how* God created the world and just what God produced by creation concretely. Next he claims that the Bible reveals to us what he calls "*zin*." This term is not easily translated, but seems to indicate that the world is an incorporation of ideas. Things are not meaningless, but they have "sense." Finally Lever mentions as a third "reality" revealed in the Bible the immanent *purpose* of creation. All creation is directed toward man, the image-bearer of God, who is to glorify God (cf. pp. 16, 17).

* * * *

In these assertions Lever, to my mind, reveals a serious weakness of his book. There is a lack of proper and sufficient hermeneutical orientation — he fails to give due attention to the science and art of Scriptural interpretation. This appears especially in his generalization that the Bible does teach *that* God created the world, but not *how* God created all things. A sharp distinction is made between the fact and the manner in which it was produced. Creation is said to be God's act — that is revealed in the Bible. However, Lever denies that the Bible tells us anything about the manner in which God performed this act.

Of course, all will admit that God works in a way mysterious to us, who are finite and, moreover, sinful and sin-stricken beings. This should be said not only in regard to the act of creation, but also in regard to God's providence. Whenever God produces

and touches things material, there is a contact which we cannot explain — it is mysterious to us. However, *God does know* — the contact is not mysterious to Him. For that reason He is able to reveal it to us. God can do this. True, when God sees fit to do this, he employs all types of literature and figures in such revelations. Very frequently he uses the figure of anthropomorphism — he expresses himself in terms borrowed from human characteristics and experiences. However, whenever God expresses himself in such a figurative way, there must be a so-called *tertium* (third). That is to say, there must be a point in which the fact and its figurative presentation agree or compare. If such a *tertium* would be lacking, the revelation would not serve its purpose.

Dr. Lever appears to neglect this demand. So, for instance, the first chapter of Genesis certainly does present the creation of man as a separate and a distinct act of God, pertaining to him not only as a spiritual being, but as well to his material existence. Does the chapter give wrong information in that respect? Was the creation of man not a separate and distinct act? Is man the final product of a process running through millions of years, and is he organically related to all lower forms of life and, therefore, not the product of a distinct act of God? Suppose for a moment that man's creation is to be understood as the end-product of an evolutionary process. Surely, if anyone, God would know this. But for what purpose does God then present it as an act distinct and separate from all his other acts of creation and as the realization of a distinct and divine deliberation and counsel? Granted that God employs anthropomorphisms, He does that for the purpose of making himself and his acts known to us.

It must impart information to us. Provided the *tertium* is grasped, the figure employed never leads us on a wrong track.

For that reason it should be considered a serious mistake to assume an absolute difference between the *fact* that God does a thing and the *manner* in which he does it. One even wonders whether it is possible to state simply that an act has been performed without describing at least something of the manner in which it was performed. The act and the manner are integrated even when figurative language is used to describe that act. Professor M. H. Woudstra remarks, "For one thing, the *that* and the *how* of creation are so intimately bound up together that it would be most harmful, if not fatal, to try to separate them as drastically as has been suggested.

"As soon as the *how* of creation is made the exclusive province of natural science, the doors are open for a type of evolution which would destroy the picture of man created at the beginning of human history, living in perfect fellowship with his Maker, and disobeying his God by an act of voluntary and wilful transgression of a divine command" (*Some Exegetical Remarks on Origins*, p. 80).

Indeed, if the hypotheses of evolution are imposed upon the Biblical account of creation, it does not only change the conception of man and of his origin, but it certainly also implies an alteration of the doctrine of man's state of rectitude and, therefore, of his judicial and moral relation to God. In fact, radical changes must be made in orthodox and Reformed doctrines concerning man's creation and his original state, and such an article as the 14th of the Belgic Confession of Faith must be subjected to forced interpretation. Of course, we admit that doctrines and Confessions are subject to change. Scripture alone is infallible and authoritative. Doctrines as well as Confessions are amenable to Scripture. But such changes may only be made upon the basis of a serious and scholarly responsible study of the Word of God.

Dr. Lever marks such as seek to gather information from Scripture in

regard to the manner in which God created man and the world as fundamentalists. One wonders just what Lever understands by "fundamentalism," and what to him characterizes a "fundamentalist." It is plain that the term, to Lever's mind, describes an approach to Scripture which he rejects. But does that warrant the author to label those differing from him with a term, which, I think, is American in origin, but which has a different and more comprehensive connotation than Lever seems to think. At any rate, it may safely be assumed that American Fundamentalism would disown the men marked as fundamentalists by Lever. Moreover, for what purpose should men of Reformed convictions be placed in another than their own category. One wonders whether that is the most charitable way of expressing differences of opinion.

* * * *

In line with the preceding is the contention of some that Scripture is a religious book, written in non-technical and non-scientific language, and that the knowledge it supplies is restricted to the religious sphere. The two revelations of God — the general and the special — are frequently coordinated and it is assumed that the authority of the one is as great as that of the other.

Dr. G. C. Berkouwer shows the fallacy of this position in his "De Algemeene Openbaring" (cf. especially pp. 236-239). Among other things he writes, "... it will not do to place the knowledge of nature without further description on the same plane with the knowledge of God's general Revelation, for in that Revelation one is interested in the knowledge of *God Himself*." Again, he states, "... the Revelation of God in those works [the works of God's hands] is concerned about God's Self-revelation and this is not found first of all by the investigations of natural science, but by faith, as this already reverberates in the Psalms of Israel."

Moreover, Dr. Herman Bavinck states, "... when Scripture from its point of view, exactly as book of religion, comes in contact with other

sciences and sheds its light also upon them, then it does not cease to be the Word of God all at once, but it remains that. Also when it speaks of the origin of heaven and earth it does not supply us with saga, or myth, or poetic phantasy, but also then it gives, according to its plain intent, history, which deserves faith and confidence. For that reason Christian theology, with but few exceptions, adhered to the literal, historical conception of the narrative of creation" (*Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, II, pp. 527, 528).

The exclusive assignment of Scripture to a restricted religious sphere is forced and artificial not only, but it goes contrary to Scripture itself. The Bible is indeed the Special Revelation of God — it is a means of God's grace to restore man to himself. But it has not been placed in a vacuum. It speaks concerning all relationships in man's present situation. It also speaks of nature and of nature's God in no uncertain terms. It enables man to have a Biblical view of nature as well as of himself.

* * * *

It will, of course, be understood that especially the first chapter of Genesis is the center of interest in this dispute. Reformed theologians are presenting an interpretation of the chapter which departs from that which was held generally in these circles. Dr. A. Noordzij did that in his "Gods Woord en der Eeuwen Getuigenis," (pp. 77-81) published in 1924. More recently Dr. N. H. Ridderbos has presented such a departure in an article in the Dutch journal "Bezinning" (11e Jaargang — 1956-No. 2) and also in a Pathway Book, "Is There a Conflict Between Genesis 1 and Natural Science?" These men favor what is called the "kader-opvatting," a term translated by Professor M. H. Woudstra as "the frame-work hypothesis." This hypothesis considers Genesis 1 to be an artistic presentation of God's act of creation. It is not meant to imply a denial of the fact that God created man and the universe, but it does insist that the *manner* in which creation occurred and the order of the events in the narrative of the chapter are not in-

tended to be indicated. Genesis 1 is considered more or less as an epic poem in which the fact that God created all things is celebrated, but from which no scientific data or information are to be gathered.

As the contact and conflict between orthodox Christianity and evolutionism are not recent, so this "framework hypothesis" is in essence not a newly discovered approach. Genesis 1 has always been a subject of controversy. Dr. H. Bavinck mentions four theories concerning the interpretation of this chapter, in his *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek* (Vol. II, pp. 521-527). They are the idealistic, the restitutionary, the concordistic, and the anti-geological theories. The "framework hypothesis" should, it appears, be classified with what Bavinck calls the idealistic theory. He describes it as follows: "... it is so called, because it adheres only to the idea, not to the letter, of the narrative of creation. This theory sees no historical account in Genesis 1, but a poetic description of the creative acts of God. The six days are not chronologically arranged periods of longer or shorter duration, but only different points of view, from which the one created world is viewed each time, in order thus to supply to the limited view of man a better survey of the whole. Hence it is left entirely to palaeontology to determine the time, the manner, and the order of the origin of the various periods. It can be said that this theory was prepared by the allegorical exegesis, which from ancient times has been employed by the Christian church concerning Genesis 1.

"Closely related," so Bavinck continues, "to this idealistic theory is the vision hypothesis... According to this hypothesis we are dealing in the narrative of creation with a propheticohistorical tableau, which God showed to the first man in a vision..."

In evaluating the various theories concerning the interpretation of Genesis 1 Dr. Bavinck states, "It is true that revelation can employ all types of literature, even fables, but whether a section of Scripture contains a poetic portraiture, a parable, or a fable, may not be accepted arbitrarily, but

must appear from the text itself. The first chapter of Genesis, however, contains in no sense a basis for the idea that we are there dealing with a vision or a myth; evidently it bears a historical character and constitutes the introduction of a book which presents itself as history from beginning to end. Neither is it possible to separate the facts themselves (the religious contents) from the manner in which they are expressed, because, as for instance with Lagrange, the creation itself is held as a fact, but the days of creation, as form and outward manner of presentation — in fact, the entire order, in which creation came into being, collapses therewith, and the basis is removed for the institution of the week and of the sabbath, which according to Exodus 20:11 is very definitely based on the six days of creation and the following rest of God" (p. 532).

These quotations from Dr. Bavinck, the eminent and erudite scholar, do not only warn us to be exceedingly careful, so that the history of dogmas as well as that of exegesis should be studied diligently, but they also indicate that Reformed scholarship should adhere to the approach to Genesis 1 as a historical account. Surely, the speculative and unstable hypotheses of evolutionism may not control our interpretation of the infallible Word of God and, therefore, not of the first chapter of Genesis.

The following remark of Dr. Abraham Kuyper, made in his lecture on "Evolutie" (p. 47), has been quoted in support of a position which seeks to harmonize evolutionism with Scripture (or the reverse): "If it had pleased God not to create the species themselves, but to cause species to come forth from species, so that he would have adapted the preceding species to the production of the following higher [species], Creation would have been just as wonderful." Aside from the fact that this statement should be read in the context of the entire lecture, which certainly denounces evolution, and aside from the fact that Kuyper *does not say that he believes* that there is a succession of species, it must be remarked that the reverse of this statement is likewise true: Creation is wonderful even

though God has not been pleased to cause species to come forth from species, but to create the species separately and distinctly.

We conclude by quoting Professor Dr. J. J. Duyvené De Wit (*Die Paleontologie as "Openbarende" Wetenskap*, Kampen, 1957), who, I have been informed, is a natural scientist, trained in the Netherlands, but now teaching in South Africa, and who according to his own admission formerly subscribed to evolutionary conceptions, but now states, "As Christians we must not only reject this evolutionary faith, but — to use a word from Abraham Kuyper's classical lecture on Evolution of 1899 — *we must attack it*. And since this attack on the part of Christians has to the present not been radical enough, a heavy guilt rests upon our shoulders, [namely] that we have to the present taken the task of a truly Christian philosophy of science with sorely little earnestness."

TWO
WONDERFUL CHRISTIAN BOOKS
for your younger children (4-8)

are:

"Better Than Anything Else"

(Special Christmas Book)

and

"Tomorrow will be Sunday"

Highly recommended by the
NATIONAL UNION OF
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Price 75¢ each

(cheque 15¢ extra)

For Sunday Schools usual discount.

Also available at
BAKER BOOK HOUSE
1019 Wealthy Street, S. E.
Grand Rapids 6, Mich.

WOUDSTRA'S BOOK HOUSE
9330 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alta., Canada

IMMORTALITY

WHAT IS IT?

Read I Tim. 6:11-16; II Tim. 1:8-12*

1. STATEMENTS OF DIFFERENT AUTHORS WITH RESPECT TO MAN'S IMMORTALITY

What do *you* think: Is man immortal or is he not immortal? Opinions differ. One author argues along this line: The idea that the New Testament teaches the soul's immortality is a misunderstanding. The immortality of the soul is a Greek, not a Christian doctrine. The Christian doctrine is that of resurrection, not that of immortality. "Immortality, in fact, is only a negative assertion . . . but resurrection is a positive assertion" (O. Cullmann, "Immortality or Resurrection," an article in *Christianity Today*, July 21, 1958, pp. 3-6).

Another author agrees with this position in so far that he, too, speaks about "the heresy of man's immortal soul." Nevertheless, he is willing to accept the term *immortality*, provided it be applied only to those who are in Christ. He states, "God can destroy both soul and body in hell. And *immortality* is the word that can be applied only to the state of the glorified saints in Christ" (H. Hoeksema, *In the Midst of Death*, a volume in that author's series of *Expositions on the Heidelberg Catechism*, pp. 98, 99).

We turn now to a widely recognized work on doctrine, namely, L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 672-678. This author points out that the term *immortality* is not always used in the same sense. He does not go so far, however, as to reject completely the idea that in a sense man is immortal. He states, "Immortality, in the sense of continuous or endless existence, is also ascribed to all spirits,

including the human soul. It is one of the doctrines of natural religion or philosophy that, when the body is dissolved, the soul does not share in its dissolution, but retains its identity as an individual being. This idea of the immortality of the soul is in perfect harmony with what the Bible teaches about man; but the Bible, religion, and theology are not primarily interested in this purely quantitative and colorless immortality, — the bare continued existence of the soul."

So, there you have it. The first author would substitute the term *resurrection* for *immortality*. The next one says, in substance, that only those who are in Christ are immortal. The last one is of the opinion that in a sense the souls of all men are immortal, but that this is not the immortality in which the Bible is primarily interested.

2. DISTINCTIONS THAT SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND

Is man immortal or is he not immortal? It all depends upon what you mean by *immortality*.

In a sense only God is immortal. He is "the only One possessing immortality" (see I Timothy 6:11-16). He alone is life's original Owner and never-failing Fountain. His immortality has been called "an original, necessary, and eternal endowment." In God's being there is no death and not even a possibility of death in any sense whatever. Now, *immortality* (Greek *athanasia*) means *deathlessness*. This negative implies the positive. God possesses fulness of life, imperishable blessedness (cf. I Timothy 1:17), the inalienable enjoyment of all the divine attributes.

But although only God is immortal

in the sense of being the original Owner and Fountain of life and blessedness, in a derived sense it is also true that believers are immortal. In II Timothy 1:8-12 it is clearly stated that our Savior Christ Jesus on the one hand utterly defeated death, and on the other hand, "brought to light life and immortality (literally *incorruptibility*) through the gospel." As a result of Christ's atonement *eternal* death no longer exists for the believer. *Spiritual* death is vanquished more and more in his life and completely when the child of God departs from his earthly enclosure. And *physical* death has been turned into gain. Christ accomplished all that for his children, on the one hand. On the other hand, he brought to light life and incorruptibility. He brought it to light by exhibiting it in his own glorious resurrection. Most of all, he brought it to light by his promise to them: "Because I live ye too shall live" (John 14:19); hence, through *the gospel*. This *immortality* transcends by far mere endless existence. Even here and now the believer receives this great blessing in principle. In heaven he receives it in further development. Yet he does not fully receive it until the day of Christ's glorious second coming. Until then the bodies of all believers will be subject to the law of decay and death. *Immortality*, that is, *imperishable salvation for both soul and body*, belongs to the new heaven and earth. It is an inheritance stored away for all those who are in Christ.

Hence, if a person, untrained in Scripture, asks you the question, "Is man immortal?" a good answer would be, "Only in the sense that his existence never ends; but in the Bible only those are called *immortal* who

*For a fuller exposition of these passages see my *New Testament Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, published by Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich., pp. 202-208 and 230-236.

have everlasting life in Christ Jesus, and are destined to glorify him forever as to both soul and body."

3. SCRIPTURE'S DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY AND THAT OF GREEK PHILOSOPHY CONTRASTED

a. The immortality taught by Plato and others after him applies to men in general. The immortality taught in Scripture (when that term or its synonym is actually used) applies in one sense to God alone; in another sense only to those who are in Christ.

b. The immortality of Greek philosophy is nothing but the soul's inherent indestructibility, its necessary endless existence. The immortality of which the Bible speaks is everlasting blessedness.

c. The immortality of pagan thought applies to the soul alone. The

body is regarded as the prison from which at death the soul is delivered. According to Scripture our bodies are not prisons but temples. Hence, the Bible's immortality applies to both the soul and the body of the believer, his entire person.

d. The immortality of which the world speaks is a natural or philosophical concept. The immortality of which God speaks in his Word is (in as far as it applies to man) a redemptive concept.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Questions Answered in the Outline

1. In which sense is it true that only God possesses immortality?
2. In which sense is it true that believers, too, are immortal?
3. If a person, untrained in Scripture, asks you the question, "Is man immortal?" what would be a good answer?

4. What literally is the meaning of the word immortality? What is its synonym?

5. What are the points of contrast between Scripture's doctrine of immortality and that of Greek philosophy?

B. Additional Questions

1. Would you say that Adam and Eve before the fall were immortal? If so, in what sense were they immortal? Are angels immortal? Is the devil immortal?

2. Is it possible for the believer, in his association with people of the world, altogether to avoid using terms in the sense in which the world uses them, when Scripture employs these same terms in a different sense? Think of such terms as immortality, fellowship, love.

3. Old-timers used to speak about "the language of Canaan." What does that mean? Should this be cultivated today?

4. Why is the idea of immortality in the sense of the soul's survival and endless existence not nearly as comforting as Scripture's doctrine of immortality? What were Plato's arguments for "immortality" (in his sense of the term)? What do you think of these arguments?

5. Where does Scripture clearly teach that immortality pertains to the believer's body as well as his soul?

OUTLINES ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE LAST THINGS: by WILLIAM HENDRIKSEN

Outline XXX

WHERE DO THE SPIRITS OF BELIEVERS GO AT DEATH?

Read Hebrews 12: 18-24

I. THE RELATION OF THIS QUESTION TO THOSE THAT WERE ANSWERED PREVIOUSLY

In preceding Outlines it has been indicated that according to Scripture it is appointed unto men once to die. Also, that for the believer death is gain, and that this is true because of Christ's substitutionary atonement. It has been shown, furthermore, that man consists of two parts, very closely related to each other, namely, body and soul (or, if you prefer, body and spirit). It has been proved that these souls survive physical death and that they exist forever and ever, a truth which is often called "the doctrine of immortality." Nevertheless, as has also been indicated, in the sense in which Scripture employs the term God alone possesses immortality as an original, necessary, and eternal endowment; and, of all men, only

those who are in Christ have received from him the gift of secondary or derived immortality by virtue of which they are destined for everlasting blessedness with respect to both soul and body.

Granted that all this is true, and that, accordingly, at death the spirits of believers live on, just *where* do these spirits go? In other words, when God's children die, do their souls go to heaven at once? And has this always been the case?

2. THE REASON WHY THIS SUBJECT MUST BE DISCUSSED

Ever so many people, who claim to believe in the Bible, are not at all sure that the souls of all believers who have died have gone *to heaven*. We have already contradicted the theory of those who teach that at death these souls simply go "out of

existence" (see Outline XXVIII). But there are others. So, for example, the Roman Catholics believe that the souls of most believers go to purgatory, not at once to heaven. (We shall reserve the subject of *purgatory* for a later Outline.) And even among evangelical Protestants there are those who believe that thousands upon thousands of believers did not go directly to heaven at death. Before me lies a little book which contains many fine thoughts. The title is *The Christian After Death*. The author is R. E. Hough, Pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church, Jackson, Mississippi. The booklet is published by the Moody Press, Chicago, Illinois. Now, alongside of the many precious Scripture-truths that are found in this treatise there are also a few ideas with which I, for one, cannot agree. One of them is this, that until the

ascension of Christ, the righteous at death went not to heaven but to *paradise* (cf. Luke 23:43). The author's reasoning is as follows: Jesus, by means of his death "changed the abode of the disembodied believer . . . He unlocked the gate of paradise and set free the mighty host which had been awaiting the hour of his sacrifice, that he might lead them triumphantly into heaven" (pp. 42-47). We are told, moreover, that another name for *paradise*, this region of bliss which was *not* heaven, was *Abraham's bosom* (cf. Luke 16:22).

3. THE TEACHING OF SCRIPTURE

The author seems to proceed from the premise that when two or more names are used to indicate where the children of God go when they die, there must be more than one place. A different name suggests to him a different place. But would it not be strange that for such a wonderful place as heaven there would be only one name? Why cannot "paradise," "Abraham's bosom," and "heaven" indicate the same place, viewed now from one angle, then from another?

Let us say that while you are traveling along the highway, a pretentious house suddenly comes into view. Now is the English language so poor that there is only one word that can properly describe this sumptuous edifice? It is not probable that this "house" will be referred to as "residence," "mansion," "dwelling," and perhaps even "palace"? If this is true with respect to earthly objects of splendor or grandeur, why should it not be true with respect to heavenly?

The fact that "heaven" and "paradise" are simply different words that indicate the same place is clear from II Corinthians 12, compare verses 2 and 4. Here we read that someone was caught up to "the third heaven." It may be assumed that the first heaven was that of the clouds, the second that of the stars, the third that of the redeemed. But we immediately notice that the man who, according to verse 2, was said to have been caught up to *heaven* was caught up to *paradise*, according to verse 4. This certainly proves that *heaven* and *par-*

adise indicate the same place and not two different places. And the same thing holds with respect to *Abraham's bosom*. The fact that at death Abraham's soul went to *heaven* is plainly stated in Scripture (Hebrews 11:10, 16; cf. Matthew 8:11).

That the soul of God's child goes to heaven at death is the clear and consistent teaching of Scripture.

Says the Psalmist: "Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to *glory*. Whom have I in *heaven* but thee . . ." (Psalm 73:24, 25). Surely the Father's house with its many mansions is *heaven* (John 14:2). Our Lord at his ascension went "into *heaven* itself" (Hebrews 9:24). He went there as "our Forerunner" (Hebrews 6:20). To be "with Jesus" means, accordingly, to be *in heaven*. Now Jesus prayed, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be *with me* where I am, that they may behold my glory" (John 17:24). That the believer, at death, does not have to wait but goes to that place *immediately* is clear from II Corinthians 5:8: "absent from the body . . . at home with the Lord." For Paul "to depart"

meant "to be with Christ," hence, in heaven (Philippians 1:23). Last but not least, the passage that was read to you at the beginning of this lesson (Hebrews 12:18-24) assures us that right now "the general assembly and church of the firstborn" is "enrolled in heaven."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Questions Answered in the Outline

1. What is the subject of this lesson, and why must it be discussed?
2. Prove from Scripture that *heaven* and *paradise* indicate the same place.
3. Where did Abraham go when he died? Prove it.
4. Prove from Scripture that in the here-after heaven is the abode of the soul of God's child.
5. Prove that at death the believer *immediately* goes to heaven.

B. Additional Questions

1. Give a fuller explanation of Hebrews 12, especially verses 22-24, than is given in the Outline.
2. Who was that man that was "caught up to the third heaven"?
3. What did that man experience when he was caught up to paradise? See II Corinthians 12:4 and 7. Is there any lesson in this for us?
4. When his life on earth was finished, where did Enoch go? And Elijah?
5. According to the belief of the heathen in Paul's day, what happened to the soul at death? See I Thessalonians 4:13 (discussed on pp. 109-111 of my *New Testament Commentary on I and II Thessalonians*). Contrast the Christian view. How does I Thess. 3:13 prove that at death the soul of the believer goes to heaven?

BAKER BOOK HOUSE



THE HOLY SPIRIT

by

EDWIN PALMER

This is a thorough and comprehensive work on the Holy Spirit. It unfolds the teachings of Scripture on the third person of the Trinity in such a way that the person and work of the Holy Spirit regains the

significance of which He has been robbed in our century.

The presentation is clear and vivid. The message is pertinent and practical.

This is a book for everyday Christian reading, as well as for the minister and Bible student. The chapters of this book could well serve as the basis for a series of sermons on the Holy Spirit.

The author is a graduate of the Free University of Amsterdam, and pastor of the Christian Reformed Church at Ann Arbor, Michigan.

THE CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

by

MARTIN MONSMA

This booklet will answer many questions about the congregational meeting.

What is the Scriptural basis for the congregational meeting?

Are conclusions reached at congregational meetings binding?

What is the Scriptural justification for women voting at congregational meetings?

These and many more questions receive attention in this informative and helpful booklet from the pen of the Associate Professor of Practical Theology at Calvin Seminary.

\$.75 each
\$7.00 dozen

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JOHN CALVIN

The four hundredth anniversary of the publication of Calvin's *Institutes*—which is at the same time the four hundred fiftieth anniversary of his birth—is a fitting time to study the life and teachings of the famous Reformer.

This *Study Manual* was especially designed for use in study groups—Ladies' Societies, Men's Societies, Mr. and Mrs. Clubs, Youth Groups, etc. Each lesson is followed by questions to arouse thought and elicit discussion.

The author is Professor of Bible at Calvin College.
\$.75 each
\$7.50 dozen

1019 WEALTHY, S. E.

GRAND RAPIDS 6, MICHIGAN

ARE THE SOULS OF THE REDEEMED IN HEAVEN CONSCIOUS OR UNCONSCIOUS?

Read II Cor. 5:1-8

1. SOUL-SLEEP, THE THEORY AND THE ARGUMENTS OF THOSE WHO FAVOR IT

Sometime ago I preached to an audience other than my own. An observation made by one of the ladies after the service surprised me. What she said, in substance, was this, "I'm so glad that you cleared up this point about the life in heaven. Now I know that my dear ones are not asleep but awake and rejoicing in the glories of heavenly life." I might say in passing that she had recently been bereaved of two who were very precious to her. "You see," she continued, "I have been wondering about this, especially because Mr. . . . (the name of a prominent person was mentioned here) has been spreading the idea that those who die in the Lord enter a state of unconsciousness and remain in that state until the day of Christ's second coming and the resurrection."

Of course, I had read about this theory. I knew, for example, that way back in early church history a small sect in Arabia believed in the sleep of the soul; also, that at the time of the Reformation this error was being advocated by some of the Anabaptists; that Calvin had refuted it in his treatise *Psychopannychia*; that during the nineteenth century some of the Irvingites in England had clung to it; and that the Russellites in our own day believe in something akin to it, which, however, really amounts to a "going out of existence." But I did not know that even in conservative Christian circles today that notion was again being advocated, and was confusing the minds of some of *our own* people.

Now, what are the arguments upon which these errorists — for that's what they are — base their view? They are, in the main, the following:

a. The flow of consciousness is dependent on sense-impressions. For example, I *see* a handsome young man, and I start *thinking* about him; or I see a model house, and in my mind I plan to build one like that some day. Or, again, I *hear* the strains of sparkling music, and in my consciousness I am having a feast. But at death there is a complete break with everything that pertains to the senses. I neither hear nor see nor taste nor feel nor smell anything any more. Hence, it must be that the flow of thoughts ceases too. I lapse into unconsciousness, and until I receive a body again I remain asleep.

b. Scripture often represents death as a sleep (Matthew 27:52; Luke 8:52; John 11:11-13; Acts 7:60; I Corinthians 7:39; 15:6, 18; I Thessalonians 4:13; and cf. also such *Old Testament* passages as Genesis 47:30; Deuteronomy 31:16; II Samuel 7:12). Moreover, it contains many other passages which come very near to saying that the dead have no consciousness (Psalm 30:91; 115:17; 146:4; Ecclesiastes 9:10; Isaiah 38:18, 19).

c. Nowhere in Scripture do we read that anyone who had been raised from the dead related what he had seen or heard in heaven. The reason? He had not seen or heard anything, for he had been unconscious or asleep.

2. ANSWER

As to the first argument (See [a] above):

The soul of man is by no means merely an instrument of the senses. Consciousness can exist apart from sense-experience. God has no body, neither do the angels have bodies. Nevertheless, both God and the angels have consciousness. A man who is a genius of an organist can have music

in his soul without having any organ on which to express it. His musical consciousness is not removed from his soul by taking the organ away from him.

As to the second argument (See [b] above):

Nowhere does Scripture say that *the soul* of the departed one falls asleep. It was *the person* who fell asleep, not necessarily the soul. This comparison of death to sleep is very appropriate; for (1) sleep implies rest from labor; the dead also rest from their labors (Revelation 14:13); (2) sleep implies a cessation of participation in the activities pertaining to the sphere in which one has been busy during the hours of wakefulness; the dead also are no longer active *in the world which they have left*; and (3) sleep is generally a *prelude to awakening*; the dead also will be awakened. In this connection, the comparison of death to sleep is particularly appropriate with respect to the glorious awakening that awaits those who are in Christ.

To be of any value at all to those who favor the soul-sleep theory, the passages referred to would have to prove that those who have entered heaven do not take part *in the activities of the new sphere* which they have now entered. None of the passages to which these errorists appeal proves in any way that this is the case.

As to the third argument (See [c] above):

Let us suppose that after Lazarus died, the Lord, knowing beforehand that after just a few days he was going to raise his friend from the dead, kept *his* soul in a state of unconscious repose. Would such an exception (and a few similar exceptions) prove the rule? Besides, even if we take for

granted that those whom our Lord raised from the dead (including Lazarus) had actually been experiencing, however briefly, the conscious joys of life in heaven, is it at all certain that after their return to the earth they were either *able* or *permitted* to talk about their glorious experiences? See II Corinthians 12:4.

3. THE NOTION OF THE SLEEP OF THE SOUL CANNOT BE HARMONIZED WITH THOSE MANY PASSAGES WHICH CLEARLY TEACH OR IMPLY THAT IN HEAVEN THE SOULS OF THE REDEEMED ARE FULLY AWAKE

Must I indeed believe:

that the redeemed in heaven are experiencing fulness of joy, pleasures forevermore (Psalm 16:11) *while they sleep?*

that they behold God's face in righteousness and are satisfied with beholding his form (Psalm 17:15) *while they sleep?*

that they sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matthew 8:11) *in their sleep?*

that the rich man, immediately after death, was in torments, cried, and pleaded (Luke 16) *all in his sleep?*

that Lazarus (the one referred to in the parable) was comforted (Luke 16) *in his sleep?*

that those for whom Christ offered his touchingly beautiful high-priestly prayer are actually, in fulfillment of that prayer, beholding his glory (John 17:24) *in their sleep?*

that the glories of heaven, with which the sufferings of this present time cannot be compared, will be

revealed to us (Romans 8:18) *while we are fast asleep?*

that we shall see face to face and shall know fully (I Corinthians 13:12, 13) *while we sleep?*

that as soon as we are absent from the body we shall be at home with the Lord, delighting in a fellowship with him better than ever before (II Corinthians 5:8) *while we continue to sleep?*

that death for us, believers, will be gain, better by far than anything we have ever experienced on earth (Philippians 1:21, 23) *though we remain fast asleep?*

that the general assembly and church of the firstborn enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:23) *is a congregation of sleepers?*

that throughout all the majestic anthems and choruses of heaven, recorded in the book of Revelation (chapters 4, 5, 7, 12) *we remain fast asleep?*

that the new song will be sung (Revelation 5:9; 14:3) *while the redeemed remain asleep?*

that the souls under the altar cry with a great voice (Revelation 6:10) *in their sleep?*

that his servants will serve him day and night in his temple (Revelation 7:15) *while they are fast asleep?*

and that the souls of the victors are sitting on thrones and are living and reigning with Christ (Revelation 20:4) *doing all of this in their sleep?*

Brother, do you really want me to believe that?

For myself, I believe this:

"When I in righteousness at last
Thy glorious face shall see,
When all the weary night is past,
And I awake with thee
To view the glories that abide,
Then, then I shall be satisfied."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Questions Answered in the Outline

1. What is meant by soul-sleep?
2. What are the arguments of those who favor this theory?
3. How do you answer these arguments?
4. Are there people today who accept the soul-sleep theory?
5. Quote some Scriptural passages which clearly teach or imply that the souls of the redeemed in heaven are fully awake.

B. Additional Questions

1. What is meant by "our earthly tent-dwelling" (or "the earthly house of our tabernacle") in II Corinthians 5:1? And what is meant by "be dismantled" (or "be dissolved" or "be destroyed")?
2. With reference to the expression "a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens" there are several theories.
 - a. Does this refer to the resurrection-body?
 - b. To an intermediate body, of very thin texture, which we shall receive as soon as our soul enters heaven?
 - c. To the actual physical body of Jesus in heaven, so that the souls of all the redeemed in heaven must be viewed as somehow residing inside that body (as a certain speaker from abroad suggested in a lecture given in our circles years ago)?
 - d. To something else, and if so, what?
3. What does Paul mean when he says that we do not wish to be stripped or unclothed but that we would rather be "clothed upon" (II Corinthians 5:4)?
4. What is meant by "the earnest of the Spirit" and why is this a great comfort (II Corinthians 5:5)?
5. How would you use verses 6-8 of II Corinthians 5 in defense of the view that in heaven the souls of the redeemed are fully conscious?

OUTLINES ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE LAST THINGS: by WILLIAM HENDRIKSEN

Outline XXXII

WHAT ARE THE SOULS IN HEAVEN DOING?

Read Revelation 7:9-17

1. THEIR CONDITION

Never can it be emphasized strongly enough that the redeemed in heaven between the moment of death

and that of the bodily resurrection have not yet attained to ultimate glory. They are living in what is generally called "the intermediate" state, not yet the final state. Though, to be sure, they are serenely happy,

their happiness is not yet complete.

On this subject Dr. H. Bavinck expresses himself as follows (my translation):

"The condition of the blessed in heaven, though ever so glorious,

bears a provisional character, and this for various reasons:

a. They are now in heaven, and limited to that heaven, and not yet in possession of the earth, which along with heaven has been promised to them as an inheritance.

b. Furthermore, they are bereft of a body, and this bodiless existence is not . . . a gain but a loss. It is not an increase but a decrease of being, since the body belongs to the essence of man.

c. And finally, the part can never be complete without the whole. It is only in connection with the fellowship of *all* the saints that the fullness of Christ's love can be known (Ephesians 3:18). One group of believers cannot attain to fullness without the other group (Hebrews 11:40)" (*Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, third edition, Vol. 4, pp. 708, 709).

With this we are in hearty accord. But that does not mean that between this intermediate state and the final state (after the resurrection) there is a complete break, a total contrast. On the contrary, just as there is in many respects a continuity between our life here and our life in heaven immediately after death (see, for example, John 11:26; Revelation 14:13), so also there is continuity between that intermediate state and the final state. It would therefore be definitely wrong to say with respect to the symbols of Scripture which describe the final state that these have nothing at all to tell us with respect to the intermediate state. Jerusalem the Golden belongs indeed to the future but also to the present, in as far as that present foreshadows the future. (That is the position I have maintained in my book *More Than Conquerors, an Interpretation of the Book of Revelation*; see especially pp. 238 and 243, and to which I still adhere.)

With this in mind it is therefore entirely legitimate to use Revelation 7: 9-17 as a basis for a study of the intermediate state.

Now many of the traits found here in Revelation 7 are of a negative character. We learn that the redeemed are delivered from every care and hardship, from every form of

trial and persecution: no more hunger, thirst, or heat. Yet, there are also positive traits: the Lamb is their Shepherd. This Lamb leads his flock to life's springs of water. This water symbolizes eternal life, salvation. The *springs* of water indicate the source of life, for through the Lamb the redeemed have eternal and uninterrupted fellowship with the Father. Finally, the sweetest touch of all: "And God shall wipe every tear out of their eyes." Not only are the tears wiped, or even wiped *away*; they are wiped *out of* the eyes, so that nothing but perfect joy, bliss, glory, sweetest fellowship, abundant life, remains. And God himself is the Author of this perfect salvation.

2. THEIR ACTIVITY

a. *They rest*

See Revelation 14:13. The body, to be sure, is at rest in the grave, waiting the day of the resurrection. But even the soul now rests from life's competition, its toil, sorrow, pain, its mental anguish and especially its sin!

b. *They see Christ's face*

See Revelation 22:4. (Of course, this will be true in an even fuller sense after the resurrection.) The eyes of the redeemed (yes, even the souls have eyes; who will deny it?) are directed to Christ, as the revelation of the Triune God. Here on earth our eyes are often turned away from Christ. One is reminded of the famous painting by Goetze ("Despised and Rejected of Men"), in which you notice how all the eyes are turned away from the spear-riven and thorn-crowned Savior. But in heaven our Lord will be the very center of interest and attention, for *he* will be all-glorious, and *we* will no longer be self-centered. We will not be able to turn our eyes away from him.

c. *They hear*

Will they not hear the glorious choruses and anthems described in the book of Revelation? Will not each of the redeemed hear what all the other redeemed, what the angels, and what Christ have to tell them?

d. *They work*

"His servants shall serve him." There will be a great variety of work,

as is clear from such a passage as Matthew 25:21, and by inference also from I Corinthians 15: 41, 42. It will be willing *service*, gladly rendered. Do not say that this service is impossible as long as the souls are without their bodies. Are not the angels — who also have no bodies — sent out *to do service*?

e. *They rejoice*

Because every task will be so thoroughly satisfying and refreshing, the redeemed sing while they work. This singing too will, of course, be different after the resurrection. Yet, is it not possible for *souls* to praise God? Is it not possible for the redeemed to have "melodies in their hearts"? Moreover, they have entered into "the joy of their Lord!"

f. *They live*

Even during the intermediate state the redeemed actually *live*. They are not day-dreaming. We must not conceive of these souls as silent shadows gliding by. No, they live and rejoice in an abundant and glorious fellowship (about which we hope to say more later, in *Outlines* to come). Moreover, it is *with Christ* that they live. Wherever you find *him*, you will find *them*. Whatever *he* does *they* do (in as far as this is possible for them to do). Whatever *he* has, he shares with *them*. If you wish proof see Revelation 3:12; 3:21; 4:4; cf. 14:14; 14:1; 19:11; cf. 19:14; 20:4.

g. *They reign*

They share with Christ in his royal glory.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Questions Answered in the Outline

1. How does the intermediate state differ from the final state of blessedness; that is, in what three respects?
2. Is there then no connection between the intermediate and the final state?
3. What is the picture drawn in Revelation 7 with respect to the condition of the redeemed in glory?
4. What does it mean that the redeemed rest, see Christ's face, hear, and work or serve?
5. What does it mean that they rejoice, live, and reign?

B. Additional Questions

1. How do you explain "the great multitude, which no man could number" described in Revelation 7:9?
2. What is the meaning of the white robes and of the palms?
3. What is the meaning of their song (Revelation 7:10)?
4. Explain Revelation 7:14.
5. We have said very little about the meaning of the redeemed **reigning with Christ** (Revelation 20:4). Explain more fully.

The Authority of Scripture

ROUSAS J. RUSHDOONY

MAN DOES NOT establish authority; he acknowledges it. This is the proper procedure, though seldom observed. Man wants to acknowledge only that authority which he himself establishes or at the least gives consent to. All other authority is offensive to his sense of autonomy and ultimacy. As a result, the claims of Scripture are particularly offensive to the natural man, because so much is involved in the admission of their truth.

To recognize the claims of Scripture is to accept creaturehood and the fact of the Fall. The Fall necessitates an infallible Savior and an infallible Scripture, as Van Til has shown (C. Van Til: *The Psychology of Religion*, p. 124). Moreover, the concept of the infallible Word involves and requires the idea of God's complete control over history (C. Van Til: *A Christian Theory of Knowledge*, p. 14). This means that God is self-contained and ultimate, controlling all reality, with all reality revelational of him, knowing all things exhaustively because he controls completely. To accept fully the concept of the infallible Word is to claim all facts for God and to insist that reality can be interpreted only in terms of him and his Word. This runs counter to the natural man's claim to be the point of reference and the source of ultimate interpretation of factuality. But it is this sin of man which makes Scripture necessary. Scripture speaks to man with authority, and with sufficiency, that is, as a completed Word. It speaks with perspicuity, clearly and simply telling man who he is, what the nature of his sin is, what his remedy is and where it is to be found. The attributes of Scripture are thus: necessity, authority, perspicuity, and sufficiency (C. Van Til: *An Introduction to Systematic Theology*, 1952 ed. pp. 139ff.).

All this the Christian must boldly

affirm, without any hesitancy with regard to the charge of circular reasoning. As Van Til points out,

The only alternative to "circular reasoning" as engaged in by Christians, no matter on what point they speak, is that of reasoning on the basis of isolated facts and isolated minds, with the result that there is no possibility of reasoning at all. Unless as sinners we have an absolutely inspired Bible, we have no absolute God interpreting reality for us, and unless we have an absolute God interpreting reality for us, there is no true interpretation at all. (Ibid., p. 152)

The issue at stake is a great one.

All authority and all knowledge are at stake in the doctrine of the infallible Word. Van Til traces and analyzes its history and doctrine in its various forms in *A Christian Theory of Knowledge*. Scripture claims to be self-authenticating and declares that man lives by the absolute authority of God. In the non-Christian view of things, God and man are both involved in a principle of continuity that embraces all being, and again both God and man are beset with a principle of discontinuity which is in essence chance. In all this, man is the interpreter and the point of reference.

There can be only one final reference point in predication. If man is taken to be this final reference point his environment becomes dependent upon him, and any other personality that may exist is not more ultimate than he. Therefore there is no God on whom he can feel himself dependent. He is his own god (C. Van Til: *A Christian Theory of Knowledge*, p. 143).

No refuge from the authority of Scripture can be found in natural theology or common grace. Too frequently now these two areas are

stressed as though an independent area of authority or witness existed. But all creation gives a common witness to God. All creation is revelational of him, and its witness a unitary one. To escape this revelation, as Van Til has pointed out, to escape the knowledge of God, man would have to destroy himself. But he cannot escape into any non-being, and as a result he has no escape; he finds himself confronted with one resounding witness in all heaven and earth, and even in himself he is confronted with God. Precisely because this is a world which is revelational of God, and because common grace is real, the authority of Scripture is inescapable and binding. As Van Til so cogently summarizes it, "Only in a universe that is unified by the plan of God can there be a once-for-all and finished act of redemption, affecting the whole race of men. And only on the basis of a world in which every fact testifies of God can there be a Word of God that testifies of itself as interpreting every other fact" (Ibid., p. 179). The Christian-theistic position, with all that it involves and without any concessions at any point, is the only position which does not destroy knowledge and reason and does not annihilate intelligent human experience. And basic to this position is the authority of the infallible Word, an authority derogatory to man as god, but basic to man as man, destructive of reason as god but determinative of reason as reason. As Van Til states it,

...it must be affirmed that a Protestant accepts Scripture to be that which Scripture itself says it is on its own authority. Scripture presents itself as being the only light in terms of which the truth about facts and their relations can be discovered. Perhaps the relationship of the sun to our earth and the objects that constitute it, may make this clear. We do not use candles, or electric lights in order to discover whether the light and energy of the sun exist. The reverse is the case. We have light in candles and electric light bulbs because of the light and energy of the sun. So we cannot subject the

authoritative pronouncements of Scripture about reality to the scrutiny of reason because it is reason itself that learns of its proper function from Scripture.

There are, no doubt, objections that occur to one at once when he hears the matter presented so baldly . . .

All the objections that are brought against such a position spring, in the last analysis, from the assumption that the human person is ultimate and as such should properly act as judge of all claims to authority that are made by any one. But if man is not autonomous, if he is rather what Scripture says he is, namely, a creature of God and a sinner before his face, then man should subordinate his reason to the Scriptures and seek in the light of it to interpret his experience. (C. Van Til: *The Defense of the Faith*, p. 125)

Neo-orthodoxy cannot tolerate a doctrine of Scripture in which God speaks infallibly and objectively, because it cannot tolerate a God who by his eternal decree has ordained all things and has spoken authoritatively concerning them. Of Scripture Barth has said, "A human document like any other, it can lay no *a priori* dogmatic claim to special attention and consideration." (Karl Barth: *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, p. 60) Of miracles and the resurrection, he states, "it is beside the point even to ask whether they are historical and possible." (Ibid., p. 91.) And yet Barth "believes" in verbal inspiration and affirms the orthodox doctrine, but only by pouring new meaning into the idea. He condemns the orthodox doctrine of an objective and direct revelation as presumptuous and as an attempt on man's part to control revelation. Yet it is Barth who makes inspiration subjective. Scripture is the Word of God only when men accept it as such, as witnessing to the revelation of God. But God is free, unpredictable, hidden and hence cannot be bound to the written Word, which can only be the means of hearing the hidden word or inner text. In this he truly hears the God who is exhaus-

tively present in the process of revelation, which is itself redemptive.

The gist of all this is that man actually hears himself when Barth claims he is hearing God; subjectivism triumphs, because no objective Scripture and no true and finished revelation is possible unless there be a self-contained and autonomous God. Without such a God, there can be no systematic theology, because God is too full of unrealized potentialities to be predictable or his revelation trust-

worthy. Without such a God, Scripture cannot be the infallible Word, a direct and finished revelation. The offense in the orthodox doctrine of the inspiration and authority of Scripture is not in Jonah's experience or in problems of chronology; it is in the God who makes Scripture possible and speaks authoritatively in and through it. To underrate the nature of this offense is to trifle with the claims of God and to evade the central issue of authority.

THIS NEW, FRESH, CLARIFYING STUDY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST
WILL PROVE A LIFE-TIME GUIDE TO EVERY REFORMED READER . . .

THE GLORIOUS BODY OF CHRIST

by R. B. Kuiper

Past president of Calvin College and Calvin Seminary;
former professor of practical theology at Westminster

Writing from a rich and varied experience and in the wide context of the teaching of Scripture relating to the Church, Professor Kuiper forthrightly considers the basic task and responsibility of the Church and deals concretely with the present vital problems of evangelism, education, ecumenism, worship, the sacraments, and discipline. His important study admirably meets the need for a new popular presentation and a fresh vista of the entire field of Reformed belief.

"This book can be read profitably by all, and its contents should be understood by every member of 'the glorious body of Christ.' Every elder and deacon should possess it and study it in order better to perform the glorious function of his office. This volume would make an excellent gift for those making public confession of faith. The 53 brief chapters can be read and studied as separate units, and societies could use it for a season of study." — Fred H. Klooster in *The Banner*.

\$4.95

At your favorite bookseller, or

WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.

255 Jefferson Avenue, S. E. — Grand Rapids 3, Michigan

Book Reviews

Woman in the Church

by RUSSELL C. PROHL

Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 86 pages; \$2.00

The writer of this book wrote to answer questions such as these: "What is the God-pleasing status of woman in the church? Are the Biblical restrictions which say that the women should 'Keep silence in the churches', and 'I permit no woman to teach', valid today" (p. 11).

The present reviewer would be happy to report that in his judgment the Reverend Mr. Prohl has succeeded in giving us a thorough and reliable study on the subject on which he writes, and that his conclusions are based on sound, objective exegetical findings. I am sorry to say that I cannot make these statements. After a careful reading of his book I cannot help but feel that the author's exegetical study is rather subjective and biased.

Mr. Prohl understandably discusses the three familiar passages of God's Word: I Corinthians 11:2-16; I Corinthians 14:34, 35; and I Timothy 2:11-15.

To indicate the exegetical weakness which marks this book I shall confine my criticism on this score to the author's interpretive remarks on the first mentioned passage.

It is the author's claim at the very beginning of his consideration of the passage in question that Paul here speaks of married women, and not of women in general. Quote: "Of who does this passage speak? It does not speak of women in general, nor of Christian women in general, but it does speak of married women, of Christian wives." Mr. Prohl reads I Corinthians 11:3 as if it said, "the head of the woman is her husband", although both the King James version and the American Standard Version read: "and the head of the woman is the man." This latter reading has always been and is still accepted by the best of our orthodox New Testament scholars. There are those who prefer the author's reading. He can rightly

appeal to Goodspeed and the Revised Standard Version.

But what are the facts regarding the Greek words for man and woman used in the passage? The Greek word for man is *aner*, and for woman *gunaikos*. Now, according to Thayer, a generally recognized New Testament scholar, *aner* in the first place means *man*, one who is a male, and in the second place, *husband*. And *gunaikos*, according to Thayer, means "a woman of any age, whether a virgin, or married, or a widow." Secondarily the word is used to designate a wife. (See Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon.)

Moreover, marriage is not even mentioned in this whole passage.

The most natural reading of the passage favors the interpretation which holds that the Apostle here speaks of the relationship of the sexes in God's plan, as this relationship affects the place and dress of women in the church services at Corinth. And then Paul begins by saying, "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ of God" (v. 3).

Here the Word of God enunciates a fundamental relationship. Christ, so we are told, is subservient to God the Father. The reference here is to Christ as Mediator and to his place in the redemptive economy or plan of God. Then we are told that man is subservient to Christ, and that the woman is subservient to the man. The order is therefore this: God - Christ - man - woman. Now this is a basic, God-ordained order. And this order holds for all believing men and women, whether they are single or married. It held for Paul as well as for Peter. Our single men and women are not left out of this divine order. Let it be remembered in this connection that there was a difference between Adam and Eve — physical difference, but also a psychical difference. Men are normally more active and aggressive, whereas women, as a rule, are more passive and reticent.

Men are more suited to lead; women to follow.

Now, these well-known differences also enter into the relationships and responsibilities of men and women in the church of Christ. And this basic fact finds expression in I Corinthians 11. But this basic fact Mr. Prohl either ignores or denies. He at least limits all that the passage says regarding the man-woman position in the church to a husband-wife relationship in the church.

To this I would add that if the passage speaks specifically and only of the husband-wife relationship in the church, as Mr. Prohl claims, we should then be able to substitute the word "husband" for the word "man", and the word "wife" for the word "woman" in every instance of this passage. But if we do this what will we get? By way of example let us read verse 8 in this way. It would read as follows: "For the husband is not of the wife: but the wife of the husband." And verse 12 would read, "For as the wife is of the husband, so is the husband also by the wife..."

The author seems to overlook the fact that since the normal relationship of life for men and women is that of marriage, God often addresses himself in his Word to married men and women. But this does not mean that many of the truths which he addresses to married men and women do not hold for unmarried men and women as well.

I am personally persuaded that the correct interpretation of the passages of Holy Writ which deal with the question at hand will not lead to Pastor Prohl's conclusion as found at the close of his book, and which reads: "In other words it is time for the Lutheran Church to support the 1955 resolution of the Presbyterians that 'there is no theological ground for denying ordination to women, simply because they are women'" (p. 80). I am sorry that the author, a member and minister of the staunch Missouri Synod Lutheran church, goes to this extreme.

I do not mean to say that our women should not be invited to our congregational meetings, together with the men, if these meetings are conducted properly, under the full control of the office-bearers. But I do maintain that the Word of God forbids the ordination of women as ministers, elders, or deacons. And this does not mean that our women may not be helpers in the Gospel and in certain phases of the work of the Church. They were helpers in the days of the Apostles. Why shouldn't they be such today? Here is doubtlessly a domain which calls for further exploration and development, also by our Christian Reformed churches.

MARTIN MONSMA

Werker in een Nieuwe Wereld

by REV. MARTEN VRIEZE

Pro Rege Publishing Co., Toronto, price 70c.

This delightful little pamphlet gives the reader a penetrating insight into the immigrant's social problems from the time he boards ship in Holland until he somewhat establishes himself in his new but strange home in Canada. The writer points out the various dangers that confront an immigrant in almost every area of his social life in his new fatherland. Special attention is paid to the so-called neutral unions. Considering the large part that the union plays in the laborer's life it is but natural that it receive special attention. By far the larger number of immigrants are confronted by it every day. They need guidance therefore especially in this matter.

This pamphlet is written throughout in a brilliantly lucid style. Also the union problem is clearly presented. No one is left in the dark as

to what the writer thinks about it and we believe he is completely correct in every word he has written. The union, according to the writer, is not the innocent organization that the name "neutral unions" implies. The name is not correct but should be changed to "non-christian unions", since they are governed by norms that do not reckon with Christ and are therefore inimical to godliness ("antigoddelijk"). The writer therefore concludes, that if anyone wishes to speak correctly and honestly on this subject, he will do his fellowmen a service by speaking of the present-day unions as the "non-christian" unions.

The burden of proof is cast upon every reader to disprove the writer's assertion that every union demands of its members that they suppress or deny their own Christian norms in order to be able to support the union's norms. Not that the unions demand such in writing or by way of an oath, but it is automatically implied in union membership that norms which conflict with Christian norms must be upheld and promoted. The issue

therefore boils down to this, that every true Christian must choose between God and Mammon, between serving God or Mammon.

Undoubtedly there is a real clash of opinions between this pamphlet and the official stand of our Church. This pamphlet must therefore bring some kind of action. No one in our Church who takes his or her life seriously can lay this pamphlet aside and in good conscience continue a member of the union. Neither can the Church afford to ignore this pamphlet. That is why we are so happy with it. An unqualified answer is given to the union problem, an answer based squarely upon Scriptural principles. And is there anyone who will challenge the assertion that every presently existing union falls under this judgment? May this pamphlet therefore be widely read, and widely discussed, in order that our Church may come to a clear-cut, uncompromising stand against the ever onward-marching, organized tyranny of the "non-christian" unions of today.

CECIL W. TUININGA

SUBSCRIPTION BLANK

Please enter my subscription for TORCH AND TRUMPET. I enclose check for \$3.00 for one year.

Name.....
 Address.....
 City..... State.....

You may send sample copies to the following:

Name.....
 Address.....
 City..... State.....

Name.....
 Address.....
 City..... State.....