Thanksgiving Day?

The three possible purposes for celebrating a THANKSGIVING DAY are these: First, that on this day we give thanks in distinction from other days—that we as Christians on this day consciously give thanks to God for all things. Second, that on this day we give more thanks than we are accustomed to giving when pursuing our daily routine of life. That on this day we are going to take special notice of all things and make it our task to become extremely thankful—not that we are not thankful all the days of the year, but that on this day we are going to manifest this thankfulness in a special way.

A final purpose might be that in this day we give thanks for some special thing. That on this day we give thanks for some evidence of God's mercy and goodness which we deem worthy of special thanks—special thanks that is for some special thing.

All of us being reared in soundly Reformed homes will see immediately that the first purpose proposed is thoroughly unscriptural. The Lord demands that each day we give thanks to Him and all His praise proclaim. —Psalm 92:1, 2.

Furthermore, concerning the second purpose, the Lord not only demands of us that we give our thanks to Him every day but that each and every day we give our entire thanks. There are no degrees of thankfulness as far as God is concerned, so that today we can be truly and justifiably more thankful than tomorrow. God justly demands (in view of the fact that we were created capable of this) that each day we give Him our whole praise, adoration, and thanks. We must say with the Psalmist, "I will give thanks unto Jehovah with my whole heart." Wholehearted thankfulness is surely the only thankfulness which is acceptable to God. If we are truly thankful, therefore, we will be wholeheartedly thankful. Furthermore, one can not be more wholeheartedly thankful at one time than at another. The very word itself is indicative of this fact. Your heart, your all, is filled with thankfulness, praise, and adoration to its capacity; there is no room left for more thankfulness when
you are wholeheartedly thankful.

Finally, we must not only give thanks to God every day, and give this thanks wholeheartedly, but it must be a thanks for all things, whether these things seem good to us or not. For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God. There is no special thing, such as an abundant harvest, for which we give thanks to God. God must receive from us thanks and praise every day for all things. If it should please the Lord to give us an especially lean harvest, we must not say, "Well, we will look around us and find many other things for which to thank God". No! We must thank Him for that lean harvest that He in His eternal counsel saw fit to give, confident that that also is a manifestation of His mercy and goodness towards us. God's goodness is just as sure in that lean harvest as in an abundant harvest. We must say with Job of old, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be he the Name of the Lord".

Young people, do you realize that really there should be no need for a Thanksgiving Day? Adam, if he had not fallen, would have carried out perfectly God's command to be thankful to Him every day, wholeheartedly, for all things. God does not change His commands! It is still demanded of us that we give thanks to Him wholeheartedly, for all things every day. Let us realize that as we celebrate Thanksgiving Day this month. Let the celebration of Thanksgiving Day serve to remind us again that this day should really not be necessary for us.

And if we realize this our celebration of this day will certainly be changed. We feel that the manner in which we usually observe Thanksgiving Day is not an evidence of true humble thankfulness. Our tables are laden with the fruits of this earth, our families are gathered around us, and one ignorant of the occasion—looking in—might easily interpret and characterize our festivities with these words, "They eat, they drink, and they are merry for tomorrow they die." Other than our presence in church—and shamefully enough, our church services are not even well attended on this day—and a prayer before devouring this over-abundance of wealth, what are our evidences of thankfulness on this day? Surely the modern Thanksgiving Day is not characterized by our daily obligation to God to give thanks—thanks to the Almighty God—wholehearted, thanks for all things.

Also if we realize the true significance of Thanksgiving our attitude towards this day must necessarily change. Is your attitude towards this day truly one of thankfulness? Yes, only God can search and know the heart. However, from outward appearances it seems that too often our individual attitudes towards this day are not primarily what they should be. To many college students the day is still denied of us that we give thanks to Him wholeheartedly, for all things every day. Let us realize that as we celebrate Thanksgiving Day this month. Let the celebration of Thanksgiving Day serve to remind us again that this day should really not be necessary for us.
Children Of The Reformation - Are We?

Again we are about to commemorate what the undersigned considers to be the greatest event within the Church since the days of the apostles. God, Who alone does His work throughout the ages, accomplishes this work by means of the weakest instruments and when His time is come. The Lord has chosen the poor, the base, the ignoble, the despised of this world. Hence, the reformer, Zwingli, emerges from an Alpine shepherd's hut; Melanchton comes from an armourer's shop; and Luther is born in the cottage of a poor miner. The time had come when the Church of God was about to be released, delivered from the shackles of Rome, from the spiritual imprisonment of the Roman clergy, and return to the freedom of the Word of God and the service of and fellowship with the alone and ever blessed God. Unto this end the Lord raised up a man, Martin Luther by name, lawyer-monk-priest-doctor of Divinity, who, on the thirty-first day of October, 1517, four hundred and thirty-two years ago, ignited the spark which set the entire Church ablaze, when he nailed his ninety five theses to the church door at Wittenberg the evening before the Catholic All-Saints Day.

What is the Reformation, its chief significance and what is the calling which this tremendous movement enjoins upon us? We pride ourselves in the fact that we are the children or sons of the Reformation, but what does this mean? October is and should be observed by us with the greatest joy and the most profound gratitude. But this also implies that we must walk in the steps of the Reformation, must also reveal ourselves as true sons and daughters of this great movement of God.

The Reformation, from the viewpoint of Luther's role in this tremendous movement, was almost purely soteriological, a matter of personal salvation, of rest and peace for his soul. Who is not acquainted with his unceasing, feverish quest for rest and peace for his troubled, sin-laden soul. He was always brilliant in his studies, and his father, recognizing this ability in his son at an early age, resolved to give him a thorough education and prepare him for a place of prominence and distinction in the world. Martin was to become a doctor of law. While attending the university at Erfurt, after having completed preliminary study at Mansfield, Magdeburg, and Eisenbach, the intrepid German reformer came under the preaching of an evangelist preacher in that city, who boldly exhorted his...
hearers to read the Bible, and preached sin and condemnation. Through the instrumentality of this preacher Luther was brought to a consciousness of sin and guilt, which began to plague and torment him more and more. Thereupon Luther had gone forth in search of a sensible, but was unable to find any.

It was this consciousness of sin and guilt and his feverish quest for rest and peace for his tormented soul which determined the reformer's career. This explains why he now decides to abandon his career as lawyer, and also, despite the vehement protests of his friends and the denunciations of his father, to enter the quiet of a convent, there to give himself wholly unto the Lord. In this convent he fulfills all the duties and obligations laid upon him, constantly in search of peace for his troubled soul; and there he finds a Bible. reads it untiringly, and becomes acquainted with the truth that salvation is of grace alone, and with the wonderful words, "The just shall live by faith,". Later, Luther becomes a priest and doctor of Divinity.

At this time in his life, however, Luther had not as yet broken with Rome, and he continued to view the Church and his salvation as inseparably connected. It is because of this that he journeyed to Rome, begins to climb Pilate's Staircase, stops in the midst of his ascent, and flees from the place in horror and terror, when the truth of God's Word, that the just shall live by faith, strikes into his consciousness as a thunder bolt. While in Rome he had been amazed and profoundly shaken by the corruption of the Church which he had witnessed there. Returning home, he pondered upon his spiritual problem and the now thoroughly familiar words of Scripture, "The just shall live by faith," began to take ever deeper root in his heart and soul. Soon after this incident, he opposes the shameless Tetzel who was selling indulgences, and, in opposition to this shameful practice, nailed his ninety five theses to the church door at Wittenberg on Oct. 31, 1517, the evening before the Catholic All-Saints Day. This act of Luther was the spark which set the entire Church-world ablaze. Finally, he was put under the ban, but nothing could separate him from the blessed consciousness of his justification and forgiveness of sins; and his words, spoken at the Diet of Worms in April of 1521, "Here I stand, so help me God", have resounded and re-echoed throughout the ages.

Now we are enabled to understand the chief significance of the Reformation. The important heritage of this tremendous movement is the liberation, the freeing, the unshackling of the Bible, the written, infallibly written Word of God. Luther knew that he obtained peace for his soul through the Bible. He, therefore, set out. not to destroy the Church, but to reform it, and he began to denounce the corrupt practices of the Church, which bound the consciences of the people of God and deprived them of the blessedness of forgiveness. He would have the Church return to the Scriptures. In this, however, he was frustrated and opposed and finally put under the ban. The reformer, however, refused to budge;
he clung to the Word of God; and later translated the Scriptures into the German language, the language of the people. And so the Bible had been removed from its shelf of retirement and bondage, and once more became the property of the common people.

What is the implication of this tremendous truth for us, especially for us as young people? We pride ourselves in the fact, do we not, that we are sons and daughters of the Reformation. Do we rejoice in the fact that the Scriptures have been removed from their shelf of ecclesiastically forced retirement and returned into the hands of the common people? If so, permit me, then, to ask a few pertinent questions. Do we acknowledge the Word of God as the sole Standard of all life and doctrine? Do we bow before that Word as having absolute authority? Do we constantly examine all things, our Confessions and also ourselves, in the light of that Word? Do we really rejoice in the possession of it, which must imply that we study it? It can hardly be said of our young people, generally speaking, that they really busy themselves with the Scriptures. Do we read spiritual literature, spiritual books, and do they serve their purpose of leading us to the Bible?

We are indeed the sons and daughters of the Reformation. Let us, then, also walk as such. May it indeed be said that the Word of God is a lamp before our feet and a light upon our path. The Word of God has been liberated from its Roman Catholic bondage. May it be that liberated book also among us. And remember, as Protestant Reformed young people, we occupy the position that we may read those Scriptures in the most glorious light which has ever been cast upon the blessed Word of God. The Word has been liberated and is free; let us study it, conscientiously and prayerfully, and we, too, shall be free, yea, free indeed. H. V.

Hail and Farewell

The Publishing Committee is pleased to announce that Mr. Louis Regnerus of Oaklawn, Illinois, has accepted appointment as a Reviewer of new and current books for Beacon Lights. Mr. Regnerus will take up his work as co-editor of this department with the December issue.

We also take this opportunity to convey to Mrs. H. C. Hoeksema, who has resigned as co-editor of this Department, our sincere appreciation for her valued services in the past. At this writing Rev. and Mrs. Hoeksema have just entered a new field of endeavor as Mr. Hoeksema serves the congregation of Doon, Iowa, as pastor. We extend to them our heartiest best wishes in their new sphere of activity and we pray that our Covenant God will, in His mercy and grace, sustain and guide them for His Name’s sake.

With this issue our readers will be pleasantly surprised to see that Rev. G. Vanden Berg has graciously consented to fill the rubric “Christian Living” in our magazine. Knowing Reverend Vanden Berg as we do, and particularly the conscientious manner in which he approaches any task he sets for himself, we look forward to an enjoyable period of association with him in our work. A. H.
THE COVENANT QUESTION
for after-recess discussion.

1. Method of Study, or Approach:

A. In our study of all theological questions we must come to an understanding through a study of the historical background of the question. For a mature and confessional stand it is therefore our first obligation to orientate ourselves with the work and discussion on the question in the past. When we begin thus we do not imply that a Scriptural study is unnecessary or secondary. Thorough study of Scripture is basic and necessary for coming to any conclusion in theology for theologians and laymen alike. However, the questions and problems of the covenant appear as men study the Scriptures, not in the Scriptures themselves. And to come to our own conclusions we must become acquainted with the problems first, whereupon we as individuals must in all humility consult the work of others, and especially the work of the church in the past as it spoke about these problems.

1. More particular introduction:

a. We may argue the above position in society upon the following questions:

1/ What is our approach to the study of the Scripture?
2/ Is it biased by confessions and theology?
3/ What is our approach to the study of theology?
4/ What is the value of the study of the covenant for other studies?

B. To make any study worthwhile for societies and individuals, we ought to have in mind all available material for collateral reading, and attempt by some manner of means to obtain it and at least peruse it! It is very difficult for me to advise you partly because my own reading on the subject is still limited, and partly because much of the reading on the subject is in the Holland language.

4. There are other English works, but I have not read them well enough myself to place them on the list. Perhaps I shall give them later.
5. For a history of the struggle in the Netherlands it is well to have some historical work. I don’t know of any in our language except Prof. D. H. Kromminga’s “Christian Reformed Traditions”.

II. Historical Background:

A. Apostolic Times. Strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true that the issue
of the covenant as it is debated today and in the last centuries, also was a burning question in the days of the apostles. It did not deal with the term covenant as it appears today, but it was treated nevertheless as a reality together with the issue in connection with it.

1. In the epistle to the Hebrews the Old Covenant is compared and explained in the light of the New covenant.

2. The issue of circumcision had the implications in the days of Paul and Peter as it has since also. In our day the same errors adhere to some conceptions of baptism as e.g., to Judaistic ideas about circumcision. How?

3. The discussion of law, and of Christian liberty as answered by Paul in his epistle to the Galatians treats the same problems connected with discussions of conditions and demands and also of the preaching of the Gospel and our responsibility.

4. This question, therefore, must be answered in the light of the absolute answers of the New Testament and the apostles and must never be left hanging in the air as to the fundamental issues answered in the Bible. The same dangers of heresy must be realized and warned against, for they are not new ideas, but the same old objections that have always crept in.

B. In Post-Apostolic Times:

1. The Judaistic controversies appeared again and finally reached a high-point in the issue with Marcion. What is the teaching of Marcion? In a certain respect Barth has been accused of Marcion heresy. How so?

2. The church fathers dealt with the problems we deal with in the covenant when they treated the question of the law and gospel.

3. And the Roman Catholic Church tradition erred in teaching of the essence of religion in its emphasis upon its liturgical forms and in its wrong use of the law and gospel as it followed the Pelagian error.

C. The Reformation Period:

1. Especially to the Reformers do we turn for the beginnings of our rich theological heritage. In the days of the Reformers the teaching of the Scripture on the covenant was brought to a more special emphasis. And ever since that time whoever reads and studies Reformed theology must realize the importance of the treatment of the covenant. Karl Barth also shares the interest in the subject as he treats it in his third volume of Dogmatics.

2. This is true of Calvin, but not in the same special sense as in other reformers. Calvin made the treatment of the covenant subordinate to the doctrine of the Trinity, it is said.

3. The pronounced attention that was given to the subject is to be traced to Zwingli, Bullinger, and then to the German theologians Olevianus and Ursinus. These last, who were authors of our Heidelberg Catechism, also published treatises on the subject of the covenant which appeared thru the years 1576-'85.

4. This had great influence upon theologians in Hungary, Switzerland, Germany, and Netherlands. Reformed theology since then became known as "federal theology".

5. In the Netherlands it occupied the minds of the Reformed theologians in that period when Reformed theology was in its flowering days, up to 1650, when the
influence of the schools and still later of philosophy and rationalism can be seen to appear. Such theologians as Junius, Gomarus, Trelcatius, expressed themselves upon it.

6. England also saw a development of the subject by its theologians who were educated by the Reformeds in Geneva. It is claimed that the Scottish theologian, Ball, was the most influential, who wrote a pamphlet on the subject at the time of the Westminster Assembly as it was drawing up its confession. I have in my possession an old book of 447 pages, published in 1678 in London by Rev. Wm. Strong on "A Discourse of the Two Covenants". This work is a Scriptural study throughout and shows a keen understanding of the problems involved; which again is evidence of the early interest in many lands, among all theologians on this Biblical subject.

D. The Last Century—to date.

1. Dr. Smilde wrote a book, "Een Eeuw Van Strijd Over Verbond en Doop", (A Century of Debate About Covenant and Baptism). This indicates the historical background of the last century.

2. In the Secession of 1834 the leaders of the movement had differences which were in connection with baptism first of all and so with the implications of the covenant question. (Such men as Hendrick De Cock and Brummelkamp).

3. These differences continued in the history of the group through its union with the movement under Dr. A. Kuiper and is the background later of the discussion in the Netherlands and, of course, is our background too, for we are children of the Secession and the Doleantie. There was, always, as a result of this, a sort of division in the Netherlands, the opposite sides of which were called the "A and B groups."

4. This question was treated in the Synod of the Secessionists in Utrecht in 1837 and on following Synods. Again when the Secessionists joined with Dr. Kuiper's group, in 1905. The Synod of Utrecht attempted to satisfy both groups by giving five conclusions. This quieted the sharpness and bitterness of the groups but never satisfied the theologians as to the questions about the covenant and baptism. Each group continued to maintain its own emphasis. The Christian Reformed Church in America adopted the Conclusions of Utrecht in 1908—which our Protestant Reformed Church has not done.

5. Finally the differences again broke out with much bitterness and strife preceding and during the last war. The trouble now revolved around the declarations of Synod 1942-1944, and the deposition of Drs. Greydanus and K. Schilder.

III. Our Appraisal (of the historical background):

A. If we study the debates we can see how some of the material shows lack of understanding one another. This, however, gives us no right to minimize its importance or to dismiss it. It also shows how personalities play a large part in debates on Biblical questions. Again, this should not cause us to shy away from important questions.

B. Historical study should cause us to avoid the errors of the past and to profit from its fruit.

1. In a careful study of these debates upon theological subjects it always becomes evident that some do not understand the real issues, their deep implica-
tions, and become warm against a certain view or for it, and unwittingly fall into error. As a result there is much bitterness of personal friction.

2. On the other hand there is always the age-old struggle between the truth and the lie.

3. Some questions for discussion:
   a/ Will our American Reformed theology ever show an interest in this discussion on the covenant?
   b/ Will our Protestant Reformed people rise above narrowmindedness, shortsightedness, personality difficulties, or will we merely repeat the same mistakes and errors of the past?
   c/ Will we seek to confess the Reformed truth clearly in all spheres of life? Or will we show the same impious disregard for the creed and doctrinal contributions of the past as is the cancer of the American churches?
   d/ Should we take the attitude that discussion should be limited to the theologians, and that we should avoid it in our church papers and in our societies as much as possible?

   L. D.

The Inside Story: : :

Reverend Herman Hoeksema stands out today as one of the greatest theologians among those who adhere to the Reformed Faith. He has faithfully preached from the Heidelberg Catechism for more than twenty-seven years, and now presents this volume as the beginning of a scholarly new exposition of this sound, organized study of the great doctrines of Holy Scripture.

The method of instruction in Christian religion called the Heidelberg Catechism has been held in high esteem by the Reformed Churches throughout Europe for several centuries. This high estimation has quite naturally carried over into the American branches of the Reformed faith. When looked at as an organized means of studying the Scriptures, there is then an unction pervading it that is not found in any other work of its kind.

* * * This is an excerpt from the inside flap of the jacket covering the first volume of THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE entitled IN THE MIDST OF DEATH, published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Co.

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P.S. And not too long, please.

Leaving the Middle Road

In a recent letter published in behalf of our Radio Broadcasting, an attempt was made to set forth our specific calling in this connection. Furthermore, a paragraph was included to disclose the manner in which we are fulfilling that calling.

(For the information of our readers the full text of the letter referred to is printed on the following page).—ED.

You may have begun to wonder, why I selected the title I did for my article in connection with this subject. Let me go on to explain that the purpose is two-fold. First, to show that the past accusation, which perhaps still lingers, of our oneness, is somewhat true. In the second place because it allows me to reveal my thoughts in a figurative way.

There have always been those who would make the preacher a mere sales-man selling his goods to all at the same price. Namely, the accepting of the Lord Jesus as their personal Saviour in order that He may save them from their sins. This is the one extreme. The other, of which we are often accused, is nothing but pure determinism or fatalism. To this accusation I do not render my support. However, to this problem of seeking a middle road I present an analogous one.

There are those also, who are perhaps largely the same group before referred to, who would make the sole purpose of the Gospel, the saving of souls. Resulting in the gross error that it is used, more properly said misused, in any fashion which appears to bring a larger number into the fold. Yes, and not only that, but even the character of the fold is often changed in order to enlarge the group. This practice we of course deplore. On the other hand it is not a matter of which we are to be unconcerned. We cannot say in a negative way that we (the Church of Jesus Christ) are not a "soul-saving" agency. Are we the laborers in that field which is white unto the harvest?

Concretely let us consider the matter: True enough, as the letter which I previously referred to sets forth, it is our calling as God's Church to preach the Word. But that Word is the Way, the Truth, and the Light, and no man cometh unto the Father but by Him. Surely, then, if we have that Truth and we do, then we declare, proclaim, set forth, and show that Way. If we have that Truth,
Dear Member of First Church,

We would like to have a little chat with you. As you know, fall marks the beginning of a new season for most of our church activities, and thus it usually is considered the beginning of a new season of radio broadcasting also. And at the beginning of a new season we want to try something new also, therefore this letter finds its way to you. And marvelous to say, it’s not a request for money, though we can always use that. Rather we would like to get down at least in our first few letters, to some real fundamentals of radio preaching.

The first fundamental about which we are writing is our calling to preach the Word. This, of course, is basic. Because we are called by God to preach the Word we have preaching services on Sunday. Because we are so called we have missionaries in the field. And also because we are so called we have radio preaching by means of the Reformed Witness Hour.

Involved in that calling are three elements. First of all, you notice that it is our calling. That means that we do not simply begin to preach “on our own hook”, but that as a church of Jesus Christ are called to do so. Besides, it means that it is our calling. The church preaches, be it through the means of the minister. Otherwise, we could just write this letter to our ministers.

In the second place, we are called to preach the Word, in other words, to expound the Word of God and to proclaim it as living witnesses.

And finally, we are called to preach the Word. That means that the Word is at once the limitation and the power of our preaching.

Now, you may ask: what has all this to do with the Reformed Witness Hour? Concretely this: we are not on the air as a propaganda agency in the spirit of modern, high-pressure advertising. Nor are we on the air as a “soul-saving” agency. But we are on the air in the consciousness of a deeply spiritual calling to preach the Word as a church of Jesus Christ. That calling is as basic to radio preaching as it is to our church services themselves. And the radio committee feels the need of keeping this fact in mind, both for itself and for the congregation.

Yours in the cause of Christ, The Radio Committee,
First Protestant Reformed Church.

October 1, 1949
Who Will Show Us Any Good?

PSALM 4:6.

"Who will show us any good?"

An important question! Especially so in relation to our Christian Living! Important, too, in relation to the proper celebration of our Thanksgiving! Significant for young and old: "Who, then, will show us any good?"

If we ask this question among worldlings, we may expect a variety of answers. The answer of the world to a question of this nature is always determined by the circumstances of the present moment. Hence, if you propose this question to a group of pleasure-mad youth you may expect an answer something like this: "Hollywood, the Drive-In, Theaters, dance-floors, bowling-alleys, roller-rinks, ball-games, etc., show us many a "good" time. Of course, it all depends on what you mean by "good".

Propose the question to a meeting of Local No. - - - C. I. O., or A. F. L. The presiding officer will speak in behalf of all represented. "Good!", he declares "we will see as soon as our demands are unequivocally granted. When all share alike the benefits of 'real security, pension, high wages for little work, much leisure', then we shall see good." Again we ask what his and their conception of utopia is?

Enter now a moment into the poverty-stricken home of the unemployed father of six children. To him the modern luxuries of new cars, radio, television, refrigeration and more, all belong to a hypothetic world. Ask him who will show him good and he may reply, "The man that enables me to also procure the things we now only dream about!" You see, with him, too, it is a question of who will show him good 'things'?

If 'good' can be purchased with dollars, the question really reverts to this. "Who will show us more money? Who will endow us with greater spending power? Who will enable us to breathe more freely in the pool of carnal cravings and lustful pleasure?" Such is the meaning of the question in the minds of the world. In that consciousness they will then also commemorate their Thanksgiving Day. Their tables will be spread with the fat of the earth; their bounties will be enumerated; and even a kind word of thanks will be raised to the good 'Providence' who has shown such beneficence. Then the question, "Who will show us more
good", is in order and by this is meant, "How will we be enabled to accumulate more in the future?"

"The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing." Eccl. 1:8. "Vanity of vanities—all is vanity" Eccl. 1:2. Yet, they call it good and ask anew, "Who will show us more of it"?

To the psalmist David, however, the question, as he penned it in the fourth Psalm has a different meaning. David means, "Who will show us the ONLY GOOD?" Then, too, the answer he furnishes to his own question is not one that is determined by his natural circumstances, for then he would have said something quite different from that which is expressed in the text. David found good in this, "that the Lord lift up the light of His face upon him!"

Let us try to understand the psalmist. It was the time that David was being persecuted by his own son, Absalom. The latter had led a rather successful insurrection in which his father was dethroned and driven into exile. To aggravate matters, one named Shimei followed after David as he fled, cursing him and casting stones at him. Still worse was the situation David had to cope with among his own men. His followers rebelled. Dissatisfied with the circumstances, they turned the glory of their leader into shame and went out seeking after vanity and the lie. David was in deep misery. He called to God. The poet realized that many there are who say, "Who will show us any good", but apart from God and His mercy there is no one who is able to display true goodness. And again, it depends upon what is called good!!

David has the right conception. His prayer is: "Lord lift up the light of Thy face upon us". He realizes that "In Thy light we shall see light", and he knows that apart from God all is darkness and death. The way may seem ever so dismal and impossible but if only the Lord's face is upon us, all will turn out to our good. Such was David's experience as he fled from the presence of his son.

The Psalmist recognizes the face of God as the only Good. The face of one is not the same as the person himself. The face identifies the person and even furnishes information regarding who and what one is. I know and recognize my friends by their face. I can usually tell whether they are happy or sorrowful, anxious or carefree, energetic or tired, by the expression of their face. So the face of the Lord tells us by revelation who and what God is. Of course, we cannot see His face actually because no one has ever seen God and lived. That would not be good for us. But His face is a figurative phrase which denotes His Self-revelation.

David petitions for the 'light' of Jehovah's face. Light is the opposite of darkness. When the people of God left the land of Egypt God showed Himself to them in the fiery cloud. When the Egyptians on the other side saw the cloud it was dark....very dark. To Israel it was light. This means that in that Light all the beauty and love of God as the Covenant Jehovah is manifest. Centrally the light of God's face is seen in Jesus, Who is the express image of God.
In Jesus the law and the shadows fade away and the realities of grace and truth are seen. Wonderful, marvelous light! Beautiful expression of God’s face!

Let it now be upon us. How careful the Psalmist is in the choice of his words. He does not say “against” us although the Word of God often speaks of the Lord’s face being ‘against someone’. That someone is always the ungodly, wicked sinner whom the Lord abhors. He never sees the ‘good’ of which the text speaks. O, he receives good things which he also corrupts, but they only serve to magnify his judgment. The ‘Good’ is strange to him. But let it be upon us. Let that beautiful light reflected in Jesus of Bethlehem be upon us. Let it cover us, overshadow us so that we cannot be seen except in that Light. And make us bearers of that Light so that we may know what it is to be the “light of the world”. That is good!

Who will show us that good?

Christian living is impossible except we see this light and observe this good. Christian thankfulness is impossible without it for thankfulness implies joy, and to be really glad requires the consciousness of the possession of this only good. True indeed, that many celebrate and assume the name, Christian, but as Jesus Himself tells us, “Many who say Lord, Lord, will never enter the Kingdom”. It is not a question of saying...it is a question of observing and doing.

Who then will show us?

The prime requisite to behold this good is faith. Your natural, physical eye cannot see it. The judgment passed through that eye always evaluates Jesus and His glory as nonsense and foolishness. It will have none of it. Your eye, by nature, is so filled with lusts that the most intelligent preacher or most stirring evangelist could not sever it from its firm hold upon the material things of this world. Your eye, not your faith, tells you that there is much good in the achievements and practices of men. But faith gives you a different viewpoint. Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things unseen. What eye has not seen, ear has not heard, and what has never arisen in the heart of man, faith exposes. Jesus, the salvation of God, only faith can see. And that is God’s gift to His people. Wonderful gift of love!

Who will show us? You have the answer. Only God through faith. He opens the heavens before you so that you may look into them to foresee what awaits you. He unveils His Holy Word before your consciousness so that in that Word you are able to gather the precious and priceless gems. He shows you what is “good” and He gives you the power to grasp it and hold it fast. And He also reveals to you how that which appears to you to be so ‘apparently evil' turns into your ‘good’.

Yes, this is just the way God labors in and with His children. He did this with David. The insurrection, the persecution, the cursing and the mocking of Shimei, the exile, and the attitude of men seemed like so many evils. The ‘good’ of it all could not be seen by the men of David and even the Psalmist him-
self confesses that he was in deep distress. That good could come out of this seemed impossible. Yet, the face of the Lord shone upon David and in due time and through the proper series of events, the Lord brought him back to Jerusalem and the kingdom. It was a good chastisement for the king.

So today! In the world there is war and rumor of war! In industry we hear of repeated strife. Strikes in vital industries throw thousands of men into the camp of the unemployed. In the social world, evil is so predominant that it is abhorring to write about it. Then, not even to speak of the corruption in high places! Where can one find good in all of this? The world tries to console itself in the face of all this by attempting to believe that education and a more fair and equal distribution of the world's goods will ultimately solve these evils and make everything 'good'. But be not deceived! By faith we see that God uses all things in the realization of His good Kingdom. The measure of sin must be filled. The world must be ripe for judgment. Do not then look for good to come out of it all except through the refining judgment.

Look at the church! Torn to pieces from within by worldliness and destroyed from without by the vain attempt to keep peace with her enemy. And those who would militate against evil and represent the truth are despised and not even considered as 'church'. Show us good? Yes, the eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear Him. Has He not chosen the poor in this world, rich in faith and heirs of His Kingdom? Surely, it must be thus in order that the power of God may be displayed over against the impotency of man. Look at all things through the revelation of His Word and you begin to see the 'good' of it all.

But what about you and me, Christian Friends? In our inquiry after good we desire more than to see it, do we not? Isn't it the very purpose of our asking this question, that we may also experience the good? The men that followed David were not content with a mere statement of information that all was going to be all right in time. They insisted upon action. They wanted NOW to receive 'good'.

So also we!

And the attainment of the consciousness of the only 'good' is alone in the way of walking daily in the fear of the Lord and in the keeping of His holy commandments. Walk in sin and seek that which the world calls 'good' and the wrath of the Most High will consume us. But on the other hand, follow the example of David whose delight was to dwell in the house of the Lord, and you will taste and see that God is good.

"Be followers of us", says the apostle, "even as we are followers of Christ". That means walk by faith. Fix your eye upon the new Jerusalem which is above and separate yourself from everything that would make you feel strange, to that glorious city of God. Put on the whole armor of God and go out into the battle as soldiers of Jesus Christ to war the good fight of faith. Do not be ashamed of the reproach you must bear but only
remember that it is a 'good' gift of grace that has been given to you, that now you may suffer for His sake. And above all keep your garments clean and unspotted in the world. The Lord loveth the righteous and He blesses those of an upright heart. Doing this faithfully, you will know 'true good'.

Thus you will sing: "O God how good Thou art...to all the pure of heart... though life seems vain.... Burdened with anxious care.... I groped in dark despair ....till in Thy house of prayer....all was made plain". You will sing this because your heart will over-abound with thanksgiving. Thus it was with David. In his distress he prayed that God lift up His face upon him. The Lord answered and David then said: "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased. I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep, for thou, Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety." O, God, how good Thou art!

Yes, irrespective of the material circumstances, God's children learn by grace to give thanks for the 'good' which they possess. cannot be taken away from them. Heaven and earth shall pass away but not this 'good'. God remaineth forever. He alone is good. He is our stay, even unto death.

Wholehearted Thanksgiving! Joyful Praise! To Thee we bring O Thou GOOD!

“Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God?” — Jeremiah 2:17.

In the days of Jeremiah the prophet, Israel had suffered one crushing blow after the other. Why? In this Scripture verse Jeremiah answers this with another question, “Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord, thy God?” We, too, should realize that we caused much of the nation's sorrow by our sins and our thankless forgetfulness of God. If nine tenths of our countrymen do not read the Bible regularly; if the people of the United States spent $8,000,000,000 last year for alcoholic beverages, but during the same period gave one tenth that amount for God's kingdom; if even churches forget, neglect, or openly reject the Redeemer; if there is not a large city in the United States without a group of Modernist, Christ-denying preachers who cunningly attack the faith of our fathers, not one metropolitan newspaper which does not daily print evidence of widespread rebellion against the Almighty, then certainly no other conclusion can be drawn than that for masses in our country the Saviour is no longer their God. America must pay for this tragedy that the masses have forsaken the Lord. More than ever before churches of America must preach as Jesus did, “Repent and believe the Gospel!”

By Dr. Walter Maier in Day by Day with Jesus, Calendar.
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LESSON XL
"THE ROYAL ENTRY"
(John 12:12-19)

The History:
Be sure to read the entire narrative before you begin to study or discuss it. To get a complete picture also read Matt. 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-41.

It was now Sunday. With His disciples Jesus left Bethany, going to Jerusalem by way of the Mt. of Olives. The news was soon spread to Jerusalem that Jesus was coming. And so there are two multitudes, the one, a very great one according to Matthew, met Him, spreading their garments in the way. and the other as the group that was with Jesus, perhaps having come to Bethany to see the risen Lazarus. It was this miracle, says John, that created such a tremendous stir at this time. And since all the circumstances for this event were controlled by Jesus, it is plain that He also wanted these things to happen. Having acquired a colt of an ass He further proceeds on the way. Descending the mountain it all begins to take form. The disciples (the multitude with Jesus) take their own garments and put them on the colt's back. Later they spread them in the way. The other multitude meets Jesus, and spreads palm branches, etc., in the way. See the procession, and it is continually growing in numbers. Listen to them (the group with Jesus first of all) shout and sing. Here they see the fulfillment of Zech. 9:9 before their very eyes. So Jesus enters the royal city. And the Pharisees are more than ever before at a loss what to do next.

Its Significance in the Eyes of the People:
Why did Jesus so enter Jerusalem? How must we explain this doing of the people? First of all we must understand that the raising of Lazarus brought Jesus' popularity to a climax. Such works were simply unheard of. Secondly, we must remember that the people, including the disciples, had always bosomed the idea that Jesus would become an earthly king. And according to all appearances now the time had come. And they will give Him a royal welcome. All will hail Jesus as king. They even quote Ps. 118, not because they understood it, but because it was customary to sing this song at the Passover when the festival procession was received by the priests. But it certainly applied to Christ who would be the King of Israel.

Naturally their expectations were never realized. How could it be so, for Christ came to establish a spiritual kingdom. Such a kingdom the Jews did not want. in fact they hated it. Therefore this apparent zeal for Him spelled deep suffer-
BEACON LIGHTS

ing for Jesus. These people quote part of Psalm 118, but reject another part which speaks of rejecting the cornerstone, Christ Jesus. They will use Scripture as it is convenient for them. A Jesus they will have for their carnal benefit, but the Christ of the Scriptures they reject. Jesus of Nazareth is praised, but the Christ they despise. Now they sing hosannas. but soon many of them will cry: Crucify Him. Crucify Him.

Its True Significance:

But what does this really mean? Why did Jesus so enter Jerusalem? First of all we must see that this indeed is a fulfillment of the prophecy of Zechariah. And so the Lord shows that He indeed is the King of Israel, and Jerusalem is the capital of His realm. By God He has been appointed as King over Zion, the Church of the living God. And having set His face toward Jerusalem for some time, He will now come to His kingdom and become her King.

However, take notice of the manner in which He comes. First of all He rides on a colt of an ass. Horses were used by kings in warfare. They were the symbols of strength. But donkeys? They were the lowly beasts of burden. As the humble One Jesus will become King of Zion. Notice, too, that Christ comes without a crown on His head, poor and unarmed. What an entry! Did you ever hear of such an ascension to the throne? Christ will come in the way of humility, poverty, and not with strength of arms, but obedience to the Father. He is the humble servant of the Lord. To the cross He will go and so establish His kingdom and become King in glory. And this way Christ will go after He throughout His life has made plain to the people by words and works that He is the Son of God. He who has the power to raise a Lazarus out of the grave of corruption will now give Himself into the hands of men to be crucified. So He enters Jerusalem.

Questions: How did Jesus lay hold of this colt? Why did the Jews cast palm branches on the way before Him? Is this the origin of Palm Sunday? Did the disciples understand this entry? Why not?

LESSON XI.

"THE REQUEST OF THE GREEKS AND JESUS’ REPLY"

(John 12:20-36)

The Request, vss. 20-22:

We must not think that this is the only thing that happened during the days following the royal entry. According to the Synoptics many things took place. In fact Jesus must have been very busy. But John, with his own peculiar purpose in mind, speaks only of this request of the Greeks and Jesus' answer. In fact it is the testimony of Jesus that he wishes to tell us, showing how the Greek's request was the occasion for making it.

Who these Greeks were is difficult to say. It is quite certain, however, that they lived in the region of the Dispersion of the Jews and so came into contact with the Jewish religion. They most probably were proselytes and came to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. But they have a special interest in Jesus. "We would see Jesus". What a beautiful request! They approach Philip, per-
haps because they knew him. But Philip, not daring to approach Jesus alone, consults with Andrew, and both go to Jesus.

Jesus’ Reaction, vss. 23-36:

The request makes Jesus glad. It reminds Him of the great influx of Gentiles which will come after His death and resurrection. Therefore the time is not yet ripe for the Greeks and their request, i.e., for the Gentiles to be brought into the fold. Consequently Jesus begins to speak about His death. Was not Jonah’s way from the Jews, through the belly of the fish, to the people of Nineveh? This Jesus further compares with a kernel of wheat. If it is not planted, and consequently does not die in the ground, it does not bring forth fruit. It must die. So, too, Christ except He suffer and die and be buried, will abide alone, i.e., there will be no people saved by Him. Doing this He will not love His present earthly life and shun the cross. And the disciples must also learn of this, for so it will also be with them later. They must follow Jesus, do as He does, hate their present, earthly life in this world, and accept their cross, suffer and die for His cause. And then they (His servants) shall be with Him in glory, being honored by the Father. Of all this Jesus is reminded by the request of the Greeks. The hour is very near.

Questions: What is meant by Jesus’ hour? What does Jesus mean by hating our lives? By loving them? How do covenant young people often love their lives?

The Significance of the Hour, vss. 27-33:

For the Father: Through it the Father will be glorified. By means of the cross the Son will shed His innocent, righteous blood. The implications of this work and its deep motives of love and mercy no human mind will ever be able to comprehend. But being saved by faith the saints will forever sing Hallelujahs unto God. God’s name will be glorified through this hour, the hour of Christ’s suffering. The very thought of it troubles Jesus’ soul. No wonder! What awful suffering, pain and sorrow lie ahead! Shall He really pray for deliverance from it? Oh no, for this cause He came into the world. And God answers from heaven, not for Jesus, but for Christ’s audience. Remarkable it is that they don’t understand this speech. The same thing happened with Saul with His conversion. No, men must not hear directly from heaven, they must live by faith. And yet they must know that He is of the Father. Of this they are convinced. Because be it thunder (which is very rare in the blue skies of Palestine) or a voice of an angel, they know it was the doing of God. It indeed was “supernatural”.

For the world: The world by this hour, the cross will be condemned. The Jews will think that they have condemned Jesus. And this they did, because of their hatred and reproach for the Son of God, yes, God Himself. But by means of this, their action, they are condemned by God, for they have shown what they will do with God if only they can lay their hands on Him. Therefore this is the condemnation of the world. Cf. Col. 2:15.

For the Church: And the church will
be saved by this hour. Christ will then
draw all men unto Him. i.e., when He
shall be lifted up from the earth. And
this signifies what death He should die.
In other words His death will be differ-
ent than that of others. Through it He
will leave this world and be lifted up,
naturally into heaven. The first step in
this lifting up we find in the cross. There
He was literally lifted up. But this was
followed by His ascension when He went
to the Father. And from there, with
the power of the Spirit and Word He will
draw all (His own) unto Himself.
Questions: Prove from the previous
verses that the word "all" cannot refer to all
men in the world. For what other reasons
is this impossible?
Walk While Ye Have the Light, vss.
34-36:
This the people cannot understand.
Won't the Messiah stay with them for-
ever? Imagine, they expected not only
a perfect kingdom on their earth, but an
eternal one. That was their conception
of heaven. But how can Jesus then speak
of leaving this earth if He indeed is the
Christ?
Jesus does not enter upon the question
raised, but directs the questioners to that
one point which concerns them. They
must walk in the light; this they cannot
do when it is dark. The picture given is
that of a man who must reach a certain
destination by walking. Naturally, he
walks when it is light, not when the
darkness has covered the earth. The
Light, of course, refers to Christ. He
is the Light. By darkness is meant the
power of sin, which, when it comes upon
us, lays hold of us, and we are helpless
victims in the clutches of the devil. And
these people must believe while they have
the light. Jesus will be with them only
for a few days, then the apostles will
preach for a time, but after that the
Lord will come with terrible judgment
upon the Jews. Chap. 7:34. Think of the
destruction of Jerusalem. No longer will
the Word of God, the Light, come to them
after that.
And the same thing happens in our
lives. No, Jesus does not invite us unto
salvation, nor knock at the door; He de-
mands obedience and faith. But how long
does the Lord come with this demand to
men? All their life long? By no means.
There is also the darkness. When men
refuse to heed His Word He gives them
over unto sin and the "darkness comes
upon them".

LESSON XLII.
"SUMMARY OF JESUS'
PUBLIC MINISTRY"
(John 12:37-50)
The Effect, vss. 37-41:
In these words John first of all sums
up the results of all Jesus' preaching
and working of miracles. And what are
the results? Large followings? The
very opposite is true. As a nation Israel
did not believe in Him, even though He
had done so many miracles before them.
Vss. 42 tells us that there were many
among the chief rulers that did believe
on Him, but feared to confess their al-
legiance to Him. Cowards they were.
And yet we can understand it, because
we see the same thing throughout the ages. But on a whole few believed on Him.

Why? Was He not the pedagogue par excellens? Even the Jews testified that never spake a man like this one. And He taught with authority. Then, too, remember all the mighty miracles. Why then was the group of disciples so small?

The verses 38-41 tell us. The answer is given from the viewpoint of God’s sovereignty and Counsel. First of all these Jews were hardened by the preaching of Jesus. By means of His works, their eyes were blinded, and their hearts hardened. The more they heard of Jesus the more they hated Him. And do not think that this effect was contrary to God’s purpose, as if God had good intentions, but the unbelief of man put them to naught. Never! The text states very plainly that Jesus preached to them in order that these things would take place. The same had been true in Isaiah’s day. It is always a power that saves us, or that hardens us in terrible unbelief.

And this took place, naturally, according to God’s eternal decree of reprobation. Reprobated they were from eternity. But God always works out reprobation through the way of unbelief. First of all there is God’s election and reprobation, according to His sovereign good pleasure. Then in time all men are born in sin and worthy of hell. To them God comes with His Word. Some, by the grace of God believe. Why? Because according to election it is given unto them to do so. But others hearing that same Word wilfully refuse to give heed. Why? Because of their sinful nature? Sure. but also remember that the grace of faith is not given them because they have been reprobated. And so it was here. And their unbelief must be revealed in the highest sense, not only by rejecting the prophets, but also the very Son of God.

Questions: What is the difference between reprobation on account of unbelief and reprobation through the way of unbelief? What is the Arminian conception of election, and of reprobation (if there is any)? Does the calling of the Word of God in the preaching come to all or only to the elect?

A Summary of Jesus’ Teachings. vss. 43-50:

Bengel: “It is the evangelist who here
sums up from all the utterances of Jesus the essentials of His testimony to the Jews'. In all Jesus' words He had uttered this one call: He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on Him that sent Me. Here again we see how John points us to the very theme of His Gospel narrative, namely, that the Word has become flesh. He is the very Son of God. With the Old Testament prophets the wide gap between men and God was bridged with the Word, but between Jesus and the Sender there is no gap. He is from heaven, and he who sees Him sees the One Who sent Him. Notice how in these verses the element of faith is emphasized. In this Son of God we must believe. And what about those who do not believe? No. He does not judge, i.e., not by Himself. He will judge, now and in the day of days by His Word. And whose Word is this? The Father's. For in all things the Father gave Him commandment what He should say. And that Word is life everlasting. Believe it and we shall have life everlasting.

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LESSON XLIII.

"JESUS WASHES HIS DISCIPLES' FEET"

(John 13:1-17)

The Washing, vss. 1-11:

Be sure to read all the verses before you begin to study the lesson. The chapters 13-17 comprise the works and sayings of Jesus of the last evening of His earthly life. His attestation to the Jews, as we noted in the previous lesson, has already been ended.

It is now Thursday evening, the evening on which the Passover lamb was to be eaten. This was on the 14th of Nisan. The next day would be. what has become known throughout the world since then as Good Friday. All that is therefore recorded in the chapters 13-19 took place in the next 24 hours.

First of all there is the foot washing. Verse 1 is rather difficult to understand. The main idea is that instead of being busy with Himself Jesus is concerned only about His own, those whom He has loved from eternity. Then we can also ask why does the writer insert vss. 2 and 3. What does that have to do with the foot-washing? Very likely this is given to show us the undisturbed, clear elevation of Jesus' might of love over the impending outbreak of this devilish treachery, which could even now, immediately before its occurrence, confuse His mind. But nothing of the kind. Jesus' love for His own is strong.

According to instructions the Passover supper is ready. (Not ended as in the A. V.) The disciples appointed for the work have all things ready. Since all wore sandals it was customary that their feet be washed before they would sit down (or lie down on couches) at the table. This was ordinarily the work of the most humble slave. However, this being a private meal there is no one to perform this menial service. And none of the disciples volunteer. Why the very thought is inconceivable. Are they not the future "cabinet-members" of the Messianic king! They will soon be lords.
And so they all take their places. Ther.., to their utter amazement, Jesus takes the basin and the towel and begins to wash their dirty feet. Imagine, Jesus, the Messiah, who would soon, according to their hopes, ascend the glorious throne of Israel. And one has to know their sharp class distinctions to appreciate the significance of this action, and their amazement.

Naturally all this is symbolic. So Jesus will wash them and all His people from the pollution of sin with His blood. And the humility expressed here is not to be compared with that which He does as the Son of God, assuming a human nature subject to the results of sin and dying on the accursed tree. But out of love He does so; He is their servant, and will be of service to them.

This the disciples do not understand as yet. This we learn from Peter's refusal to let Jesus wash his feet. Peter may have thought that it would be possible for him to wash Jesus' feet, and serve Him, or even to let the feet unwashed; but Jesus wash his feet? Never, not unto eternity, he states. But then he will have no part in Jesus. And immediately the impetuous Peter becomes extreme in the other direction. Now his hands and head must be washed. But this isn't necessary since the washing of the feet is symbolic of washing the other mentioned members.

The Disciples must Wash Each Other's Feet, vss. 13-17:

Now Jesus applies this His doing to that of His disciples. They must do likewise. If they call Him Master and Lord (better, the Master and the Lord) and He washed their feet they should surely do so with one another. However, do not fail to understand Jesus here. The point to be emphasized here is that they can do so only because Jesus has first done such for them. Only when we are cleansed in His blood is it possible for us to wash each other's feet. Jesus can never be our example except He first be our Saviour.

The washing of each other's feet means that they must be of service to one another. This implies first of all that they must be clothed with humility. No wonder that Peter later speaks of this in the 5th chapter of his first epistle. It means that we must willingly use our gifts and time and talents for the benefit of each other as of the one household of faith. Literally it means that we are always ready to serve, to help others in the church. So we must be humble and ready.

But it also implies that we must be willing to be served. This Peter refused to do. His pride was too great to be served by Jesus. Yet it must be so, with Jesus, but also with one another. Never may we be too proud to be served with gifts, admonitions, prayers, comforting words, etc. of our fellow-christians.

Questions: Why can't Jesus be an example for everybody? Mention different possibilities of serving one another. Also of being served. Why does human nature refuse to do either of the two? What does Q. 55 of the Heid. Cat. teach in re this subject?
Soul and Spirit

The same questioner that submitted the question whether or not the human soul is immortal (see Beacon Lights of last May) also asks concerning the difference, if any, of soul and spirit. This brings up a question that has often been discussed throughout the history of the Church, namely, does man consist of two distinct parts, of body and soul (dichotomy), or of three, body, soul and spirit (trichotomy). Those that maintain the latter base their opinion especially upon two passages of Scripture, viz. I Thess. 5:23: “May your spirit, and soul, and body be preserved entire without blame”; and Hebrews 4:12: “The Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.” It would be impossible, within the limits of this brief essay, to enter upon a discussion of this question. Suffice it to say that our Reformed fathers were almost unanimous in their opinion that man consisted of but two distinct parts, viz., body and soul, and that soul and spirit are essentially the same.

In seeking an answer to this question “we must remember that Scripture does not give us any philosophic distinctions, but rather does the Word of God represent man as a unity, and the various terms employed to indicate that unity in its diversity of activities do not necessarily imply the existence of different essences or of separate organs through which these are realized. In Scripture spirit and soul are interchangeably used with body for human nature in general, not as though indicating three separate entities, but as denoting a parallelism which brings out the full personality of man.” (International Standard Bible Enc. c.f. Psychology). That the terms soul and spirit are used interchangeably in Scripture is evident from the following passages of Scripture. “Why is thy spirit so sad?”—“Why art thou cast down, my soul?” (I Kings 21:5, Psalm 42:11). Here sadness and dejection are ascribed either to man’s spirit or soul. In one place we read “Jesus was troubled in spirit”; while in another we read “My soul is exceeding sorrowful” (John 13:21, Matt. 26:28). Dying is represented as the surrender of soul (Gen. 35:18; Job 11:20), but also of spirit (Psalm 31:5; 146:4). The dead are called souls (Rev. 6:9; 20:4) and also spirits (Hebrews 12:23; I Pet. 3:19). The living are described as “disturbed” or “grieved” in soul (Jgs. 10:16) “vexer” (Jgs. 16:16) “discouraged” (Num. 21:4) “weary” (Zech. 11:8); but also as in “anguish of spirit” (Ex. 6:9) “impatient in spirit” (Job 21:4) “straitened in spirit” (Mic. 2:7). The two terms are also used together as parallels in such passages as...
"With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early." (Luke 1:46, 47) "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." (Phil. 1:27) "Stand fast in one spirit, with one soul (mind) striving for the faith of the gospel".

However, even though it be true that soul and spirit are essentially the same, and that these terms are used interchangeably in Scripture to denote the inner life of man, nevertheless they are not identical. Man is spirit, because, unlike the brute, he did not merely come forth out of the earth, but God breathed in man the breath of life (Gen. 2:7); because God gave him a spirit (Eccl. 12:7) Because even as the angels, he is spiritual, can mind heavenly things, and if need be can continue to exist apart from the body. But man is soul, because unlike the angels, he has a body, which links him to earth, and limits him, even in his higher life, to the material and sensual. Hence, man, in distinction from the animals, is not only related and adapted to the earthly and sensual, but also to the heavenly and spiritual; and in distinction from the angels he is an embodied spirit, standing not only in relation to the things heavenly and spiritual, but also to the things earthly and sensual. In the former sense we can speak of man as spirit, in the latter sense as soul. Not, however, in the sense of different essences, but as distinctions of the one, indivisible psychological life of man.

Schuiler Writes

Dear Schuiler:

What do you think about Insurance, such as Life and Hail Insurance, or what it might be? Is it proper for Christian people of our Denomination to insure whatever they own? It seems as though man puts his trust outside of God and in that way puts his trust more in the Insurance than in God.

Sincerely, B. V.

Here we deal with a question which arises every so often. There was a time when the question of Insurance was a very live issue among a great segment of Reformed people. Today one does not hear much about the "Insurance" question, and I believe that most of our people carry some kind of an insurance policy. Whether this is a sign of improvement or not is a different question. Of course if insurance in itself were sinful fifty years ago, it is sinful today, for God's law does not change. And that many Reformed people in the past were not at all 'insurance minded', can readily be understood. In fact that there are still a number of our people who are not 'insurance minded', I can also understand.
And personally I also belong to that group. It was just in the recent past that I took out an insurance policy for my car to protect the ‘other man’. That’s all the insurance I have and I care to have no more.

But you ask me concerning my opinion about insurance. My opinion is such that I don’t want it for myself if I can possibly do without it. But I am quite liberal with respect to my fellow christians. If they want to take out insurance my attitude is: “That’s their business and that’s up to their conscience.” I know very well that Insurance can easily be overdone, but I never heard of any one yet who could prove from the Scriptures that it is positively sin. If it is, we may not have car insurance, we may not insure our homes, our furniture, we may not even insure our mortgaged church, which usually requires insurance. And, naturally, it seems to me, we could not tolerate members in our churches who sell insurance. I don’t think we are ready to go that far. But we would have to carry matters that far if insurance were principally wrong. Besides, let us not forget that many other things can be abused and misused.

Does the foregoing mean now that I would want to advocate that we take out all kind of insurance policies? Not at all. In fact I know that some people are insurance-poor. I can also see the actual danger that people trust too much in their insurance instead of wholly trusting in God. Again, I can see that at times the world ‘helps us out’ when there would be a wonderful opportunity for the Church to practice the mercy of Christ. And all this is due to the fact that Insurance is an institution of the world and does not reckon with the Word or the Church. And much so-called ‘necessary insurance’ has also come about by the modern age in which we live.

1. If it is wrong for Christian people of our denomination to carry insurance, it is wrong for everybody, because there is but one law of God for all men.

2. Whenever we take out insurance, and in as far as we carry insurance, let us do it as before the face of God, and not put our trust in the means of ‘protection’, but solely in God.

3. If taking out insurance is for us a question of “faith” there will be no danger that we become “insurance-mad”, “mammon-minded”, or put our trust in the things that perish. But whatever is not out of faith is sin. That also covers insurance.

4. Therefore, if my brother takes out insurance ‘in faith’, I will not stumble over his action. That is a matter between him and his God. On the other hand if I “in faith” do not take out insurance, let my brother not stumble over me and call me a “fool” for not following his example. I will not judge him. Neither should he try to lord it over my conscience. I think here we deal with the principle: “He that eateth, eateth to the danger that people trust too much in the Lord, for he giveth thanks: and he that eateth not, to the world ‘helps us out’ when there would be a wonderful opportunity for the

B E A C O N  L I G H T S

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Atomic Warfare

Since the startling news that Russia has produced the atomic bomb, everyone has been suddenly aroused from a sense of security and from the feverish effort to obtain security, and our leaders feel the immediate and pressing necessity of reconsidering our entire defense. All along the line there is much thought given to the grave implications of this news. When atomic weapons were first used by the U. S. we were warned that it could be kept secret for only about five years. Now those years are past. Some are still telling us that there is no need to fear, for the fact that Russia has the bomb does not mean that she can produce these bombs in effective numbers. Nevertheless, our pacts for security may become obsolete overnight. All our diplomatic relations and our economic program may have to be seriously revised.

We live in a fast changing and developing world. None of us should ever be led to think that we have any lasting security here. Nor should we put our confidence in the atomic bombs as an insurance of our safety. We must realize that there always are and always shall be grave dangers for the truth and for the faith of the church, and yet that through all these terrors the truth shall prevail and God's Kingdom shall come.

Nevertheless we watch with concern the pattern unfolding before our eyes. Who knows what this means for the future world?

One of the most interesting and distinct thoughts about this comes, I think, from Dorothy Thompson, from which I quote:

"Russia did not need the atomic bomb to conquer China, nor does she need it to conquer Europe and Asia. She needed it to neutralize the United States.

"The defense of the United States and areas vital to our security depends upon the supremacy, not the superiority, of the American Air Force.

"That supremacy existed through a monopoly of the atomic bomb. That monopoly meant that, although the Red armies could easily over-run Europe and Asia, the key cities of Russia itself could be destroyed by the American Air Force in a matter of hours, while American cities would be safe.

"That one-way danger of Russia has been the chief military deterrent to Russian conquest.

The day American air supremacy ceases, the Russian struggle for world dominion will pass into the final stage. And American air supremacy ceases to exist the day the Russians are able
BEACON LIGHTS

to destroy American cities and their inhabitants.

"For whereas the American Air Force, armed with a monopolized weapon, has been an effective deterrent against aggression and a safe American defense, the Russians already have supremacy in other military fields: the supremacy of geographical position; of unmatched manpower and every sort of artillery able to move in all directions on land (but not across the seas) and of native will to power.

"Therefore, the day Russia overcomes American air supremacy, she achieves military supremacy. And, I repeat, Russia overcomes our only supremacy, not when she is equal or superior to us in the air, but when she overcomes vulnerability to atomic attack.

"Everyone will realize this soon and there will be great repercussions. The American people will lose confidence in their security. The European peoples will doubt our willingness to resist in Europe when our own people are menaced. Europeans and Asians will apprehend their position in an atomic crossfire.

"Peace with freedom, therefore, demands not the international prohibition and control of atomic weapons alone, but the equal prohibition and control of all weapons, not the outlawing of one form of war, but the outlawing of all aggression, under—to quote Vishinsky on the atomic bomb—"adequate, rigid, unconditional, international controls."

"The United States has about 10 historical minutes to mobilize the world for this, while she still has supremacy in the air. Otherwise the tide which we could have taken at the flood of 1947 will have passed."

"And darkness will fall."

* * * *

Most of us know very little about atomic energy aside from the fact that it shortened the war with Japan.

Perhaps the most important discovery which led up to the atomic bomb is the fact that the atom is not indivisible. For many centuries the atom was thought to be the smallest possible particle of matter. Since the largest atom is only about one-hundred-millionth of an inch in diameter, it would seem that this view of the atom was reasonable enough.

However, just before the beginning of the twentieth century, scientists discovered electrons—those infinitely smaller particles of atoms which are negatively charged. Then came the finding of a central nucleus made up of positively charged protons and neutral neutrons. Around this nucleus revolved many electrons. Just think of a tiny solar system, with the nucleus as the sun, and you'll get the idea.

The nucleus, it seems, is the controlling power of the atom. Change the nucleus, and you change the atom. In the process of changing the atom, energy is released. And there you have Atomic Energy! It's that simple. . . . (?)

A. H.
As Ahab and Jezebel, the wicked king and queen of Bible times demanded of Naboth, "Give me thy vineyard", so the United Electric Company demanded of the simple hill folk the land in the valley in the Ozarks where they made their living on the farms their grandparents had built up to fertility and passed on to the generations following. With dishonesty and fraud the Electric Company forced the sale of these farms and in many cases paid the owners much less than the land was worth. Anger and bitterness filled the hearts of the hill people and an official of the Electric Company paid with his life.

Give Me Thy Vineyard is the story of Hiram Jackson, a big and powerful mountaineer, who was forced into the life of an outlaw, living in a cave in the mountains, hiding from even his friends, keeping secret trysts with a couple chosen friends to keep in touch with the world from which he was a fugitive; it is the story of Rose Gurney, Hiram's fiancee, whose love and faithful devotion through the years of anxious waiting gave her lover the strength to keep his senses; it is also the story of Grady Rogers, the stranger who came to teach school at Stony Point, so that his invalid son might benefit from the fresh, clean air of the Ozarks, and found that his duties became that of a preacher as well as a teacher.

This book is the first prize winner in Zondervan's $10,000.00 International Fiction Contest. The story gives the reader an insight into the life of the hill billy people of the Ozarks with their strange dialect, simple standard of living, and strict observance of the code of the hills.

The Christian philosophy brought out in this story sadly lacks many of the Reformed ideals we cherish. This is especially evident in the last chapter in which Grady Rogers told the hill people that before Christ would wash away their sins they must roll away the stone of stubborn refusal from the door of their heart even as the stone was rolled away from Lazarus' tomb before Jesus called him from death to life. The Christianity of the hill people and the ministry of Grady Rogers is characterized by the shallow simplicity of our Arminian fellow Christians. Merely as a novel, the book may be considered a good book—very well written, interesting, and easily read; but as a Christian novel it does not fulfill our requirements.
Here you see the Young People's Society of the Second Protestant Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan, which at the present time consists of 19 members and our president, Rev. Blankespoor, who has proved himself to be a very able leader.

We meet every Tuesday evening from 8 to 9 o'clock and enjoy the study of the Gospel of John, following the Outlines in the Beacon Lights. We have an advantage there in having the writer of these Outlines right with us.

After Bible discussion we have recess and attend to the necessary business. For our after-recess programs we have numbers given by members of our Society, or special numbers by other members of our church. We are always delighted to listen to our Service Quartet; and violin, guitar, or accordion selections are always a treat. Once a month we have a Question Hour, and at the last meeting of each month refreshments are served.

Elsie Kuiper (Sec'y).

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BEACON LIGHTS

DONATIONS

H. Timmer ........................................ $ 3.50
J. Schaap ........................................ 1.00
Mrs. E. Blaauw .................................. 1.00
Singspiration (Fuller Ave.) .................. 55.14
South Holland Ladies' Soc. ................... 10.00
Miscellaneous ................................... 2.50
The Church and The World

In the first place we shall see where the church stands; in the second place we shall see where the world stands; and, finally, we shall see how the church more and more goes along with the world.

The true church of God is a living testimony of Christ. Living according to God's commandments; separating itself from the world and all its evil ways. In the church of this world there are members who are not children of God, but out of habit and custom still attend the church. But the true children of God go to church because it is their calling and duty towards the Almighty God. They have no need of anything else. Their pleasure is fulfilled.

The world has its own pleasures, and they care not for the church. For example: ball-games, swimming-pools, fairs, the circus, car-races, theaters, and many other things. These are all amusements of the world.

If we as Christians go along to any of these places of amusement, we are going along with the world. Oh, I know, such things as swimming and ball-games in themselves is not sin, but as a rule these are public places, and then it is sin. for we are seeking our amusements where the world has its amusements. Then we are not separating ourselves from the world, but are going along with it.

Now we will look at the fair. If it was only the showing of the animals and other things it would not be so bad. But that is not the case for they have side-shows of all kinds. When we pay to enter the Fair we are also helping to run the shows.

Nowadays there are so many car races where any minute someone can be crushed to death. True Christians do not have to fear death, but to go to those worldly places of amusement where they are so careless that they do not even care or think about what they are doing, and willingly risk their lives for such a useless thing. We would be surprised how many people who are members of the church go to such places of amusement.

If a person would only stop for a little while and see how fast the church on this earth is failing and more and more goes along with the world; in about twenty years there will be no church left to be seen for the natural eye. For in the end it will go much faster.

Oh! it makes me shudder to think that it is popular for church members to go along with the world. And the few who do not go along they are called old-fashioned and odd. I have heard that remark made more than once. I would not like to take those words upon my lips. For it is far better to be old fashioned and odd than to go along with worldly things.

So, as young people, let us remember we still have to do with the same God who in Noah's day punished sin with the flood. The Israelites in the wilderness and many others. For God sees all our sins and lets nothing go unpunished. Let us remember we must choose in this day whom we will serve, God or Mammon.
A last page, last minute reminder!

REFORMATION DAY MASS MEETING

November 1, Hudsonville Church
... Tuesday, that is!

come ... and enjoy:

- Hudsonville hospitality and Christian fellowship at its best!

- Excellent musical selections from our own talented constituency!

- A Pastor-led Bible discussion of the current Lesson Outline!

- A timely address by Rev. J. A. Heys!

- Delicious Refreshments!

GO TO HUDSONVILLE — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1.