January 1968

Four Outstanding Ministers

The Key to Success

Teaching The Sciences (2)

Student Power?
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In This Issue

EDITORIAL ................................................................. 1
Of Visions — Arie Nobel

FEATURES .............................................................. 2
Four Outstanding Ministers — Vernon Groeter
The Key to Success — Ed Lotterman

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY .................................... 5
Standing Vigilantly in the Faith — Rev. G. Lubbers

TRUTH vs. ERROR .................................................. 7
Karl Barth's Conception of the Word of God (2) — Rev. R. C. Horbach

CRITIQUE ............................................................. 9
Teaching the Sciences (2) — Agatha Lubbers

CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS .......................... 11
Student Power? — Mark Hoeksema

BOOK REVIEW ..................................................... 12
Letters To An American Lady by C. S. Lewis — Arie Nobel

NEWS FROM, FOR, AND ABOUT OUR CHURCHES ........... 13
Judy Lubbers

BIBLE OUTLINES .................................................. 14
Romans 2 (continued) — Rev. B. Woudenberg
Romans 3 — Rev. Robt. C. Horbach
Editorial

OF VISIONS

GREATHEART. But here was great odds, three against one.

"'Tis true," replied Valiant-for-truth; "but little or more are nothing to him that has the truth on his side. . . ."

Then said Great-heart to Mr. Valiant-for-truth, "Thou hast worthily behaved thyself; let me see thy sword." So he showed it to him.

When he had taken it in his hand, and looked thereon a while, he said, "Ha, it is a right Jerusalem blade."

VALIANT. It is so, let a man have one of these blades, with a hand to wield it, and skill to use it, and he may venture upon an angel with it. He need not fear its holding, if he can but tell how to lay on. Its edge will never blunt. It will cut flesh and bones, and soul and spirit, and all. Heb. 4:12.

GREATHEART. But you fought a great while: I wonder you were not weary.

VALIANT. I fought till my sword did cleave to my hand; and then they were joined together as if a sword grew out of my arm; and when the blood ran through my fingers, then I fought with most courage.

GREATHEART. Thou hast done well; thou hast resisted unto blood, striving against sin. Thou shalt abide by us, and go out with us: for we are thy companions.

Then they took him and washed his wounds, and gave him of what they had, to refresh him; and so they went away together.

—Pilgrim's Progress

It is with these words that N. B. Stonehouse introduces the book J. Gresham Machen, A Biographical Memoir. This book was written after the death of Machen, and we think that this above quote is the best tribute that can be paid to a man who labored mightily to defend the truth of God in the world.

And that these words applied to Machen we do not doubt, and remember that these are meant to be very high words of praise. Yet, when we read these words we ought not to think of those that have departed to their eternal reward only. We ought to think of the fact that life for any Reformed person is to be a battle of faith, and that the praise can come, properly, only after the battle has been waged. And then in the highest sense from the Lord Jesus Christ in the words, "Enter ye blessed into the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world." Is this our deepest desire?

But what of the present? Ah, that is a tremendous question for it is here that all men labor for their final reward. Is there a real stout battle of faith waged by us? Are we striving and resisting unto blood? Are we hated even as the Lord of Glory was? We tremble to even ask the question, for we ought not to answer this question hastily with an affirmative. Yes, there are sound reasons to hesitate before this question, because there is little evidence of such a battle of faith.

For example, the young men, instead of having a constant confrontation with this battle of faith, have another vision hanging before their eyes. The vision of the "successful man." This man has his basic schooling and is told throughout that schooling that he must pick his career as soon as possible! This is very important for then he can prepare by gleaning all the pertinent details from his courses in school and his life experiences so that he will be ready to take up that career. These are his early years! His formative years! So we have that young man at the point of entry so to speak, he is prepared. He has learned to adjust. He has been taught to conform so that whether his career is under a corporation or a private business, he is now ready to begin his battle for success. This success is equivalent to the high wage, the position, the recognition received for service.

Further, the young lady has a somewhat different approach. She must also, of course, have education. She must also be successful by choosing her way early. She must learn to paint herself rather well, she must dress becomingly so that in due time she may attract Mr. Successful. This is the common vision for the young lady for it is in this way only that she will obtain the new house, the new car, the proper social atmosphere of her choice.

Young people that is the vision of mate-
rialism, and that is the best that this philosophy of life can offer for there is a final judgement.

This is the life of those walking by sight and not by faith. (Even though the righteous may have some of those things.) And it is this life that the modern society is tempting you with, young people of the Protestant Reformed churches. And we write of this because there is no real driving spirited antithesis manifested by the majority of us. There is no resisting unto blood, there is no development of the spiritual man to the point that this vision of the world is radically rejected. Yes, it even seems that many would rather be friends with the world than with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. For these two do not have any concourse with each other but are totally separate. There is little evidence of the youthful members of the church castigating and condemning unrighteousness and sin. Not only that but the inevitable result of this is that many seem to desire a tolerant viewpoint so that the former antithetical stand of the P. R. churches can be lessened somewhat. If this happens we will have many troubles, stemming from the fact that God will not bless those who seek wicked devices.

So it is that we pray that we may have the vision of the poor man who is rich in faith, that we may stand in the truth apart from the world. Does this seem to be folly? We do not think so for even though the poor are accounted of as nothing to the eyes of the cultivated man, yet it is to this people that God chooses to give reformation historically in the church through the regeneration of the Spirit.

This really emphasizes that there are not many mighty, not many noble that are called, but the base and the foolish things hath God chosen to put to shame the wisdom of the wise. Young people, remember this and pray for grace that the devil will not find a ready entrance through your covetousness of the worldly goods. The results are terrible, just look around you, you will see this. God will not be mocked.

And we hold it before your eyes that God works in His people in conjunction with the preaching of the word of God. And this is not to be despised, but it must be pursued and that in the way of prayer and supplication. And it is in this way of sanctification that one can see the Kingdom of God and that applied righteousness of Jesus Christ. And in the way of that powerful vision he will run and strive in the power of faith against the principalities and powers which attempt to destroy the church of Christ. Yet that it is a terrible battle we daily witness for even our own flesh would sell us out in its daily search for devices.

Beyond the words of the above quote, however, we can see that the portals of heaven are open so that after the warfare is finished there is a reward for the victor, an everlasting reward. For we shall stand before the great white throne and the Lamb and hear the word, "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into thy rest." But we have a foretaste of that even now while we walk in the company of the saints. For we will experience one of the Christian’s greatest blessings, the communion and the love of the brethren. Can you see that, reader? Strive, make war then, and pray that God may give us victory throughout the year 1968 in spite of the falls and temptations.

ARIE NOBEL

FEATURES

FOUR OUTSTANDING MINISTERS

By MR. VERNON GRAESER

With the exception of John Calvin I met and spoke to each one personally and even prayed with one in a little group of five. All of these men have passed on to their reward, they are no longer pilgrims and strangers on the earth. One of the outstanding ministers was Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse pastor for 30 years or more of the Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. He was the author of over a dozen books and editor of "Eternity" magazine which is still in circulation today. His weekly ser-
mons were carried from coast to coast over a national network of radio stations. As a minister in the Presbyterian Church, he never deviated an inch from the fundamental doctrines of the bible although his denomination was completely modernistic. He always preached on the book of Romans, stressing election and reprobation. He was a spell binder, one loved to hear his sermons.

I can remember the Sunday a friend of mine first told me about his sermons. "Brother you should hear them, the real Reformed Truth." So I listened, Sunday after Sunday over the radio and he was right. One day I read in the local newspaper that he was coming to Tucson, Arizona and that he would preach in the Mountain View Presbyterian Church, one of the most beautiful and modern churches of that city. This was in July of 1953. Of course I had to hear him. The place was packed. A friend of mine and myself sat side by side listening to the introductory remarks of the speaker on the pulpit. In back of the pulpit sat the famous Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse and lesser church officials.

Dr. Barnhouse was a handsome man even at the age of around 55 or 60. He was of rather stocky build, medium height, had a square firm dimpled chin, curly hair, displayed an infectious smile offset by deep seated twinkling eyes set far apart in a broad forehead. He impressed one as being kind and loving without being mushy and sentimental. He also impressed me as being a deep thinker. Dr. Barnhouse would be immediately noticed in a crowd as one of an outstanding personality. Dr. Barnhouse was at that time very nervous and to my surprise and astonishment constantly chewed on a white handkerchief held in his right hand while the introductory remarks were being made. When the time came for him to speak, he put away the handkerchief and held his audience spellbound while he preached. After the sermon a little crowd gathered about him of which I was one. I finally got to say a few words to him. "Tell me, I said, where? oh where? in this city can I find a church that teaches, preaches and believes as you do?" He answered, "Well you go to the Church of the Brethren." And then he named the location. Later on I went — it was one of the greatest disappointments in my life.

Another outstanding minister was the late Rev. Peter Eldersveld. It is estimated his weekly sermons were heard by 3,000,000 persons in 75 countries. Most of my readers have probably met or at least seen pictures of Rev. Peter Eldersveld and a description of him is unnecessary. He was born in Kalamazoo, Michigan and I was surprised to learn he was a star basketball player in his youth. He also toured the country. He preached in Christian Reformed Churches of the different cities throughout the U.S. He came to the small recently organized Bethel Christian Reformed Church of Tucson Arizona. This was in May of 1955. We had about 20 families in our church. We had 2 deacons and 2 elders. His sermon for that morning was "Nothing, but Faith." Before the service we had gathered for a short prayer as is done in our Protestant Reformed Churches before the minister goes to the pulpit and the elders and deacons take their seats. We were about to pray for God's blessing on Rev. Eldersveld that he might speak a word of comfort and edification to God's people and that God would use the pastor to bring His word to His people. Someone asked Rev. Eldersveld what he thought about the decline of true religion in the U.S. I'll never forget his answer "True religion is on the downgrade and even in our own churches I doubt very much if the trend can be reversed." He looked wistfully out the window staring at the beautiful Catalina Mountains in the distance. He had a calmness about him you could almost feel.

A third outstanding minister was Rev. Herman Hocksena our departed brother. If you were not a resident of Grand Rapids or a member of either a Protestant Reformed or a Christian Reformed Church you hardly knew the man existed at least that was my experience. No doubt he was well-known in Reformed Circles, but nationally the ordinary church member never heard of him. But what a man! He was an organizer, an intellectual giant, and a great preacher. Combine this with an iron will and leadership qualities thru which he was able to influence the church which he organized to unwavering doctrinal purity and strict Christian discipline and you come up with a preacher that appears maybe once every two or three hundred years. Just about the time our churches were at their lowest ebb, one Sunday night after a church service

BEACON LIGHTS Three
about five or six Protestant Reformed people were conversing with Rev. Herman Hoeksema outside of First Protestant Reformed Church. He puffed on his cigar as we talked back and forth. This was three years before his death, he was an old man but his eyes still flashed fire. Someone else joined our group. As Rev. Herman Hoeksema turned to him this party said—"Rev. so and so has just left our denomination, Dominee." Without batting an eye, Rev. Herman Hoeksema replied—"Good riddance, we’re better off without him, he never was much anyway." That was Reverend Herman Hoeksema, the truth was the truth and right was right and he would maintain both and trust God, even if every minister in the denomination left.

Then of course there was also John Calvin, I know him thru books I have read on his life. Here is a statement he made after refusing to serve the Lord’s Supper to one under censure, although ordered to do so by the city council of Geneva. “I must lay before you that I do not know whether this is the last sermon I must preach at Geneva; not that I am taking leave on my own account; but if I am forced to do what is not right before God, it is impossible for me to proceed further, as far as I am concerned.” Ceaselessly from the lofty pulpit he repeated and thru his writings declared, that the will of God as it is revealed in the Holy scriptures must be obeyed, down to its very details. He would not permit this will to be disregarded or this rule of doctrine and life to be misunderstood.

I do not believe Rev. Peter Eldersveld or Dr. Donald Gray Barnhouse were either hated or loved with a burning intensity. No doubt some disliked them and no doubt many loved them.

But with Calvin and Hoeksema, they were either loved intensely or hated vehemently. After contact with these men over the years one did not remain lukewarm or walk the middle road. He took a strong stand either for or against.

You see the real test is not so much in what you say or how affluent your speech may be, but the real test lies in adherence to the truth and in the enforcement of Christian discipline both in word and deed. History bears this out. Years after Calvin’s death his influence continued to spread and Geneva’s fame for its Christian virtues was celebrated all over the world.

Rev. Herman Hoeksema has gone to his reward but his forty years of work and leadership will continue to live on in our churches and with continued adherence to God’s truth and a refusal to sacrifice righteousness for expediency we may look for further blessings and spiritual prosperity. I fear greatly if our choice should be otherwise.

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THE KEY TO SUCCESS

By ED LOTTERMAN

Mr. Ed Lotterman is presently one of the young men preparing for the ministry by studying at Calvin College. We give his picture to the readers to enhance his article, which we think is certainly instructive for our young people.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Do you recall the resolutions which you made when the school year began? You were going to study hard every night. You were going to listen closely to your instructors. You were going to do all the assignments. You were going to take neat and accurate notes. You were going to work hard and make the school year a success. Do you remember those resolutions?

Think about them again. You were going
to work hard and make the year a success?

What was your first definition of "success"? What was your second? Was a third definition necessary?

Let me explain.

You are nearing the midpoint of the school year and I want you to think about the first half of it.

Just before school started last fall, you made the annual resolution to "make this a successful year." Is it going to be a success?

You realized that the term "success" was a broad term, so you defined it to be "an 'A' in every course." It soon became evident that the year would not be a success; however, you remembered the resolution which you had made. Your solution to the problem was not to work a little harder, but rather to change the definition of "success." Your new definition was: "a 'B' in every course."

But, the question is, "why did the first definition fail?" Could the reason be that the definition was not realistic? Maybe. Could it be that you were prematurely enthusiastic? Maybe. Could it be that when the time came for you to begin working, you postponed it? Probably.

Was it because of procrastination that your definition of the term "success" had to be changed? Did you spend more time in the coffee shop than you should have? Could you have used your time more effectively?

Oh, but it was so easy to change the definition of that broad term! After all, a "B" is a fairly good grade too, and besides, you could not study all the time.

Convincing excuses were rapidly formed. They were useful then, and they would be useful later too, if a third definition of "success" would be needed.

If all this is true of you, I urge you to change your definition of that broad term just one more time. Make your definition be: "Success is the best I can possibly do by the grace of God."

With that definition, Young People, you can readily understand that procrastination is a friend of the flesh and of the devil, but that it is an enemy of the soul.

Pray that the Lord will give you the strength and the desire to do your best.

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FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

STANDING VIGILANTLY IN THE FAITH

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all things be done with charity."

1 Corinthians 16:13, 14

When Israel stands on the over side of Jordan, ready to enter into the land of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua, the LORD Himself comes to Joshua with his promise and command. The promise was that the Lord is with Joshua whithersoever he would go. In view of this great and precious promise Joshua was to be strong and of good courage; he must not be afraid, nor must he be dismayed what'ere betide.

Israel must quit themselves like men! They must be strong.

Such is also the injunction of Paul to the Corinthian church in the New Testament.
dispensation. And looking into the new year of 1968, such is the word of exhortation to us, to the entire church of God in the world. In a very short, pithy and concise phrase the apostle sets forth this exhortation. And this admonition is also for you, my youthful reader.

The first matter which we must do is be watchful, be vigilant. We must be spiritually sober and not fall asleep at the post. It is in view of the great and mighty deeds of God that we must remain vigilant, and have the loins of our mind girt up. (1 Pet. 1:13) We must ever be ready for action. No, we are not to be mere re-actionaries. Ours is a positive calling to live in the world, confessing the name of Jesus over against every wind of doctrine and error. Hence, we are to be watchful unto prayer, lest we fall into temptation. In the year that lies before us we shall never be watchful unless it brings us unto prayer. He that does not pray and live a prayerful life has fallen asleep. He is not watchful for the help of heaven; he does not lift his eyes unto the hills from whence cometh his help.

Closely connected with this watchfulness unto prayer is that we are "strong." Then the LORD is our fortress, and His strength is magnified in our weakness. This is the strength of Jacob after he had wrestled with the angel at Peniel. There God made him a cripple that he might learn to walk as a man, a man of God! There we see the rule: peace be to everyone who walketh after this rule, and upon the Israel of God. (Gal. 6:16) It is the strength which is ours because we lean upon the everlasting arms which are underneath. Thus doing we humble ourselves under the mighty arm of God, which has brought salvation to his people and destruction upon the Egyptians and all the enemies of Israel. Only by submitting to the "mighty arm" of God are we strong. (Is. 52:10; 53:1; 63:5; 1 Pet. 5:6) It is then that we cast all our care upon Him, knowing that He makes it his business to care for us. We may not then receive the things we might desire, but we will surely receive the things which we need.

Thirdly, we must "quit ourselves like men." Ours must be manly strength, sobriety rooted in the wisdom of the fear of the Lord. We must be courageous, and be of good cheer. We must not flinch in the battle, nor flag in the fray. God does not want us to be spiritless warriors of His. It must not be so that it is as in the days of Deborah, when there were no men. We must be like the little band of Gideon, the three hundred strong. Such men must our young people become! That must be the end of our study of the Scriptures in our Society meetings, the Catechism class, and also in the official ministry of the Word on the Sabbath. Thus we must be in our place in the shop, the office, the school and the home.

Fourthly, we thus stand fast in the faith. The "faith" here referred to must be the truth of the Gospel, all that is promised us in the Gospel. It is the faith once delivered to the saints. (Jude 3) This is the faith for which we must earnestly contend. But to do this we must quit ourselves like men. Positively, we must confess the truth. However, we must also reject all heresy and erroneous teaching repugnant to the truth. Therefore we must know the truth, love the truth in Jesus. This we do by the grace of God. We will then stand unmoved from the hope of the Gospel. Many winds of doctrine and of error will then seek to uproot us, and to move us from our position in grace. But we must stand unmoved. Party strife must be banished from the church. It is not a question of Paul, Apollos, Cephas or even Christ. It is then a matter of Christ in us, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Herein shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love for one another. (John 13:35) From this place in the Gospel we must not be moved. No matter what happens, what man may do to us, we must ever stand firm in the position that we are to walk in love. Then we are unmoved from the faith from a good motive of sincere purpose.

All things must be done in love!

Love is the more excellent way. It is the way which is straight and narrow which leads to life. Then we shall be like the man who hears the words of the Lord and doeth them. All things must be done in love or there will be no spiritual watchfulness, no strength to endure to the end, no quitting ourselves like men.

Dear covenant young people, quit yourselves like men, be strong.

May it be said of you: I write you young men, because ye are strong and have overcome the Evil one!
KARL BARTH’S CONCEPTION OF THE WORD OF GOD (2)

From what we have said so far on the subject, it would seem beyond doubt that Barth is with us, the Reformed. For to us it is plainly an “either-or” matter, i.e., either we must be Modernists and humanists, or true Christian believers. And whereas Barth seems to oppose “theology” to “dogmatics,” as we noted above, he, however, continues to say extremely interesting things which, taken in themselves, we, as Reformed can also say.

We may wonder at the following statement: “And let us not forget that theology in fact, so surely as it avails itself of human speech, is also a philosophy or conglomeration of all sorts of philosophy” (188). On the other hand we may be inclined to agree where he says, “quite untheological thought . . . can . . . really only materialize in the form of secretly quitting the church for a passing, or . . . permanent period. (This) is freedom to babble heresy . . . There is no room in the Church for this freedom” (86). There are many other remarkable statements which Barth makes, that, whatever he means by them in his heart of hearts, we, as Reformed can, nevertheless, take and use.

Evidence of this we have in his reference to the language the church speaks about God. He declares such a word has “a proper content” only “if connected with a Word of God spoken previously to the church.” The criterion for such proper content – a criterion “of the rightness of such speaking” by the church – is the “Word of God Himself.” Therein lies the only “criterion of dogmatics” (46). If this criterion were followed, there would be no room, either, in the church for Modernism’s “social gospel.” For as Barth so well puts it, “social work” is not proclamation of the Word of God, but propaganda, “and not very good propaganda at that” (55).

Again with respect to modern Fundamentalism there is another lesson concerning the purpose of the religious instruction of the youth of the church. He lays it down that that purpose is to teach, not to convert; not to “bring to a decision,” nor even to preach (55). He insists that all we hear of God’s Word in prayer, in good works, in catechetical instruction and in “the theology of the church” is not therefore a commission to us to preach and proclaim this. To illustrate what he means here, to illustrate the idea that God speaking in nature and in events is not to be the content of preaching, he says: “God may speak to us thru Russian communism or a flute concerto, a blossoming shrub or a dead dog. We shall do well to listen to Him if He really does so . . . God may speak to us thru a pagan or an atheist . . . But that is not equivalent to saying . . . that we should . . . proclaim the pagan and atheist thing we heard” (60, 61).

The latter remark, especially, can easily be the basis for an indictment against Modernism’s “preaching” (61), its “natural” theology and “current events” lectures.

The Reformed make the distinction between the essential, ontological Word of God
and the infallible record of that Word as we have it in the Scriptures. Does Barth have this distinction in mind? It certainly seems so. For he speaks of what a man called to the office of preaching "may claim to utter as God's Word in the exercise of proclamation, cannot be the actual Word of God as such, but only the repetition of His promise, . . . 'Lo, I am with you alway!' " (64). This is clearer in the words, "The old Lutheran theology . . . made a very sensible distinction between the theologien archetypus which God has and in fact is Himself, and theologien ektypus, as with the exception of Christ according to His humanity and the angels it may belong to men as well" (306).

Now, notice what Barth says of the Romish and the Modernistic conceptions of the preaching of the Gospel. "Roman Catholic preaching seems largely to rest satisfied with the level of higher instruction in religion and morals." Romanism then embodies Modernism. Romish exegesis is "predominantly an imposition instead of an exposition," and has deteriorated "into a dialogue of the church with herself" (119). Since this is also true of Modernism, it is indicative of the fact that the Romish church is shot thru with Modernism.

Enlarging upon Modernist preaching, he reveals its impotence and ineffectiveness, that it "does not claim to be more than as genuine and lively . . . expression as possible of the personal piety of the speaker in question" (66)! From this critique of Barth, the "anti-intellectualism of modern theology" (231) is evident. For "Modernist thought knows nothing, finally, about the fact that man . . . has constantly to be letting something be said to him . . . and which in no circumstances and in no sense he can say to himself. Modernist thought hears man answer without any one having called him. It hears him talk to himself" (68). As we saw, it is no different with Romanism, for "in the unwritten tradition the (Romish) church is not (divinely) addressed, but is engaged in a dialogue with herself" (118). But a criticism of Modernism could hardly be more cutting! Yet we are not convinced that this ipso facto places Barth with us in the camp of doctrinal orthodoxy.

But he goes on to depict Modernism's depreciation of true preaching in his illustration of a Modernist church having therein a water fountain, symbolizing God's creative life-stream; with colored windows symbolizing "light from the uncreated Light"; the organ raised to the dignity of a "second pulpit" - all which proclaims to us, in holy accents, the inexpressibility of the Gospel. In fact, so it is said, "even Jesus would have been increasingly dissatisfied with (mere) speaking, had He been tied down to public work and public speaking for decades instead of for one year." (quoting H. Bär, p. 70).

But to give us a right conception of true preaching, Barth quotes Luther thus: "The Christian community should never come together, except there God's Word be preached and prayer made . . . therefore where God's Word is not preached, 'tis better people should neither sing nor read, nor come together . . . 'tis better to leave out all, save the Word. And there is naught better to pursue than the Word. For the whole Scripture showeth that that same should be compulsory among Christians, and Christ also saith Himself (Luke 10:42), 'One thing is needful.' For that Mary should sit at Christ's feet and hear His Word daily is the best part to choose, and is never taken away. It is an eternal saying that all else must pass away, however much there is for Martha to do" (78). Cf. pp. 114-15.

Luther is again permitted to speak on the subject: "Where the preaching chair lies and snores, that it wakes not up nor expounds the Word, one may well read and sing . . . but without any understanding." If only Barth himself could be as sound and scriptural throughout! For over an extent of one hundred pages and more he can be very vague, dull and incomprehensible in his dissertation on "church proclamation," then suddenly come out with an ostensibly clear statement to the effect that "real preaching means . . . the Word of God preached . . . " (106). The this remark is neither profound nor striking, it is, by itself, nevertheless true. But we are constrained to ask, What does Barth mean by it? For in a context of 130 pages he says nothing distinctively or traditionally Reformed.

There are further remarks anent preaching by the church (122) which Barth says is, by the authority of the Scripture, placed under the necessity of becoming a real apostolical succession. By this "succession" he means an "obedient following of the word of the prophets and apostles." So we
ourselves would say that the only “apostolical succession” worthy of our standing is the doctrine of the apostles; and that thus the Bible becomes important to the Church as a Book which is superior and free beyond all exegesis of the Book. The Bible as the Word of God, therefore, tho it is proclaimed thru the limited word of man is nevertheless not limited, or rendered less authoritative. . . . the Word of God, i.e., in this word, the human word of prophets and apostles represents the Word of God Himself . . . the latter is . . . man’s word with God’s commission . . . behind it . . . man’s word which is acknowledged and accepted by God as good, man’s word in which God’s own language to us is an event. . . . That is what we mean when we call the Bible the Word of God” (123). We might add, not only “God’s own language to us is an event,” but it comes to us in an event. Think of the victories of redemption!

This has a rather nice sound—rather like a Fundamentalist testimony to the primacy and supremacy of Holy Writ. There is nothing particularly strong and definitive in the Reformed sense. But the following sounds like modern Liberalism: “The Bible is God’s Word so far as God lets it be His Word, so far as God speaks thru it.” As tho, Modernist-wise, there is an area in the Bible in which God does not speak thru it: or, that the Bible from the same given area does not have the same Word of God to speak always. What can the author mean when he says in another place, “the Bible . . . must from time to time become God’s Word” (131)? We do not say that the Bible contains the infallible record of the Word of God, nor that it becomes such; but that it is such! So—as we move thru this book, the paradox-of-Barth increasingly mystifies us!

CRITIQUE

AGATHA LUBBERS

TEACHING THE SCIENCES (2)

re EVOLUTION

In our last article for the Beacon Lights we were making a few general and introductory remarks about the teaching of science. In that article it was emphasized that those who are of the household of faith possess a basic prejudice. I indicated, however, that those who are of the household of faith are not distinctive and exceptional in this respect. It is also true that those who do not believe in God the Father as the Creator of the heavens and the earth possess a basic prejudice. Theirs is the prejudice of unbelief. Theirs is the prejudice of infidelity and hatred toward God. They “believe” of course; but they do not believe in God as the Creator of heaven and earth. They believe the anti-Christian lie of the Devil as it comes to manifestation in many ways but especially in evolutionary theory in the field of science; particularly in the biological sciences.

In this article we hope to write at some length about the theory of evolution as it was propounded and developed through the years.

BEACON LIGHTS Nine
Evolution Defined

The theory of evolution, which is accepted by a preponderance of men and women of science, is defined in Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary, New International Dictionary, Second Edition, as follows:

“... the process by which, through a series of changes or steps, any living organism, or groups of organisms, has acquired the morphological and physiological characters which distinguish it; hence, the theory that the various types of animals and plants have their origin in pre-existing types, the distinguishable differences being due to modifications in successive generations.”

An abridged edition of the Oxford Dictionary defines evolution as it was used in the 1830’s as follows:

“Origin of species conceived as a process of development from earlier forms and not as due to special creation.”

The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, Unabridged edition, 1966, defines evolution as understood by biologists as follows:

“... the continuous genetic adaptation of organisms or species to the environment by the integrating agencies of selection, hybridization, inbreeding, and mutation.”

Evolutionism basically holds to the origin of life forms in the ocean. Evolutionism holds to a gradual change and a continuous but gradual movement toward complexity and diversification. It is a development toward more organization. Evolutionism is what the term implies, a philosophic commitment to a basic kind of life history. More will be said of this later and an attempt will be made to show that evolutionism is not science but is scientism.

Evolutionism is defined in the Dictionary of Philosophy by Dagobert D. Runes as:

“... the view that the universe and life in all of its manifestations and nature in all of their aspects are the product of development. ... this doctrine finds variety of species to be the result of change and modification and growth and adaptation rather than from some form of special creation of each of the myriad of organic types and even of much of the inorganic realm.”

The Origin of the Theory of Evolution

In our last article we also briefly discussed the origin of the theory of evolution but in this article I intend to help you become aware of the development of this theory.

Contrary to much popular opinion the theory of evolution did not begin with Charles Darwin. The publication of the book The Origin of Species certainly popularized the theory but the origin of this theory must be sought much further back in history.

Sinful, fallen man will always ask concerning his origin. He will ask and seek an answer to the question. “Where did I come from?” Even more he will seek an answer to the question, “Where did all things come from?” Apart from the Word of God he will arrive at some answers to his questions but they will be man-glorifying and God-debasing. Man has a propensity to serve the creature and not the Creator. The source of the origin of all things and man at the apex of the entire creation is not to be found through existential perception nor through vain speculation. More of this later.

When modern man thinks of evolution he thinks of it in terms of men such as Darwin, Bergson, or John Dewey. These were some of the modern, outspoken proponents of the theory upon whom men of this century continue to lean heavily in their theorizing. But we must look further back than the nineteenth century to find answers to the question concerning the origin of the theory of evolution.

If one were to go back as far as possible one could trace this theory to the very father and source of all lies, Satan. He is the father of the lie. And this is one of the devil’s lies whereby he deludes the thinking of men and if possible the thinking of the very elect. You see I believe this whole theory is very dangerous. A proper understanding of it is essential to our young people for their very life’s sake in the midst of this world.

We first read about this theory in the books of the early Greeks and of the early Indians. These men were speculating concerning the origin of all things. The truth had not been preserved in their generations. Anaximander in the 6th century B.C., Enophanes in the 6th-5th century B.C., Thales in the 6th century B.C., and Empedocles in the 5th century B.C. were Greeks who all suggested that life developed from simpler forms into more complex forms. Thales suggested that life had a marine origin. Lucretius, a noted Roman poet, who lived about 98-55 B.C., speaks of strange
monsters which nature did not permit to survive. These statements were later construed to mean that earlier writers serve to bolster the more "scientific" pronouncements and arguments of the proponents of the theory of evolution in the nineteenth century. Aristotle who lived in Greece in 384-322 B.C. and was one of the teachers and servants of Alexander the Great said that "nature proceeds little by little from things lifeless to animal life." This seems to suggest that he had ideas of a gradual change. He also wrote: "... there is observed in plants a continuous scale of ascent toward the animals." "... throughout the entire animal scale there is a graduated differentiation in amount of vitality and in capacity for motion." (I will have explanatory comments on all of this in a later article.)

After these writings by the Greeks and the early Romans a long period of calm persisted in which very little was written or suggested which could be classified as disturbing or tending to propose the dangerous theories of the past. The Greeks, who believed basically in the eternity of matter, were little heard of during the period known as the Dark Ages nor were they popular amongst the Reformers. During the 18th and 19th centuries, however, the period that is generally classified as the Enlightenment, European thinkers and scientists began to speculate in this area. Religion was beginning to break down once again after the period of the Reformation and the results of the Renaissance were beginning to break forth in their full potential. Men began once again to speculate boldly and dangerously concerning the origin of life on earth.

Comte de Buffon (1707-1788), a French naturalist, proposed extensive evolutionary ideas in forty-four volumes of a work on natural history. James Hutton (1726-1797) was an English geologist who developed the idea of uniformitarianism. This concept is basic to evolutionary theory and is a basis for all modern evolutionary geology. Uniformitarianism holds that all past geological changes were the same as those seen taking place in the present. The Apostle Peter writing the Word of God said there would be those in the last days who would say that all things continue as they were from the beginning. (Cf. II Peter 3.) Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802) was the grandfather of Charles Darwin. He was an English naturalist and poet and was said to have influenced Charles Darwin with many evolutionary ideas. Jean de Lamarck (1744-1829) was a French naturalist and was a pioneer in comparative anatomy. He proposed a theory that changes in the life of an individual such as the loss of a limb by some accident are hereditary. A. G. Werner (1749-1817) was a German who came forward with what is known as the "onion coat" theory. He believed that rocks are arranged in definite strata or layers in a definite order. William Smith (1769-1839) was an English geologist who theorized that fossils occur in definite strata or layers of a definite order. You notice that he substituted fossils for minerals. His theory is therefore similar to that of Werner. Baron Cuvier (1769-1832) was a French naturalist and was a pioneer in the fields of paleontology and comparative anatomy. He believed that different kinds of organisms were successively created and destroyed. This is not evolution as we understand it today. He believed that the destroyed organisms were replaced by migrations from other regions. Sir Charles Lyell (1797-1875) lived contemporaneous with Charles Darwin. He was a few years older than Darwin and was friend of the same. He was the English geologist who provided with his theories a framework and a foundation for the theorizing and thinking of Charles Darwin. He was a uniformitarian and is the father of all modern historical geology with an evolutionary bias. He rejected completely any idea that God created the earth.

(To be continued)

**CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS**

**STUDENT POWER?**

On December 15 at 10 a.m. in front of the Commons Building at the Franklin campus of Calvin College, some 150 students attended a protest demonstration, which the undersigned was fortunate (or unfortunate) enough to observe. The issue was
Along a similar degenerative line, the book *Miss Lonelyhearts*, by Nathanael West, was given a favorable review in the December 1, 1967 issue of *Chimes*, Calvin's student paper. In the story, *Miss Lonelyhearts* (a male) is searching for an answer to his problems. Another character advises him, "God alone is our escape. The church is our only hope, the First Church of Christ Dentist, where He is worshipped as Preventer of Tooth Decay. The . . . Trinity new style: Father, Son, and Wire-haired Fox Terrier."

In trying to solve his problems, *Miss Lonelyhearts* plunges deeper into wickedness and debauchery, until after one violent incident he "is united with God in a triumphant religious experience," as the author of the review puts it.

The comments on the book run along this vein: "*Miss Lonelyhearts*, West's book and heart, is a complicated bomb that results in a simple explosion, wrecking the world without rocking it. But no matter what else the 'rocked' world is, it is hilarious. If one can accept Christ it is hilarious and meaningful, but without Christ it is merely hilarious and pathetic."

Is a world with Christ meaningful? No, because the world cannot have Christ. Is it hilarious? Very funny indeed. Is it pathetic without Christ? Could be, if wickedness is equated with pathos. Does this sound like a Christian review of a Christian book?

This book is recommended reading for Calvin students. "It is the first of a series of novels that will be simultaneously reviewed in *Chimes* and sold in the Franklin bookstore." What can be said about such a degenerating situation? Words fail me. But that makes no difference. Get your recommended Calvinist reading today! It's in the Franklin campus bookstore of Calvin College, that Christian liberal arts college in Grand Rapids, Michigan. And it costs only fifty cents.

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**BOOK REVIEW**

*Letters To An American Lady*

*by C. S. Lewis; edited by Clyde S. Kilby. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan. $3.95*

This is an interesting book composed of

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*Twelve*
letters written to the “American Lady” beginning on the 26th of Oct. 1950 until the 30th of August 1963, just before he died. Being letters they are interesting, wide-ranging and sometimes witty.

The lady being addressed is not identified, but we are told she was “a widow four years older than Lewis, she was described by one friend as ‘a very charming, gracious, southern aristocratic lady who loves to talk and speaks well.’ Once financially independent, she had fallen upon privation and, what was worse, serious family problems. In due course Lewis arranged through his American publishers a small stipend for her, and this continues to the present. About the time the correspondence began she turned from the Episcopal Church to the Roman Catholic. Twice she has been so near death that the last rites of the church were administered. . . . She is a writer of reviews, articles, poems and stories” (pp. 8 and 9).

Lewis himself was physically a sick man and, therefore, throughout the letters we find reference to both his diseases and the diseases of the American lady. Yet there are pungent remarks from his pen which will delight the reader such as the idea of prayer, p. 21. Or this, from p. 22, “Sleep is a jade who scorrs her suitors but woos her scorners,” and on p. 45, “The only reason I’m not sick of all the stuff about . . . . . . . is that I don’t read it. I never read the papers. Why does anyone? They’re nearly all lies, and one has to wade thru’ such reams of verbiage and ‘write up to find out even what they’re saying.’” Or this one, p. 34, “As for McCarthy I never met anyone, American or English, who did not speak of him with horror. A very intelligent American pupil said ‘He is our potential Hitler!’”

But these quotes are not indicative of the purpose of the letters which was to encourage this American lady spiritually, which if one reads it, he will see that this is certainly attained.

The nature of the book is such maybe that the older the reader the more he will get out of the book. Because of the constant sickness and pain which is discussed it can be hard reading unless it is taken in small portions. In spite of all this I recommend this book highly, for it does reveal a life of the mortification of the old man which if young people are wise they will observe this even when they are young.

ARIE NOBEL

NEWS

from, for, and about our churches

by JUDY LUBBERS

while the Hope Choral Society presented theirs on December 31.

Membership

On November 26 Miss Lenette Kamps from Loveland made confession of faith.

On December 10 Richard Honholt, Willard Haveman, Gary Holstege, Judith Holstege, and Donna Kuijer from Hudsonville made public confession of faith. Hudsonville also received Richard Honholt as a baptized member from the Hope Reformed Church of Grand Rapids.

Marriages

On December 7 Miss Lenore Engelsma (Hope) and Mr. Donald Cook.
Servicemen

After being home on Christmas leave, Dave Molker returned to basic training camp. His address is:

Pvt. David Molker
ER 17773106
Co. D 1st Bn.
1st BCT Bde
USATC Infantry
Fort Polk, Louisiana 71459

The new address of Neal Buiter from Oak Lawn is:
Pfc. Cornelius Buiter
U. S. 548-14-392
4th M. I. Detachment
Data Link
APO San Francisco, California 96262

HELPS FOR BIBLE STUDY ON Paul's Epistle to the ROMANS

ROMANS 2

by REV. B. WOUDENBERG

Romans 2:25-29

THE TRUE CHILD OF GOD

In conclusion, Paul now points our attention to the one that is excused before the law of God and acceptable in His judgment.

At this point circumcision is introduced as representative of the belonging to the law. It was the boast of the Old Testament Jew. His participation in this sacrament of the Old Testament was his proof that he belonged to that nation which was favored by God. Here was the seal of his superiority.

Paul, however, reminds all such that the chief concern of God is not with external signs but with that which takes place in the secret recesses of the heart (see Psalm 40:6-8; 51:16, 17). This was the same element which Jesus always stressed so strongly in His preaching (Matthew 6:1-18). The fact is that if one keep the outward form of the law while neglecting the inner, spiritual responsibilities, the very hypocrisy of his claims only increases his guilt, and his circumcision is become uncircumcision. Meanwhile if those who do not know the outward form nevertheless observe its inward principles, their uncircumcision is counted for circumcision in the presence of God.

Those who are the true children of God, therefore, the true Jews in the sight of God are those who have the principles of the law written within their hearts. It is the nature of this inward, spiritual purity that Paul will continue to develop as he goes on in this epistle.

ROMANS 3

by REV. ROBT. C. HARBACH

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ESTABLISHED

This Epistle begins with:

I. Introduction (1:1-15)
II. Theme (1:16, 17)
III. Judgment: The Whole World Condemned (1:18–3:20)
   A. The Gentiles Under the Wrath of God (1:18-32)
B. The Gentiles’ Judgment (2:1-16)
C. The Jews’ Judgment (2:17–3:8)
D. The World’s Judgment (3:9-20)

This chapter’s outline:

1. The Argument for Justification (1-20)
2. The Heart of Justification (21-26)
3. The Experience of Justification (27-31)

I. The Argument for Justification (1-20)

A. The Jews’ Objections to the Doctrine Anticipated and Answered (1-9)

1. Q. What special privilege, then, has the Jew, if he as well as guilty Gentiles must be judged? (1, 2)
   A. The Jews had the revelation of God made through them! That was to their credit. Now it is to their charge.

2. Q. What about the Jews’ unbelief? Won’t God in justice have to punish them for that sin? Then what about God’s faithfulness to His promise to be God of the Jews? (3, 4)
   A. God is unchangeably faithful. He will maintain His justice, but also His covenant.

3. Q. Would not God jeopardize His justice by punishing the Jews for their sins, since it commends His justice? (5, 6)
   A. Any recognition of justice which denies God the right to judge is itself injustice. Besides, this implies the reprehensible principle that it is right to do wrong that good may come!

4. Q. Since God uses man’s sin to promote His glory, would it not be unrighteous to punish that sin with wrath? (7, 8)
   A. This is Antinomian and Libertine philosophy advocating “Let us continue in sin that glory may abound,” which makes it impossible for God to judge at all, and makes Him responsible for sin.

5. Q. What about the Jews’ position in history? (9)
   A. What about the Jews’ practice? It is no better than that of the Gentiles!

B. The Natural Man Examined and Judged (10-20)

1. Three-fold examination
   a. God as Judge finds his character (10-12)
   b. God as Physician Examines his speech (13-14)
      (1) The Physician looks down man’s throat (13). It is full of foul, noisome putridity! (2) He examines the tongue. It habitually wags, even burns, in deception. (3) The lips from birth conceal fatal fangs fed by latent poison sacs. (4) Man’s mouth is an open, rotting grave! the striking mouth of a rattlesnake! a hornets’ nest! a sulphur pit!
   c. God as Historian records his walk (15-18)
      (1) His feet leave a train of gory footprints from Cain to the end of time. (2) His path is destruction, labors in the very fire to destruction, and continually causes destruction. History’s civilizations are built successively upon the ruins of conquered and desolated civilizations. (3) His ferocity:
(17), evident in world-wars, feuds, race-riots, murders, revolutions, and crime increase among nations. (4) He lacks the beginning of wisdom: "no fear of God." This explains all the other aspects of his depravity, and reveals the source and cause of it!

2. Final sentence and judgment
   a. Guilty (19): including Jews of the old dispensation ("under the law"), in fact, all mankind! The Gentiles are sinners, but the Jews are worse, transgressors! The Cross condemns all the world and shuts every mouth before the tribunal of God.
   b. Condemned (20): "no flesh justified."

II. The Heart of Justification (21-26)
   A. The Establishment of Justification
      1. by the testimony of the O.T. Scripture (21)
         We now reach the core of the Epistle, the heart of the Gospel according to Paul. "But now!" So far we have seen man in his guilt, "but now" God in His grace. We have entered into the court of the tabernacle where we behold the fine linen curtains signifying God's righteousness. That righteousness would shut out the sinner, but for the brazen altar before the entrance, where we are now. Here we see the believer entering, laying his hand on the sacrifice, to go on to the very holiest (Romans 8), thence to offer himself a living sacrifice (12:1).
      2. by the means of faith (22)
         and therefore "without the law," and without anything of man's accomplishment. It is, then, a by-faith righteousness, this "righteousness of God." It is the sum-total of all that God is, demands, approves, declares of the elect, and gives to them.
      3. in the indispensable necessity for righteousness (23)
         See ASV. Every individual is in desperate need of righteousness in order to salvation; "for all sinned," a historical reality in Adam; and, the natural consequence, "are falling short of the glory of God!"
   B. The Ground of Justification
      1. Grace only (24). Man, as far as his side is concerned, is justified "freely," i.e., "without a cause," — the cause is not in him, but in God alone — through His grace. "Justified Doreau" (a word which would make a beautiful proper name!).
      2. Christ's propitiation (25). The ground, above, further explained to be the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ offered to God to make satisfaction to His offended justice. Now we are in the Holy of holies, before the mercy-seat, called the propitiatory, the lid of the ark of the covenant, where the blood was applied covering the law of God. Thus mercy and justice kiss each other over the mountain of all our sins. The result: the remission of sins!
      3. God's righteousness (26), which the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ makes manifest. On account of that sacrifice, God forgives the sins of His people.

III. The Experience of Justification (27-31)
   A. How Enjoyed
      1. Not by works (27), for works in any degree would provide a ground for boasting. But in light of the twin fact of v. 23, there can be no boasting. Nor can there be, in the face of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. He paid it all! God is the justifier of man. Crooked man cannot justify himself. The "law of faith" impels one to take refuge in the righteousness of Another.

Sixteen
2. But by faith only (28). This we reckon (not “conclude”), i.e., argue as a reason why boasting is excluded. Paul is concerned with how we obtain and experience righteousness before the bar of God—“apart from the works of the law” (ASV). James is concerned with how we are proved to be righteous.

B. How Established

1. By God becoming our God (29). Omit the definite article. The AV makes God the God of Jews and Gentiles in general, whereas He is neither the God of the Jews or of the Gentiles in general. But He is the God of Jews and Gentiles, indifferently, who believe.

2. By the principle of faith (30, 31).
   a. Q. Is God a racial God? A. No and Yes. No, in the sense that He limits His people to some one particular race; He does not do that. He chooses them out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation. Yes, in that these people, elect from every nation, form the “elect race” Peter mentions.
   b. Q. Is the law by the principle of faith rendered of no effect? A. No, faith does not deny the law; it simply recognizes that the debt to the law has been paid, and that there is nothing more to be paid. Faith then discharges from that debt. But the debt cancelled does not on that account make the law which enforced the debt void. Faith magnifies the law and makes it honorable. Hallelujah!