

The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

J.P. de Klerk

Introduction by John Huizenga

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Although many of our readers can trace their family history back to the Netherlands, the bond has become very weak and our Fatherland has become a Great Grandfatherland known only from secondary sources. Yet we do well to keep abreast on church news in the Netherlands as well as the other countries in the world. J.P. de Klerk is a native of the Netherlands and now lives in New Zealand. We have asked him to share his knowledge of the Netherlands in the way of personal drawings and photographs of churches in the Netherlands as well as a brief summary of each church.

The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

Thirty years ago, there were still many Reformed churches in The Netherlands, though they were divided into three groups:

- (1) Reformed State Churches
(Netherlands Hervormde Kerken)
- (2) Reformed Synodal Churches
(Gereformeerde Synodale Kerken)
- (3) Reformed Liberated Churches
(Gereformeerde Kerken Vrijgemaakt).

In the first two groups the modernist professors have caused chaos. Numerous books, brochures, pamphlets and articles have been written about that. As a result thousands of people left, in different directions, because several were already too much infected so that they did not fit in the obvious choice, the Liberated Churches. Anyhow, the result has been, that many Reformed Synodal Churches have disappeared completely, broken down till the last piece, or used by a factory or a warehouse, and even here and there, a mosque (there are already more than 500 mosques in The Netherlands). The Churches where I was baptized, and the one where we married, have been bulldozed away (in the city of The Hague).

So, speaking about Reformed Churches has become more difficult. The Reformed Synodal Churches decided last year to go together with the Reformed State Churches and the Lutheran Churches of The Netherlands. Those three have adopted the name “Samen of weg kerken” (Churches who go together the same way) which has caused a lot of consternation. They are modernist. A group called “Gereformeerde Bond” (Reformed Covenant) left the Reformed State Churches (Nederlands Hervormde Kerk) and joined those who had left the Reformed Synodal Churches, as far as they did not join the “Liberated Reformed Churches” (the fastest growing Churches).

The Koningskerk (King’s Church) is one of the new buildings, one of the few, erected after 1960. It has attracted much attention because of a high wall made of concrete and glass in a design that has to do with the parable of the sower. There is an outside roof and a (lower) inside roof, for acoustic reasons. The tower has been separated from the main building. Houses for the minister and the caretaker are part of the whole construction; in between there is a big room for festivities of clubs, weddings, etc.

Situated in Amsterdam, the church is surrounded by many high flatbuildings. ❖

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