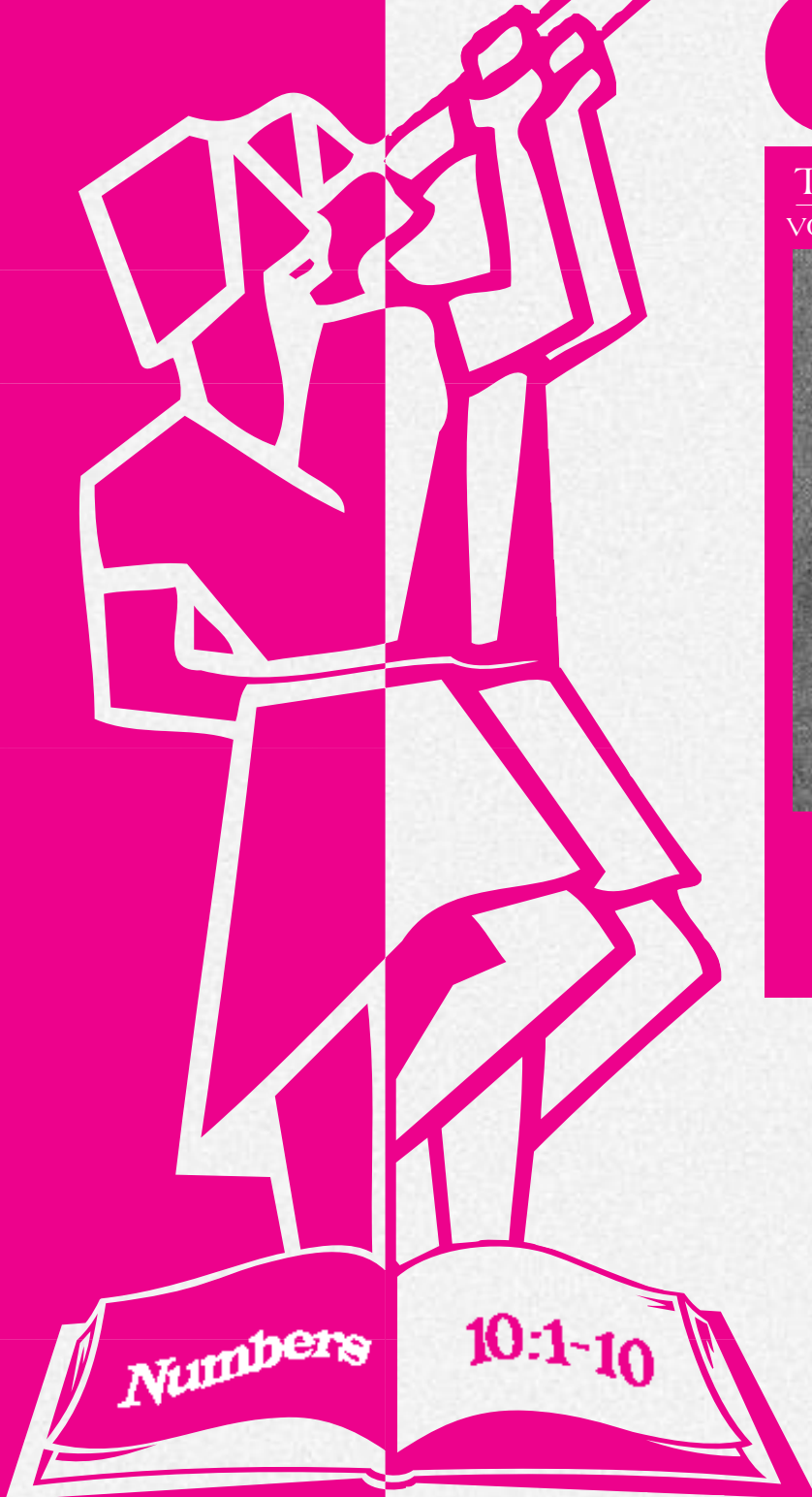


# Clarion

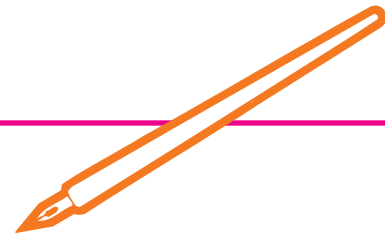
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*Abraham Kuyper  
and the  
Stone Lectures on Calvinism*



By J. De Jong



## Kuyper at Princeton

This year marks the one hundredth anniversary of the famous *Stone Lectures on Calvinism* which Abraham Kuyper gave at Princeton University in Philadelphia. At the time Kuyper was at the zenith of his powers, and his influence was growing, especially in his native country, but also beyond its borders. The lectures reveal Kuyper's noble aim: to have the whole of life brought under the lordship of Jesus Christ, and to promote a Calvinist world view in which all man's labours, whether in science or art, would be directed to the glory of God. The lectures illustrate clearly his love for science, art and culture, and at the same time his special appreciation for America as the new world of opportunity, 'the land of the free.'

In order to commemorate the event, Princeton held a special Kuyper conference in February of this year, inviting participants from many countries, and especially from Kuyper's native Holland. Although appreciation was expressed for Kuyper's work, on the whole he did not come off that well. In fact, according to the reports, Kuyper was labelled as a racist and a sexist, one who in many respects defended an outdated and antiquated world view which cannot be considered useful in any way for us today.<sup>1</sup> Especially Princeton's own faculty participating in the conference were rather scathing in their attack against the well known Dutch leader and statesman. Their perspective seemed to indicate that it would have been better in their eyes if these lectures had not even taken place one hundred years ago.

What do we make of this drastic change of fortune for "Abraham the mighty"? In his zenith, and for years after, he towered above his contemporaries as a mighty general, defending his "Reformed principles" (*gereformeerde beginselen*) with vigour and conviction even up to his death in 1920. Now, one hundred years later, many of the sons are standing around to witness the continued burial of the father. In today's view, the mighty general was really a charlatan, a racist and a sexist, whose central world view should be abandoned as quickly as possible. Why the sudden turn of thought? Is there any valid reason for the change?

### The Stone Lectures

One look at the *Stone Lectures* will alert the reader to the fact that we are indeed entering another era and another world. Kuyper championed Calvinism as a life system and a

life and world view of all encompassing significance. In these lectures he sought to set principle over against principle, the principle of the lordship of Christ over against the principle of humanism and modernism. He saw the whole development of culture as the unfolding of the battle between these two principles. And he took Calvinism as the highest expression of the principle of obedience to the good news of Christ.

One might even question how much of Calvin has been retained in Kuyper, or to what extent we have the rebirth of Calvin in a new dress. Kuyper has often been called a *neo-Calvinist*, where prefix *neo* is to be taken in a more pejorative sense of one who, as a neophyte, uses the name of the master, but in effect introduces a new teaching which undermines the work of the master, (in this case, Calvin). Would Calvin recognize himself in Kuyper's Calvinism?

Already in the first lecture Kuyper laid bare some of the essential principles that coloured his view on Calvinism in all his writings: the sovereignty of God over all of life, the principle of renewal (*palingenesis*) through which life is in principle restored to God, and the principle of common grace, through which Christians are called to keep their focus on *this world*.<sup>3</sup> The first refers to God's special work in gathering the elect as the new mankind. Kuyper's focus here is on the church as an invisible, and essentially supra-terrestrial reality (61). But while God is doing this he does not abandon the world, and so the Christian cannot close the door to the world either. Besides particular grace which works salvation, there is also a

common grace (*gratia communa*) by which God maintains the world, "relaxes the curse which rests upon it, arrests its process of corruption, and thus allows the untrammelled development of our life in which to glorify God as Creator" (30). The result of these two principles combined is a form of Calvinism expressed in terms of evolutionary optimism. In Kuyper's perspective, Calvinism has evolved as the highest expression of man's social, political, cultural and religious life up to that time.

Calvinism for Kuyper is neither an ecclesiastical, nor a theological, nor a sectarian conception but as he says, "one of the principle phases in the general development of the human race" (34). As he puts it, three principal tribes of western Europe make up the genealogy of the Calvinistic nations: the Celtic, Romanic, and Germanic elements under



Dr. Abraham Kuyper receiving the honorary doctor's degree at Princeton University in 1898.

the leadership of the Germanic. Kuyper extols the intermingling of the nations, and adds "only among Calvinistic nations does it achieve its highest perfection" (37).

The next lectures work out in detail the program outlined with a broad brush at the outset. The first examines Calvinism from the angle of particular grace. The one principle of particular grace works itself out in the specific Calvinistic forms of religious practice and worship as it is known in the churches of the Reformation. Theology, organization, discipline, worship and life-style are all "the logical product of its own fundamental thought and the embodiment of one and the same principle" (41). The whole work of particular grace is represented as the unfolding of one divine idea, the special predestination of God which is the chief hallmark of his absolute sovereignty in the world.

### What's inside?

The name of Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) is well known to us. His influence was felt throughout the Netherlands in the years before and after the turn of the century. Born in Maassluis, near Rotterdam, he studied in Leiden and entered the ministry in the Hervormde Kerk of Beest in 1863. He subsequently served the Hervormde Kerk in Utrecht (1868-70) and Amsterdam (1870-74). In 1886, he led a secession from the Hervormde Kerk which, six years later, united with the secession churches of 1834. However, his interests went beyond the pastoral ministry and church reformation. In 1874, Dr. Kuyper entered politics even serving as the prime minister of the Netherlands from 1901-1905. In 1880 he founded the Free University of Amsterdam where he himself taught for many years lecturing in a variety of fields. Not satisfied with the fields of theology, education and politics, he was a journalist too. He edited the daily *Standaard* for nearly fifty years, and the weekly *Heraut*. He published many, many books. Which student of theology has not known the ecstasy and the agony of ploughing through Kuyper's *Principles of Sacred Theology*?

Abraham Kuyper also travelled, notably to the United States of America where, in 1898, he delivered the famous Stone lectures on Calvinism. This year is the centennial of these lectures. We are very happy to present you with a variety of articles about Dr. Kuyper and his lasting impact.

GvP

**In Kuyper's perspective,  
Calvinism has  
evolved as the highest  
expression of  
man's social, political,  
cultural and religious  
life up to that time.**

### Common grace

The next three lectures move in the realm of common grace and expand upon the importance of this essential principle for the development of human life, including Calvinism itself. For while the elements of special grace can be a help for common grace, the rewards of common grace can also serve as added boosts for particular grace (118-121, 124). Kuyper here paints a grand canvass: in politics, in science and in art Calvinism has done the world its greatest service. In politics, Calvinism has consistently defended the essential liberties: liberty of conscience and freedom of religion. Kuyper admits

that this did not always work itself out to a full fledged freedom of speech and worship but in these essential elements the foundation was laid. The real guarantee of freedom lies not in a forced rule, but in the principle of the sovereignty of the spheres, whereby each sphere of life organically manifests its own principle of sovereignty according to the norms of God's Word (91ff).

Similarly in science, Calvinism unfolded the principle of free science, that is, science not governed by church or state, but in obedience to divinely established creational ordinances, permitting the free discovery of the secret treasures of God in accordance with his ordinances and statues (126-128, 138). And in art, Calvinism yielded some of the highest expressions of human artistic endeavour precisely because of the exploration into the many facets of light and colour as revealed in God's creation.

In this section, the recurring theme is the birth of *freedom* as espoused by the Calvinist life system. The sovereignty of God translates itself into the principle of the sovereignty in one's sphere, by which each dimension of life is as it were held to its own sphere. Freedom is Calvinism's greatest ideal, and precisely here Calvinism and America meet!



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In all this we can say: Kuyper unfolded a majestic tapestry! In six lectures he covers all spheres: particular grace and common grace, the world of the church and the church in the world. In the final lecture, Calvinism and the future, resounds forth in positive tones about the glorious future that awaits us if only we permit the Calvinist principle to unfold to its limit.

**Freedom is Calvinism's greatest ideal, and precisely here Calvinism and America meet!**

### The critique

Now it cannot be denied that for us too there are elements of the lectures that cannot escape critique. There is something in them which is foreign to the principal founder of the system Kuyper is defending. For Calvin, while being the many sided man who provided a perspective on many areas of human endeavour, never meant to create a *system*. He was first and foremost a preacher and servant of the church. Calvin also never thought in terms of evolutionistic optimism, and never spoke in terms of the evolutionary progression of the human race in a positive direction. Neither would he have taken his own thoughts as representing the highest pinnacle of human development. Kuyper's mixture of race, blood and Calvinism is one at which Calvin himself might have balked.

To this and to many other points we must say: Kuyper was a child of his time. He remoulded Calvin's work in the language and thought world of the 19th century, and he had the vision and the grandeur to interpret Calvinism in a very inspiring forms of language, optimism, and assertiveness. There is something about the frail and emaciated Calvin of later life that disappears behind this towering giant of the 19th Century. Kuyper was not afraid even to use aspects of the philosophical thought world of his day as a frame of reference in order to express and promote his Calvinist world view.<sup>4</sup> Kuyper's vision was not presented without some of the leaven of the leading Idealist philosophers of the day.

Yet it cannot be said that in his system Kuyper in effect *departed* from the main principles that Calvin defended. For all the 19th century colour and crimson he brought to Calvin, with its accompanying stains and stresses, he was none the less true to Calvin's essential aim! For Kuyper stood in Calvin's line on the one central point: *solus Deo gloria!* That rule can be translated into the distinct principles of the sovereignty of God, and the lordship of Jesus Christ over all creation, along with the duty and calling of believers to live for the King (*pro Rege*).

### But Princeton?

It is then quite another story to turn Kuyper into a sexist and a racist, and to discard his positive and optimistic spirit as a brand of 19th century *hubris*. For the Reformed of later years have always said: Kuyper had his faults. He was a man of weaknesses, not only in the way he let his thoughts run free with leaven borrowed from the philosophical currents of the day, but also in the way he asserted the truth of his thoughts above the criticism and opinions of others. The dangers were there, and the criticisms did not remain hidden! But there is another side to the matter. In his approach, Kuyper maintained the leading thought of the mother promise (Gen 3:15) and its accompanying *antithesis*. He confessed the *enmity* that spanned the history of the world! He bowed to Scripture!<sup>5</sup> These lectures, too, still breath the spirit of reverence and respect for the sacred text! His fundamental criticism of modernism and humanism is the departure from the sacred text!

It is this voice, a voice of many novel thoughts, but above all this, a voice of obedience to the Word that the modern critics want to wipe away with their ready use of politically correct labels. In his philosophy and in his statesmanship Kuyper was indeed a great man – Abraham the mighty! But the LORD who is mightier than all flesh made him weak, yes, made him a *child* when he stood with his heart before the power of the unchanging *Word!*

With all their idealism and with their rolling waves of the optimism and of evolutionary progressivism of the age, the *Stone Lectures* have this undercurrent: he who obeys the Word will see the blessing of the work of the Spirit of God. With all their criticism, today's academia may try to silence this Kuyper. They may try to erase the very antithesis he maintained. But they will never succeed. In

fact they only make his words speak louder.<sup>6</sup> For what else do we get from Princeton today but the very modernistic criticism that Kuyper spoke about?

They have read him and studied him, thoroughly analyzed him, and waxed eloquent about his work. But they have not understood! For they do not look behind Kuyper to the driving force in his life: with all his weaknesses, still to be a servant of his Saviour and so to adorn by his work the glory and praise of the only living God.

**Kuyper maintained the leading thought of the mother promise, and its accompanying antithesis. He confessed the enmity that spanned the history of the world! He bowed to Scripture!**

<sup>1</sup>See the report by M.R. Langley in *Christian Renewal*, Vol 16:14 (April 6, 1998), 6

<sup>2</sup>A (somewhat inexact) translation of the popular Dutch phrase "Abraham de geweldige."

<sup>3</sup>Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism. The Stone Foundation Lectures*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1931) 56, 58. Further page references to this work appear in the text of this article.

<sup>4</sup>Hegel and Von Hartmann come to the aid of his view on art, 148

<sup>5</sup>See Kuyper, 56: "The *necessitas S.S.* [the necessity of Sacred Scripture, JDJ] was for Calvin the unavoidable expression of the all-dominating authority of the Holy Scriptures, and even now it is this very dogma which enables us to understand why it is that the Calvinist of today considers the critical analysis and application of the critical solvent to the Scriptures as tantamount to an abandoning of Christianity itself."

<sup>6</sup>Kuyper says: "A theology which virtually destroys the authority of the Holy Scriptures as a sacred book; which sees in sin nothing but a lack of development; recognizes Christ for no more than a religious genius of central significance; views redemption as the mere reversal of our subjective mode of thinking; . . . – such a theology is like a dam giving way before the first assault of the inrushing tide. It is a theology without hold upon the masses, a quasi-religion powerless to restore our sadly tottering moral life to even a temporary footing," 182-183. One look at morality in contemporary America – even it its highest places! – bears out the truth of these prophetic words.



By P. Aasman

## Love is a Command

... and to know His love that surpasses knowledge. Ephesians 3:19

"But I don't love her!" That may well have been Joseph's reply to the angel, had he been informed by late 20th Century culture. And that would be the end of the matter. Since discovering that she was with child by no act of his own, Joseph may well have felt that he did not love Mary anymore. And what is a person to do if he has lost his love?

Love has become, in our day, an elusive emotion that makes puppets of us all – a fickle tyrant – and we, its helpless slaves. People are either head-over-heels in love, or without hope because their relationship has lost its love. Christians are beginning to see it this way too: when a relationship has lost the dynamic of love, it is hopeless. What can we do when love has become a fugitive, when the elusive feeling has fled? For many, there is no solution but to separate or divorce.

This is a common perception of love between a man and a woman.

But this is not a biblical perception.

In the Bible, love is just one emotion among many that we must master. Just as we must control sinful emotions (by resisting them), we must control righteous emotions (by using them). Love is a righteous emotion. Christians are not to wait for love to *happen*. In the Bible, God *commands* us to love. "You shall love Yahweh your God." Jesus demands that we exercise extraordinary control over this righteous emotion when he says, "Love your enemies." Love is not a choice. It is a command. It is not something we wait until it happens to us, we must simply go and love.

That may sound impossible, but it is not. God does it. He commands us to love because He loved us first. We cannot meditate on God's love enough. Paul says that the love of God in Jesus Christ is beyond every conceivable boundary, for He loved when it seemed impossible to love. It is easy for a child to love his parents, and for a parent to love his child, but there are many people that we just cannot imagine loving. Yet, the truth is, it is easier for me to love Adolph Hitler (a man responsible


for the attempted extermination of the Jewish people and many others) or Henry Morgentaler (the man who fought for and won the right for women to abort their unborn children) than for God to love me. Much easier. Hitler and Morgentaler sinned against equals, against their fellow man; my sin is of a much higher or uglier order: I had sinned against God. "Against you, you only have I sinned," David says.

And yet, as ugly as we are, God loved us. He sent his Son down from heaven to save us. And even though we keep on insulting God with sin every day, He keeps on loving us, and draws us closer to himself by the Spirit of adoption. That is the love of God. He loves people who are utterly disgusting in his eyes; He loves people who have absolutely nothing lovely about them. Despite who we are, God loved us and keeps on loving us.

The emotion of love is a beautiful thing. A man should be desired and

loved in the eyes of his wife, and a woman in the eyes of her husband. People cannot seriously contemplate marriage if they do not experience vibrant and growing love. Their relationship should demonstrate the emotion of love. But if the love of God controls us, then even if this emotion fails, we will continue to love. We are commanded to. God could. And so can you, if God's Spirit does indeed dwell in you. Then your love becomes extraordinary, like God's. It costs you something you never paid before: it costs your own self.

Paul says in his letter to the Romans that nothing can separate us from the love of God. If we are in the love of God, then nothing can separate a husband and a wife. Not even when the emotion has fled. Love remains, because God commands it.

Rev. P. Aasman is the minister of the Canadian Reformed Church of Grand Valley, Ontario. 



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# Timeless Insights From A Century Ago

## Kuyper's Stone Lectures

By Kenneth J. Boessenkool

Is your Reformed perspective deep and broad? Do the ideas you hear off the pulpit, discuss in your study societies, and ponder in your personal and family devotions, penetrate every area of your life? How about your politics? Or science? What about art?

It is easy to say 'Yes, of course' to each of these questions. But can many of us really explain *how* our Reformed perspective affects politics, science and art? How many of us would be ready to stand in a public forum and defend our view of these things against worldly opponents? Exactly one hundred years ago a great Dutch theologian, writer, politician, and academic did just that.

In 1898 Abraham Kuyper was invited to Princeton University to deliver the prestigious *Stone Lectures*. These lectures are rich with Calvinist heritage but are also deeply relevant for Reformed confessors today. Before delivering these lectures, Kuyper had led a rich and varied life as a theologian, pastor, author, editor and educator who founded the Free University of Amsterdam in 1880. In 1901 Kuyper was elected Prime Minister of the Netherlands.

Kuyper opens the first of *six Lectures on Calvinism* with a warning. Christianity, he says, is "imperilled by great and serious dangers. Two life-systems are wrestling with one another, in mortal combat." The mortal combat is not between Protestant and Roman Catholic religions, nor between two Dutch churches, but between modernism and Christianity.

Modernism is bound to build a world of its own, from the data of the natural man, and to construct man himself from the data of nature; while on the other hand, all those who reverently bend the knee to Christ and worship Him as the Son of the living God, and God Himself, are bent upon saving the 'Christian Heritage'.

The modernism of Kuyper's day was not much different from modernism today, though most of us would know it as lib-



Dr. Abraham Kuyper – 1875



Dr. Abraham Kuyper – 1895

eralism. Today it is the liberal philosophers, politicians, and their minions who want to create a world "from the data of the natural man." Against this philosophy, or life-system, the *Stone Lectures* find "rest" in Calvinism. "From Calvinism," Kuyper states, "have I drawn the inspiration firmly and resolutely to take my stand in the thick of this great conflict of principles."

What are the principles of Calvinism on which we can firmly and resolutely take a stand? The *Stone Lectures* are Kuyper's answer to that question. In his six lectures, Kuyper presents the richness of Calvinism (1) as a life system; (2) on religion; (3) on politics; (4) on science; (5) on art; and (6) on the future.

The first two lectures contain material that, I suspect, is familiar to all of us. Yet the vigour in which the principles are set out, the clarity of the writing, and the verbal combat with competing world views makes it a joy to read. It is in the third lecture, however, where the fun really begins.

On politics, Kuyper moves quickly to the central issue. Government is unnecessary in a world without sin for "who binds up, where nothing is broken? Who uses crutches, where limbs are sound?" Of course, we live in a world of sin. Yet

we should always keep in mind, Kuyper says, that the state, the law, judges, and all other mechanical means of compelling order "are something unnatural; something against which the deeper aspirations of our nature rebel." Thus a battle develops between authority and liberty. Kuyper tells us that a proper understanding of liberty and authority depend on what Calvinism calls "the primordial truth that God has instituted the magistrates, by reason of sin."

This primordial truth points to both the danger and the necessity of the authority that God places in the state. The danger comes from the fact that sinful men direct the state, "and is therefore subject to all manner of despotic ambitions." The necessity of the state flows from the fact that, in a world of sinful men, living "without law and government, and without ruling authority, would be a veritable hell on earth."

This is powerful stuff. Humanity might have been spared much horror in this century had it paid more heed to Calvinism's primordial truth rather than to the foolish liberal idea of the perfectibility of man.

Kuyper goes on to show the powerful implications of three crucial Calvinist ideas. The first of those ideas is

unmediated communion between God and man. The second states that the social spheres such as family, science, business and art “do not owe their existence to the state, and do not derive the law of their life from the superiority of the state, but obey a high authority within their own bosom, an authority which rules, by the grace of God, just as the sovereignty of the State does.” The third crucial Calvinist idea is the equality of persons that follows from man’s divine likeness.


What are the implications of unmediated communion, sphere sovereignty, and equality of persons? The

three most crucial for politics are democracy, constitutional law, and civil liberties, which form the core institutions in Winston Churchill’s *Great Democracies*. It was the Calvinist influence in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States that was responsible for the development of the institutions on which global stability and liberty now depends. This is our rich heritage.

I can only scratch the surface of one of Kuyper’s lectures here. I heartily recommend, therefore, that you get your hands on Kuyper’s six rich lectures. These ideas should also find their way into the hands of our high school

students. Although they are a century old, these timeless lectures will deepen and widen the Reformed perspective of all who read them.

Abraham Kuyper’s *Lectures on Calvinism* are still in print and are available from your local bookstore or from Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids (the latest reprint is 1994); Paperback, 199 pages; \$ 13.00 U.S.

*Kenneth J. Boessenkool works for a Toronto think tank where he writes and comments on government policy. He has an M.A. in Economics and is a member of the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church in Burlington.* 

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## A Lost Family Treasure Rediscovered

### A Book Study

By J.L. van Popta

**Peter S. Heslam. *Creating a Christian Worldview: Abraham Kuyper’s Lectures on Calvinism***  
Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. 300 pages. Paperback, \$28.00 US.

As the new millennium approaches a dramatic change in the generally accepted worldview is becoming more and more apparent. The modernist worldview is collapsing under the burdens it sought to carry. The answers modernism sought to bring forward to the questions of God, the world and man’s purpose are being rejected. We are now entering into a new era. Some call it “post-modernism.” Post-modernists rejects ultimate answers, yet still ask the questions concerning meaning, purpose and identity.

### The Stone Lectures

One hundred years ago, Abraham Kuyper, the Dutch theologian, statesman, writer, presented six lectures at Princeton University. He was invited to deliver the annual lecture series sponsored by the Stone Foundation. In his six lectures, published as *Lectures on Calvinism*, Abraham Kuyper laid out a ground work for a comprehensive Reformed worldview while at the same



time giving a critique of, the then new, modernism.

In his book, *Creating a Christian Worldview: Abraham Kuyper’s Lectures on Calvinism*, Dr. Peter Heslam does the Reformed world a great service. Heslam points out in the preface

that post-modern thinkers agree broadly with Abraham Kuyper’s critique of modernism. Heslam’s book gives access to Kuyper’s lectures to a new generation of readers, but also holds up Kuyper’s thinking to examination and seeks to find where Kuyper

himself was influenced by his own cultural and historical context and by modernist thought.

### Correcting a great loss

For the Canadian Reformed community (and the other daughter churches of the 1944 *Liberation*) this book is especially valuable. For many years all things *Kuyperian* have been considered suspect. Yet, when all Kuyperian thought is rejected, a Reformed community suffers great loss. Heslam demonstrates that Kuyper attempted to sketch out a comprehensive worldview within a Calvinist theological structure. Kuyper was a giant on the world stage of his day. Though we today may dispute and disagree with some of his theological structures concerning covenant, regeneration and ecclesiology, Heslam's book demonstrates that Abraham Kuyper still has much valuable to say to society 100 years after he presented his lectures to the world. Few men have had such a broad and comprehensive view of the world; fewer have been able to present that view with clarity, insight and vision for the future. Abraham Kuyper, Heslam shows, was one of these few men.

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### When all Kuyperian thought is rejected, a Reformed community suffers great loss.

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This book contains 10 chapters. The first is an introduction and lays out the thesis of the book. The next two chapters outline the historical context of the 1898 Stone Lectures. This historical part first gives a thumbnail sketch of Kuyper's life followed by the circumstances surrounding his invitation and journey to the United States. Six chapters follow, each analyzing the content of one of the six lectures delivered at Princeton University. Chapter 10 summarizes and draws the threads of the previous nine together and makes some useful conclusions and suggests further avenues in Kuyper studies.

### The first lecture: Calvinism a Life System

One of the controlling themes of Abraham Kuyper's work in sketching a Reformed Calvinist worldview was his *anti-revolutionary* thrust. He believed that the French Revolution embodied and articulated the fundamental ideas of modernism. Modernism was built

on the revolutionary principles of France. On the other hand, Kuyper believed that the USA, though also the child of revolution, was built on God's sovereignty (80). Kuyper's *Lectures* were part of his attempt to inspire confidence among American Calvinists that the principles they held had provided the foundations of their country. This perspective on America – that it was essentially a Christian nation – was a view point held by many Europeans at the close of the last century. Contemporary historical analysis shows that this likely was not as true as Kuyper would have liked to believe. Heslam ar-



Dr. Abraham Kuyper

gues that Abraham Kuyper was a child of his own age. This is true also in the structure of his thought. Heslam writes at the conclusion of his analysis of the *First Lecture: Calvinism a Life System*:

Although [the contents of his Christian worldview based on Christian principles] would be antithetical to all other modern secular worldviews, its form would bear a strong resemblance: it was to be derived from a single unifying principle (the sovereignty of God); it was to provide answers to the same fundamental questions of human existence; and it was to be comprehensive and internally consistent. The meeting of these requirements was the means by which Kuyper hoped the Calvinist worldview

would be brought up to date, fit to engage with contemporary issues of society, politics and culture. To him, Calvinist thought, developed in accordance with the demands of the late nineteenth century, could offer a comprehensive, logically cohesive alternative to modernistic thought and provide the basis for Christian cultural renewal.

In fact, however, this program borrowed liberally from the systems it purported to oppose – from pantheism the idea of coherence and unity; from evolutionism the idea of human and religious progress. Despite his emphasis on the antithesis between Calvinism and modernism, Kuyper's ideas are a testimony to the all-pervasiveness of nineteenth-century modernism, of which he himself was all too keenly aware. His aim of using the modernist worldview as a model for his own in order to bring Calvinism up-to-date appears to have included some pitfalls he proved unable to avoid (111-112).

Dr. Heslam's analysis of this point should cause us all to sit up and take notice. If a man with as keen a mind and with as comprehensive a view of the world as Abraham Kuyper was unable to completely avoid integrating modern secular (even *revolutionary*) structures into his thought, we must be careful today in assuming that our worldview is free of modernist or post-modernist thought. These observations must be read as a warning to us today. We too might be so much children of our own culture that we cannot easily analyze or judge its structures nor develop or maintain a fully Reformed and Calvinist worldview.

### The second lecture: Calvinism and Religion

The analysis of the *Second Lecture: Calvinism and Religion* is of special interest to many readers of *Clarion*. In this lecture Kuyper discussed, among other things, his ecclesiology. Heslam's analysis is striking in that it comes not from the perspective of that other great Dutch theologian, Dr. Klaas Schilder. Some students of K. Schilder or those who profess to hold to his ecclesiology may have a tendency to create a caricature of A. Kuyper's ecclesiology. Reading Heslam's analysis sheds light on *Kuyperian - Schilderian* differences. Heslam, not dwelling on theoretical inaccuracies, investigates



Kuyper's views on church within the late 19th century historical context. He wants to understand and explain the background against which Kuyper formulated his ecclesiology and what he hoped to achieve by expounding it in the *Stone Lectures* (133). Heslam points out that Kuyper's understanding of the church as *organism* was borrowed from German philosophy. A striking observation is made by Heslam when he comments on the *democratic* nature of the church. The church, writes Heslam, according to Kuyper, is "democratic to its bones and marrow" (135). The church is regulated according to a Presbyterian form of government. This preserves the monarchical reign of Christ with his authority invested in the congregation. "This applied not only within each local congregation but also between churches, such that no one church could have authority over another; churches could only be united by confederation, rather than by means of a hierarchical structure" (135). Heslam concludes then, that in Kuyper's scheme a church federation organized on these principals may never become synodical.

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***Kuyper taught that churches could only be united by confederation, rather than by means of a hierarchical structure.***

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Kuyper also defended a pluriform idea of church. This arose out of his belief in the office of all believers and its democratic nature. And he used this view of church to defend and justify the *Doleantie* and the establishment of such churches outside of the synodical jurisdiction of the *Hervormde Kerk*. Heslam argues that much of Kuyper's theoretical thought was driven by practical circumstances.

### **The rest of the lectures**

On the pages of this issue of *Clarion* you can find an analysis of *The Third Lecture: Calvinism and Politics*. Heslam's analysis is different from that of Mr. Kenneth J. Boessenkool and is worth reading but we will let Mr. Boessenkool's suffice. Heslam goes on to investigate, analyze, and set within their historical context, the other lectures: *Calvinism and Science*, *Calvinism and Art*, and *Calvinism and the Future*. In our day in which science plays

such an important role, Heslam shows that Abraham Kuyper is still relevant. As for the chapter on *Calvinism and Art*, it should be required reading (along with Kuyper's original lecture) for anyone who wishes to speak to the issue of fine arts and music. The debate on Rock Music in *Reformed Perspective* some time ago would have benefited greatly if the contributors had read Kuyper's fifth lecture and Heslam's analysis of it. Though Kuyper did not articulate guidelines for the fine arts in his lecture, he did, by his analysis of the arts, attempt to legitimize artistic endeavor in the Reformed community (262-63).

### **An unresolved tension**

Dr. Heslam points out however, that it is in the lecture on the arts that the clearest indication of the tension within Kuyper's thought appears (262). Kuyper's thought on the arts is dominated by his doctrine of common grace, which is emphasized at the expense of his doctrine of the antithesis, which dominates his lecture on science. Heslam writes:

This discrepancy is one of the clearest indications of what is perhaps the central tension in Kuyper's thought between the antithesis and corresponding isolation on the one hand, and common grace and corresponding engagement and accommodation on the other. It was tension Kuyper never resolved, and a comparison of his Stone Lecture on art with that on science demonstrates how it led to flaws in the overall coherence of his thought (222).

In his last lecture Kuyper appealed for a future for effective Calvinistic activity. These lectures delivered at the end of the last century, along with the rest of Kuyper's work, have resonated down the decades. We now again stand at *fin de siecle*; even more so, we stand at the end of the millennium. There is a sense of fear, uncertainty and insecurity prevalent in our culture. Kuyper was trying to respond with a Biblical Calvinism to the rise of Nietzsche's "cry of despair." Though he did not adopt the pessimism of Nietzsche's nihilism and anarchism it seems, Heslam writes, that Abraham Kuyper was willing to recognize and work within their modernist framework (228).

Kuyper's Lectures were an attempt to answer one of Christianity's crucial questions: "What is the relationship between Christianity and culture?" Heslam writes in his conclusion that the

solutions of Kuyper's contemporaries were either pietism or modernism. Abraham Kuyper strove to present an alternative. Pietism held that the institutions of culture, being part of the fallen world stood in opposition to Christ. Christian modernists sought to solve the problem of Christ and culture by insisting that Christ is the great hero of culture. Christian modernists, far from demanding a separation from culture, tended to identify Christianity with culture (267-268).

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### ***What relationship is there between Christ and culture?***

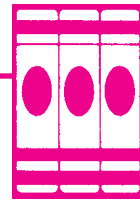
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### **What has Christ to do with culture?**

Abraham Kuyper attempted in his lectures, to present a holistic coherent worldview in which this crucial question might be answered: "What relationship is there between Christ and culture?" Heslam concludes that Abraham Kuyper held to a radical distinction between God's work in Christ and the work of human beings in culture. He held, with the Pietists, to the doctrine of total depravity of man, but in contrast to them he opposed cultural withdrawal. He rejected the modernist view of Christ as the hero of culture and held to a radical antithesis. The modernist failure to recognize the fallenness of creation was unacceptable to him. His alternative was a scheme in which creation, fall and redemption were each thought of in the broadest sense, encompassing the entire cosmos. He insisted that earthly life is in an abnormal state and that it requires Christ's work to restore it to wholeness.

### **Conclusion**

Dr. Peter Heslam's historical analysis of Abraham Kuyper's lectures are *must reading* for anyone who is interested in developing a Reformed worldview for the 21st Century. Published with a twenty-four page bibliography of primary and secondary literature, this book can be used as an access, guide and primer to the discussion concerning Reformed worldview. If Calvinists and Reformed Churches are to be able to present relevant answers to cultural questions of the new millennium Abraham Kuyper's lectures cannot be ignored. Dr. Heslam has demonstrated this clearly. His book is a great contribution to this discussion. 



By J. De Jong

## The Kuyper Centennial

**James D. Bratt, ed. *Abraham Kuyper. A Centennial Reader*  
Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, xiv  
+ 498 pages, paperback, US\$29.-**

The name of Abraham Kuyper is still used regularly, at least in Dutch Reformed circles, and still functions as the object of either praise or scorn, depending on the issue up for discussion. From lecture halls to pulpits and study societies, the once revered name of Kuyper, while having lost much of its allure, still serves as the springboard leading into today's discussions on the Christian approach to anything from church and sacrament to politics and the social issues of the day. Terms like 'church as organism' and 'church as institute,' and 'pluriformity' are readily bandied about, but increasingly the question comes up: what did Kuyper really say?

This in itself is reason enough to be very thankful to Eerdmans for the publication of an extensive Kuyper reader. Produced in conjunction with the commemoration of Kuyper's *Stone Lectures* given at Princeton University in 1898, this 'centennial reader' brings together a representative selection of Kuyper's voluminous output in the many areas in which he excelled: church and theology, politics and society, culture and education. As one works his way through these pieces, one is again struck by the vast encyclopedic knowledge that Kuyper possessed and how carefully he sought to strengthen his arguments by an appeal to recognized authorities in various fields. Prejudice may well have led him in formulating his arguments; yet this book proves that Kuyper sought to be fair and balanced in the way he dealt with the issues of the day.

The whole is introduced by Prof. Bratt's comments on Kuyper and his significance for today. Dr. Bratt, a professor of history at Calvin College, shows an insightful and respectful knowledge of Kuyper in both his introduction and his running commentary in the ample notes along the way. Even the pieces on their own speak of a contemporary



Kuyper. There are aspects to the argumentation in some selections, as for example in the selection on Perfectionism, that could function in any debate today. Yet in his selection Bratt has not just sought to present us with the contemporary Kuyper. He has worked hard to put Kuyper in his 19th century context in order to let the reader see from the documents themselves how Kuyper sought to live out his Christian principles in the context of the world in which he lived and how he did it with fear and trembling, and with a mighty wrestling before his God.

Here and there one can quibble with Bratt's interpretations, as for example when he states that Kuyper "did not hold to Scriptural inerrancy as Fundamentalists today understand that term" (cf. note on p. 16). One might ask whether it is even appropriate to juxtapose the nineteenth century Kuyper with what is fundamentally a 20th century American phenomenon. But even if Bratt can be forgiven for this,

why is the reader left with ambiguity concerning Kuyper's stand on the authority of Scripture? Granted he was not a fundamentalist (who or whatever that is), he did not champion a norm which emulated errors on every page! In fact, if anything, he always speaks up for the essential trustworthiness of the norm of Scripture! But even if Bratt does not touch on this, certainly the selections he has chosen make clear to the reader that Kuyper had a high regard for the written text of the Word.

### Church and theology

In the first section, "Church and Theology," Bratt has included some very impressive selections: the tract *Conservatism and Orthodoxy*, Kuyper's farewell sermon at Utrecht in 1870, his speech on Modernism on 1871 (*Modernism: A Fata Morgana in the Christian Domain*), and the very impassioned sermon preached just after the Doleantie took place in Amsterdam (1886), along with selections from Kuyper's famous trilogy



The Kuyper family at the departure of son Frederik to America.

on *Common Grace*. Over time the latter idea became one of Kuyper's more cherished concepts; but theologically it remained difficult to defend, and the selections here presented only illustrate how much Kuyper struggled to give some solid conceptual and Scriptural grounding to this concept. If anywhere, Bratt's summary of Kuyper applies here: although abandoning the concepts of German Idealism, Kuyper employed its methods, and this ended up being a life long struggle for him! (cf. p.16).

In all of these selections Bratt's comments are particularly helpful and enlightening. Bratt introduces dimensions of Kuyper's social, ecclesiastical and personal circumstances which help to explain his positions, and which, I suspect, are largely unknown to most North American readers. Some of Bratt's comments are rather cryptic, and while they may pass the test for the historian, they do leave the *church* historian with some questions. For example, in a brief summary outlining the distinction between infra- and supralapsarianism, Bratt surmises that "Kuyper's point in the text – that Supras put the highest emphasis on the majesty or glory of God while Infras focused more on the particular people elected – is historically warranted." (p. 167). Aside from the fact that the description of the terms is too brief to be illuminating, one wonders about the accuracy of this judgment. Especially from the stronghold of the CRC, with its secessionist roots, one would have expected a little more caution with regard to the position of the 1834 Seceders. While it may be said that many of them took the Infralapsarian position, they did not in any way detract from the sover-

eignty of God. Bratt here could have been warned by Kuyper's own arguments with regard to the Seceders as stated in an earlier selection, the farewell sermon at Utrecht. For here Kuyper, as he was occasionally inclined to do, derogates the Seceders in a rather condescending tone, but is not able to develop a substantial argument against their position, (p. 73).

At another point, commenting on Kuyper's references to the Ethical theologians, Bratt says, "Kuyper's implication that Ethical theologians thought Jesus to be human without remainder is disputable" (p. 184). Reading the text, I wondered whether Kuyper makes the implication here attributed to him, and if he does, just what the nature of the dispute would involve. The text itself leaves open the issue whether there is any remainder or not; but seems to suggest that if there is some remainder, it in effect amounts to nothing significant since at bottom the ethicals denied Christ's divine nature. Here again, to be fair to Kuyper, the reader could have received more explanation.

Kuyper's address on *Modernism* shows him at his best, one who clearly possessed the marks of genius: a broad mind with a vast intellectual powers, strong emotive and imaginative appeal, all encased in an impassioned tone and style that still today ranks him among the towering leaders of the modern era. On this selection Bratt's notes are clear and helpful.

### Politics and society

The selections on Politics and Society show us another Kuyper, one who kept abreast of his times, and sought to

discern the spirits of the day by subjecting historical events to the critical norm of the Word. In his speech on manual labour one is struck by how much Kuyper was ahead of his time in rejecting a strict *laissez faire* approach, and defending that degree of government involvement in the world of labour that would continue to safeguard the humane treatment of labourers. The speech on *Calvinism as the Safeguard of our Constitutional Liberties* also shows a depth of vision and range of knowledge at which one can only marvel. Kuyper was familiar with several writers on American history as well, and his special preference for America is clearly reflected in this address. Bratt has done the North American reader a service by including this speech, since it also provides the American reader with another look at how the 19th century European mind saw the budding flower of American democracy at this time.

A more impassioned Kuyper hits centre stage in the selection on the *South African Problem*. As can be expected, Kuyper defended the Boer position in the Boer war with the English,

### From the speech on "Evolution":

To hesitate here would betray one's own convictions. Evolution is a newly conceived system, a newly established system, a newly established theory, a newly formed dogma, a newly emerged faith. Embracing and dominating all of life, it is diametrically opposed to the Christian faith and can erect its temple only upon the ruins of our Christian Confession. No satisfaction with or appreciation of the beauty and riches cast into our laps by the studies that it stimulated may let us be at peace for even a moment with this system as *system*. That system remains evil, even though in many respects good has come out of evil. And therefore against system of the aimlessly and mechanistically constructed cosmos we set our full-fledged resistance. We must not merely defend ourselves against it but attack it. The textbooks into which it found its way must be laid aside, and we may not entrust our children to any instructor who teaches it. Like a deadly bacteria that would destroy all spiritual life, it must be microscopically investigated and its every trace removed from the tissue of our life.

and sharply denounced Chamberlain's approach as unbridled imperialism. At the same time, he takes pains to remain balanced, and does not embellish the Boers or clear them of all wrongdoing.<sup>1</sup> It is perhaps a selection like this that elicits the sharpest of contemporary criticisms against Kuyper, since he did not hide his views also in speaking about other peoples and races. He was by no means politically correct in the current understanding of the term. In fact, he was quite blunt about his opinions that the Dutch has certain characteristics putting them ahead of others, even the English, and that also in America the essential aim of the black people was superiority over the whites; an aim which he felt lived in South Africa as well. But I would be hesitant to brand this as blatant *racism*. For the selection makes very clear that despite his personal views, Kuyper's aim in the argument is as much as possible to reduce the hatred between the races, and have all harbour no hatred for the South African or black race. Rather, typical of his time, he is quite open about national and racial characteristics, something which is prevalent in news commentary even today.

### Culture and education

The book crescendos with a number of selections showing us the Kuyper as he is most often remembered today:

#### From the speech on "The Blurring of the Boundaries"

Our battle today has to be fought on the basis of principle. Arrows shot from afar will not reach the target. The clash between the basic theme of the Christian religion and that of our century cuts too deep to be left to the playful sparring of the apologists. If the working of the pantheistic poison is not stopped, the flood will roll over us. Hence the calling of Christianity to fight this evil unsparingly, especially in the realm of higher thought. And though the speech I am about to deliver lacks scope for the full range of this argument, you will not take it amiss if I call your attention to one of this poison's many effects. I mean the clear tendency of all pantheism, and so also of the pantheistic mood of our time, to increasingly blur the boundary lines in every sphere of life and not to rest until, at least in our imagination, they have been expunged.

the famous address on the *Blurring of the Boundaries*, a speech on evolution, a lecture on *Common Grace* in Science and finally, the famous 1880 speech at the opening of the Free University, *Sphere Sovereignty*. It's in these selections, perhaps more than the others, that both the strengths and the weaknesses of the great scholar and statesmen stand so markedly contrasted: *strengths* – for he powerfully defends the Calvinist and Reformed world view while wading in a veritable sea of secular humanism; and yet *weaknesses*, for he resorts all too readily to favourite terms and concepts which became philosophically tainted clichés, but as such never could provide a full accounting of the actual state of affairs. K. Schilder, for example, at one point – in deference to Kuyper – suggested that the phrase "sovereignty in its own sphere" should be modified to "autarky in one's own service" – giving a popular and at the same time obscure slogan a more Calvinistic and realistic spin. So in this section one will find the familiar fodder for criticism; yet all the while one cannot but admire the range and depth, as well as the warmth and insight of this colossal figure.

While I have not withheld some critical notations, I do hope that my appreciation has the upper hand in these remarks. For my overall assessment is that we have a very worthy addition to the Kuyper literature in English, one that provides us with the original sources, and does so in a way that will help the reader of our day to find his way around in the multi-roomed mansion that is Kuyper. I know that we can no longer adopt the impassioned and opinionated style of this great leader. His days are gone, and his world is no more. Yet in opening up his world to us, Bratt has shown us what really drove Kuyper as preacher, parliamentarian and statesman. We see standing in the middle of life Kuyper the *Calvinist*, wrestling with the issues of the day, warring against the powers that be and the philosophies dominating the intelligentsia, and through it all holding to the one true confession: God sent his Son into the world as the Saviour who took upon himself our flesh and blood to redeem us from all sin.

The organic shape of Kuyper's "life principle" (Dutch: *beginself*) can be the topic of considerable discussion and criticism. In all too many ways the system did not flow together as easily and as effortlessly as he thought it did. But he held to the principle! He believed in


#### From "Calvinism: Source and Stronghold of our Constitutional Liberties"

Do not be too amazed, ladies and gentlemen, however contradictory it might seem, if I answer that question [on the doctrinal root of our liberties, JD] by pointing to the fundamental doctrine of Calvinism: its confession of the *absolute sovereignty of God*. For this confession implies that no authority or power on earth is inherent but is imposed. Thus there is no natural authority to speak either on the part of the ruler or of the people. Only God is Sovereign; He regards all creatures, born in royal palace or beggar's hut, as nothing in comparison with Himself. One creature cannot have authority over another except as God gives it. And God does not relinquish that authority but allows it to be used to his glory. He is sovereign and gives that authority to whomever He will—sometimes to kings and princes, other times to nobles and patricians, but sometimes also to the people as a whole. For Him a democracy, as in America, is just as useful for showing his glory as is Russian absolutism. The question is not whether the people rule or a king, but whether both, when they rule, do so in recognition of him.

his God and he held high the infallible Word of his God! Only the most prejudiced reader will overlook that element in these readings.

Bratt dedicated this volume to his children with the simple words: "their heritage, my legacy." A dedication which speaks volumes, especially for Reformed Christians of Dutch descent! For too often the thirst for change and renewal remains oblivious to that which God has given in the past. Kuyper had his weaknesses, and his theological constructions, later misapplied and misused as well as misunderstood, have caused much strife and pain among the people of God on Dutch soil, and even beyond. But yet it remains true: in this "Abraham the mighty"<sup>2</sup> God gave us very much, and should we be cynical or sparing of his gifts?

<sup>1</sup>Kuyper says on 337: "I do not deny that the Boers have sometimes been too severe and have committed excesses."

<sup>2</sup>An allusion to the well known Dutch phrase "Abraham de geweldige." 

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# Clay Pots and Prairie Fields

By Hilda Tams

The church-goers at Coaldale, Alberta were filled with joy and anticipation on the morning of August 30, 1998. After being a vacant church for about two and a half years following the death of the Rev. J. D. Wielenga, we were going to receive a new minister, Rev. J.L. van Popta.

## Jars of clay

His brother, Rev. G. Ph. van Popta would lead the morning service and install our new minister. The text on which he based the sermon was: *But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us (2 Cor 4:7).*

His sermon explained the key words of the text. The *treasure* is the light of the Gospel by which we, the hearers, can be renewed in God's image. The *jars of clay* are the preachers of the gospel; our new minister, Rev. J.L. van Popta, is one of them. We, as congregation, are to remember that the clay pot is as human as we ourselves are. Therefore, we should focus on the richness of the treasure he is holding, not on the jar of clay. Likewise, the minister should be humble, remembering he is a jar of clay, just the vessel that bears the treasure.

Even though man is weak, God's power is all-surpassing and we all can trust that things will work out well according to the purpose and plan of God. Finally, Rev. G. van Popta exhorted the congregation to give thanks to God that He has provided a new jar of clay; to praise Him for an old treasure; and to pray that the life of Christ will sustain Rev. van Popta and will work for others through him.

## Congratulatory messages

After the service, Br. Harry Lubbers, the chairman of the church council, explained that numerous invitations to come and share our joy on this occasion had been extended. I will mention a few: Mr. Alex Hann, mayor of Coaldale, sent a letter in which he, on behalf of the town council, welcomed

*"Brothers in 'His' Service!"  
Rev. George van Popta was invited to install his brother as Coaldale's new minister.*



Rev. van Popta and urged the church to continue its prayers for the community leaders.

Congratulatory letters and faxes were read from almost all the individual congregations in our Classis region, as well as from the church at Ottawa where Rev. van Popta last served.

Others sent representatives who were then given the opportunity to speak. Br. John Moedt, as far as I know, does not have a split personality; nevertheless, he spoke as two persons – once, on behalf of the congregation at Taber and then as a representative of the Classis Alberta/Manitoba. The delegate for Providence Church in Edmonton, Br. Jack de Haas, with a play on the word "vacant," quipped, "Judging by the attendance here this morning, it's hard to believe that last week Coaldale was a 'vacant' church." The third speaker, Br. Casey van Seters, spoke some kind words on behalf of the Grace Canadian Reformed Church at Winnipeg.

## Fields and buildings

Then in the afternoon service Rev. van Popta delivered his inaugural sermon. It was based on 1 Cor 3: 4-15 and the theme was: *You are God's field, God's building.*

First, some background information about the city of Corinth was given. The problems in the congregation was that the believers were aligning themselves with the different teachers and preachers that had served there. Some favoured Paul; some Apollos; and others, Cephas.

Paul seeks to rectify the situation. He explains that he, as a servant of Christ, has planted the seed of the Word; Apollos, another servant, has watered it; but God has made it grow. Although the service Paul and Apollos has provided is important, their personage is not. This metaphor was applied to the present situation as well. The minister may be compared to the planter. Others, such as parents and teachers, may be the waterers and the

whole congregation is God's field. The harvest is God's and any dignity attached to being in Christ's service is for everyone who serves, in whatever way.

All of us were urged to build on the foundation, Jesus Christ, that Paul, the master builder, has laid. We need to choose our building material carefully. Will it be gold or hay? Silver or straw? Our daily walk and talk is important because Jesus cares. Therefore, build on the right foundation, build on Christ the Lord.

### Welcome evening


At a later date, September 11, the congregation hosted a welcome evening for Rev. J. van Popta and his family.

Again, attendance was high. The vice-chairman of the consistory, Br. Ed Tams, opened the evening in the usual Christian manner and also incorporated a fitting poem into his opening remarks. He then gave the floor to Br. John Voorhorst who was the Master of Ceremonies. A full and varied evening of entertainment followed.

Various individuals and many church and school groups participated. The audience enjoyed musical pieces performed by groups of young ladies; songs sung by both the junior and senior choirs; one soloist, Br. Bill Selles, sang about our infamous west wind.

Verses were recited by ladies from the Wednesday morning Bible Study

and Ladies' Aid. Youth study groups and students from Coaldale Christian School also performed well. One of the groups gave gifts to the van Popta family. Each gift was a grocery item that is grown, raised, or processed in Southern Alberta. So the manse cupboards are no longer bare.

The van Popta family was also enlightened about the history of the Coaldale Church in a piece written by Br. Dirk Kok. Sr. Bertha de Vries took on the daunting task of explaining some of the familial ties within the church in a speech entitled "Relativity." The evening ended with Rev. van Popta's thank-you and prayer, followed by refreshments and fellowship in the church foyer. 

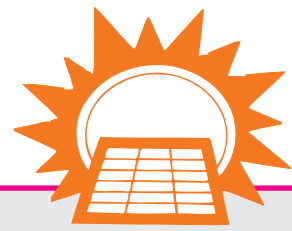
*Coaldale's Youth Choir performing a Welcome to Rev. J. van Popta family.*



*Rev. J. van Popta and family enjoying their "Welcome to Coaldale Congregation."*

*One by one, a poem and a gift was presented to welcome the van Poptas.*





By Mrs. R. Ravensbergen

*“And you, who were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,” Colossians 2:13*

## Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Sometimes you can get hurt. When you cut your finger, it hurts. Or you may fall or hit your head. There are many ways to get hurt. Sometimes you don't see where you hurt yourself, you only feel it. But when it is worse you may start bleeding, or you may even have to see the doctor. It is not nice when something like that happens, but after a while it will be all over again, and you will soon forget.

But we can also get hurt in a different way. Nobody can see it, you do not have to go to the doctor either, but it does hurt, and it may go on for a long time. That is when we get hurt inside. That may happen because somebody said something to us that really bothered us. Or maybe we did something ourselves that was not right, but we do not dare to talk about it to anybody. Band-aids and stitches cannot heal our inside feelings. When we hurt inside, we may become depressed because we do not know what to do about it.

When we read the Bible, we sometimes get confronted with the fact that we are not very good. We are reminded of our sins that we commit every day. That gives us a guilty feeling: it hurts inside! Maybe we are trying to fight our bad habits and the things that we do wrong. But then we hear from the Bible that our sins will always be there, and we get depressed. We hurt inside, and who can help us?

Well, there is hope and comfort for us! For we will never hear about our sins, or we will hear something else, too. The Lord punishes those who live in sin. In the times of the Old Testament the people had to go to the temple and sacrifice an animal. That was to wash away their sins. But the blood of the animals could not really do anything for the people. It was only to help them see that their sins would be forgiven through the blood of their Saviour. For the Lord had promised them a Saviour, Who would come and be killed just like the animals on the altar. Because that Saviour would be the Son of God, His blood *could* wash away their sins.

In the meantime that has happened already. Jesus Christ came to earth and He paid for the sins of all the believers. Everyone who puts his/her hope and trust in Him has the assurance that his/her sins are forgiven through Him.

But sometimes we forget, or we doubt the promises that we are given in God's Word. Jesus may have died, but what does it help us now? We still sin every day, and we still hurt inside because of things that we should not have done! Sometimes the words that we hear and/or read seem to have so little meaning!

The Lord knows that! He knows our sins and weaknesses. He also loves us, and He does not want us to hurt. Therefore He helps us. He sent us His Holy Spirit, Who works faith into our hearts. Faith that enables us to believe all the things that are written in the Bible. And to strengthen that faith, He also instituted the Holy Supper. Very regularly we celebrate the Holy Supper. We can see that, and many of us can *taste* the bread and the wine. With the bread and the wine the Lord wants to remind us that Christ's body was broken and that His blood was shed for *our* sins.

With the *Sacrament* of the Holy Supper and also that of the Holy Baptism, the Lord enables us to know that what we read in the Bible is really true: Christ died for all our sins. He forgives us, when we repent and feel bad about it. He takes all our sins away from us, and with that He opens up for us a glorious future. About that future we can read in the Bible as well. It will be all there for us. With help of the Holy Spirit, we can be filled with hope and eagerness to see all the last promises fulfilled.

Together we may wait for the Day in which we may be relieved of all our pains and all our sins. That day *will* come; our sins *are* forgiven. We are reminded of that every time when the Lord's Supper is celebrated. We give thanks and praise to our heavenly Father and to Jesus Christ Who gave up everything to free us from our sins, so that none of us has to hurt inside or to become depressed. Instead of that, we all can rejoice and give thanks to Him.

*The Lord preserves the helpless graciously;  
For, when brought low, in Him I found salvation.  
Come, O my soul, relieved from tribulation,  
Turn to your rest; the Lord has favoured me.*

*What shall I render to my Saviour now  
For all the riches of His consolation?  
With joy I'll take the cup of His salvation,  
And call upon His Name with thankful vow.*

*Psalms 116:4,7*

## Birthdays in December:

### 1: Marten Jansen

325-24 William Street, Shelburne, ON L0N 1S1

Congratulations with your 9th birthday, Marten!  
Until next month,

Mrs. R. Ravensbergen,  
7462 Reg.Rd. 20, RR #1, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0  
e-mail: rwravens@netcom.ca



# Our Korean Connection

By J. Faber

Once every four years the International Congress on Calvin Research is convened somewhere in this world. It is a congress of a limited number of theologians and historians who are interested in the life and work of John Calvin (1509-1584) and who receive an invitation to participate. After Edinburgh (1994) the congress was held for the first time on Asian soil, namely in the city of Seoul in South-Korea at the end of August 1998.

Apart from the Korean delegation about seventy participants came from Canada, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, South Africa, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Let me mention some colleagues from the Netherlands: Dr. C. Augustijn (Amsterdam), Dr. W. Janse (Leiden), Dr. W. van 't Spijker and his successor, Dr. H. J. Selderhuis (Apeldoorn), and last but not least Dr. F. van der Pol (Kampen) and drs. E. A. de Boer (Krimpen). This was the first time that our sister institution in Kampen was represented at an International Congress on Calvin Research. As you will understand, my successor, Dr. N. H. Gootjes, and I felt quite at home especially with our Dutch brothers in this academic assembly.

Although it would be interesting to report on this Seventh Congress, its programme and the organizing academic institutions in Korea, this article in *Clarion* is meant to tell something about our church relations with Korea and especially with Korea Theological Seminary. Korea Theological Seminary is the institute of training for the ministry within the Kosin Presbyterian Church, our sister churches in South Korea. This seminary was previously located in Pusan.

### Three sections

Dr. Gootjes and I had decided to arrive in Korea before the Lord's Day at the beginning of the week of the Calvin Congress. It would give us the opportunity to have some contact with former



Seoul, August 31, 1998  
Ministers of the Independent Reformed Church. Right: Rev. Nack Jae Choi, in whose church (Gang Byun Church) I lectured for members of the I.R.C.



Seoul, August 31, 1998 – Campus Yonsei University. Ministers of the Independent Reformed Church (right: Rev. Heon Soo Kim, my translator; left: Rev. Nack Jae Choi)

students of Dr. Gootjes of whom I especially mention Dr. Hae-Moo Yoo.

Our readers know that before Dr. Gootjes came to Canada, he laboured in Korea Theological Seminary in Pusan for more than ten years. He did so on behalf of the Dutch Deputies for Contact with Churches Abroad. Hae-Moo Yoo, one of his most valuable students, functioned as his first assistant, especially for correcting his Korean and later he went for graduate studies to the Theological University in Kampen. He was one of the paranymphs (assistants) at the promotion ceremony of our Dr. J. de Jong. In Korea I saw a picture of this ceremony which I had not seen before. Also Hae-

Moo Yoo himself obtained the doctor's degree at our sister institution in Kampen. His dissertation in the year 1990 was about infra- and supralapsarianism in the theology of the Netherlands in the nineteenth and twentieth century! Dr. Yoo was then appointed professor of doctrine in Pusan and has written a Reformed dogmatics in outline. We live in a small world. In this Korean book on dogmatics I saw a reference to Inheritance Publications in Neerlandia, Alberta! The Yoo family is trilingual and hopes to spend their sabbatical year in Kampen, beginning in December of this year.



In anticipation of the relocation of Korea Theological Seminary Dr. and Mrs. Yoo and their four children had already moved from the harbour city of Pusan to a lovely spot in the mountains close to Chon-Ahn (or Chonan), ninety kilometres south of Seoul. There they were the gracious hosts of Dr. Gootjes and myself before and of Dr. and Mrs. Van der Pol and myself after the Calvin Congress.

***The first missionaries landed only a good century ago, namely in 1885. . . . there are ten million Presbyterians today. They form between sixty and seventy percent of the entire Protestant population.***

At the beginning of June 1998, I had received an invitation from the Senate of Korea Theological Seminary to deliver a guest lecture on the occasion of the opening of their new facilities in Chon-Ahn. The opening of the new campus of our academic sister institution coincided with the Seventh International Congress on Calvin Research. Since we regarded this coincidence an act of God's providence and since the last general synod of the Canadian Reformed churches had expressed a wish for closer contact between Hamilton, Kampen and (formerly) Pusan, we decided to skip the registration of the Calvin Congress and to attend the official opening of the new buildings of our sister institution on August 25. Moreover, I was able to change my travel plans and to accept the invitation to lecture during a Reformation mini-conference in Chon-Ahn at the beginning of September.

Our first stay in Chon-Ahn was, therefore, from August 22 till August 25, the Calvin Congress was from August 25 till August 29 and my extended visit in South Korea was from August 28 till September 3, 1998. My report deals with the beginning and the end of these three sections.

### **First Impressions**

South Korea is a beautiful country of which seventy percent is mountainous so that no less than twelve million inhabitants live in the city of Seoul alone. This capital is very modern, since it was almost completely destroyed in the Korean War (1950-1953) and had to be rebuilt in the fifties and sixties. Koreans are intelligent and hardworking people and in spite of the recent financial crisis the country makes an extremely prosperous impression, especially in the urban areas.

Let me, however, make some remarks about the development of Christianity and church in South Korea. Some speak also here in a somewhat derogatory manner of a "success story." One is amazed to hear that the first missionaries landed only a good century ago, namely in 1885. One was a Presbyterian and the other a Methodist. In 1955 there were four thousand churches and one million believers. By 1997 they had increased to forty thousand churches and twelve million believers. The numbers in my sources do not always add up but according to one of them, there are ten million Presbyterians today. They form between sixty and seventy percent of the entire Protestant population. Twenty percent of the Koreans are Protestants, seven percent Roman Catholics, twenty percent are Buddhists and fifty-three percent declare to have no religion at all. There are about five and a half thousand Korean missionaries working all over the world.

When we hear these and other numbers, Westerners are inclined to be sceptical. We know of certain wrong missionary methods and church growth movements. We are aware of the fact that Westernization and Christianization sometimes go hand in hand and we met some Korean Presbyterians whom we regard as "yuppies." But I also know of the weaknesses in the Christianization of my Frisian and Saxon forefathers. Therefore, it gives me shivers of joy, when a lady who sells fish on the market in Chon-Ahn says "Hallelujah!" when she hears that we are Christians. I believe a holy catholic church, united in the praise of the LORD.

In Chon-Ahn or its surrounding area there is no Kosin Presbyterian church as yet. On the first Lord's Day, Dr. Yoo, Dr. Gootjes, and I went to an Independent Reformed Church in Daejeon (or Taejeon). The Rev. Heon Soo Kim of Daejeon studied under Dr. Richard Gaffin at Westminster Theological Seminary in

Philadelphia. He distributes the Korean writings of Dr. Gootjes and is in the process of translating the Heidelberg Catechism into Korean. The small federation of Independent Reformed congregations is established by mostly former members of the Hapdong Presbyterian Church. It moves, as far as I could discern, more in the direction of European continental Reformed churches. The hymns we sung in the worship service had a Scriptural, Trinitarian content. The Rev. H. S. Kim had provided me with an English translation.

After the service the congregation stayed in the pews and there was an intensive question period. I noticed how fluent my successor still is in the Korean language and how the fruits of his labour there still blossom. While he and our colleague, Yoo, went on to a sister church in Seoul for an evening service, the Rev. Kim accompanied me back to Chon-Ahn and questioned me about the significance of German terms in our beloved Heidelberg Catechism.

***My stay in South Korea was not only gratifying because of academic endeavours, but also because of ecclesiastical contacts. . . . Let us not forget our Korean connection!***

Tuesday, August 25 was the great day of the opening of the huge new complex of our sister institution. It was also a great day for the Rev. Dr. S.G. Hur. Especially our Australian readers know him well. After he had defended his doctor's thesis on the office of elder, he left Kampen and served in the training for the ministry at Pusan. He took a ten-year break from this teaching by becoming a minister in our Australian sister churches. Some years after he had returned to Pusan, he became the principal of Korea Theological Seminary and oversaw the move to Chon-Ahn. He hopes to retire at the beginning of next year but August 25, 1998, was certainly to him a glorious pinnacle of gratitude in his career. The huge auditorium was filled and the atmosphere reminded me of the first "Theologische Schooldagen" after the Liberation in

the Netherlands. Dr. Hur was obviously pleased with the Hamilton representation: he made us rise and receive a thunderous applause.

## Extended Stay

### 1. Ecclesiastical contacts

As far as further ecclesiastical contacts are concerned, after the Calvin Congress I had the privilege on Sunday, August 30, 1998, to preach in Seo Moon Presbyterian Church in Seoul in the same magnificent building in which the I.C.R.C. held its assembly last year. The Rev. Park, who had also studied in Kampen for a while, translated my English sermon sentence by sentence. It means that the preaching time is almost cut in half and that you have to use short sentences in order not to lose the attention of the hearers. But my experience was that the message became more direct.

Besides this contact with brothers and sisters of our sister church, I again had intensive contact with the Independent Reformed Church (IRC). The Rev. H. S. Kim had organized that on the last evening of August I would deliver a shortened and simplified version of my lecture on Calvin's doctrine of Word and Spirit in an address to members of IRC congregations in Seoul. The IRC arranged that I lodged for two nights in Allen House, the guest house of the oldest Korean University – Yonsei University, 30,000 students –, lunched with four pastors of the IRC, and exchanged with them information about our respective churches and their history.

The evening lecture for the general public was held in Gang Byun church in Seoul and was led by pastor Nack Jae Choi. Some Independent Reformed Church members had made a five-hour drive in order to attend! The Rev. Kim had prepared a Korean translation of my outline, had multiplied the English version of my entire lecture, and served as my able translator. There was a very intelligent question period, facilitated by the fact that all attendants had received a copy of the outline in the Korean language. Those who read English could even purchase a copy of the lecture itself. At the end of the evening the Rev. Choi gave an elegant and eloquent word of thanks and an elder handed me a "thank you" note written in the Korean language.

### 2. Academic Contacts

Let me tell about the mini-conference on the Reformation and especially



*Chon-Ahn, September 1, 1998  
Faculty Kosin Theological Seminary (Korea Theological Seminary) In the midst: Dr. Hur. At left side: Mrs. Yoo and the van der Pols from Kampen.*



*Chon-Ahn, September 2, 1998  
New facilities of Kosin Theological Seminary (Korea Theological Seminary)*

on Calvin in the new auditorium in Chon-Ahn, September 1 - 3, 1998. The Kampen professor of church history, Dr. Frank van der Pol, lectured on the reception of the church fathers, especially Hilary of Poitiers, in the Reformation. Dr. I. John Hesselink of Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan, addressed the faculty of thirteen professors and a student body of more than three hundred persons in a lecture dealing with the topic "Calvin on Law and Freedom."

On Tuesday, September 1, 1998, I myself lectured under the title "Word and Spirit in Calvin's Institutes." Dr. H. M. Yoo, my colleague in Dogmatology, had requested this topic. I assumed that he wanted me to refute (neo-) pentecostalism. The lecture was well received and evoked a lively discussion. It became clear to me that my assumption had been right. Not everyone – I think, not even my translator – agreed with my thesis that Calvin's strong conjunction of Word and Spirit is timely over against the renewal of sixteenth

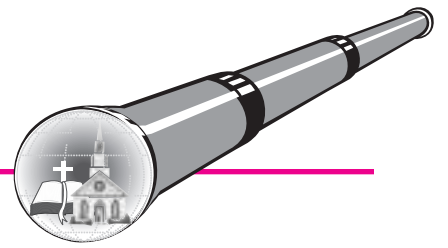
century spiritualism in 20th century (neo-) pentecostalism.

On the same day Dr. Frank van der Pol and I were present in an ad hoc Senate meeting. We had a long and important discussion about the relationships of our three institutions: Kampen, Chon-Ahn and Hamilton. It will be good to continue this oral consultation between Chon-Ahn, Hamilton and Kampen from time to time, e.g. during the meeting of the I.C.R.C.

### Conclusion

My stay in South Korea was not only gratifying because of academic endeavours, but also because of ecclesiastical contacts. I was deeply impressed by the fruits of the ten years of quite lonesome labours of Dr. N. H. Gootjes, my successor in Dogmatology at Hamilton. I now understand why during their stay in South Korea the Gootjes family came to love not only the land but especially the Korean brothers and sisters. Let us not forget our Korean connection!





# Observation Deck

## Church Membership and Divorce

By J. VanRietschoten

The Winnipeg Free Press of Wednesday, September 16, 1998, carried an article by Tracy Tjaden entitled, "God Raises Odds of Marital Bliss, StatsCan says." The article refers to a recent study by Statistics Canada.

This study shows that religious people's marriages last longer. Eighty-nine percent of people who attended church weekly stayed married at least 10 years, compared to 74 percent of non-church-going couples. People who go to church weekly place greater importance on marriage and family, the study found. Doug Koop, editor of the Winnipeg-based publication *Christian Week*, said the findings came as no surprise. "Churches tend to teach that you are not the highest priority. Honour others above yourself and God above that," he said. "One or the other is not the boss, and you both believe God is the boss." If a person hears those lessons enough and taps into them in their everyday life, the results will show through, he said. "If on a regular basis you're hearing about perseverance, love, reconciliation and mutual submission, it's going to rub off," Koop said.

The study comes at a time when recent national surveys are tracking a sharp decline in church attendance across the country. This study said between 1961 and 1996 the percentage of Canadians who said they had no religion rose to 14 percent from one per cent. . . . The study found 16 per cent of weekly church-goers who got married in the 1970s were divorced in 15 years, compared to 34 per cent of couples who didn't attend church regularly.

According to the study, couples who go to church are willing to put up with more. It found weekly attendees were less likely to view lack of love and respect or their partner's drinking habits as grounds for divorce. . . . The article uses data

from a 1995 general survey of 10,000 people aged 15 and older, and other more recent studies.

In an insert the *Winnipeg Free Press* added that it found Manitobans to be above the national average in church attendance.

In Manitoba, 22 per cent of people 15 and older attend church weekly compared to the national average of 20 percent. . . . The province has a greater proportion of people who belong to the higher-attending denominations – Baptist, Pentecostal, Salvation Army, Church of the Nazarene and Mennonite. Known as Conservative Protestant religions, these denominations have higher attendance rates than some others.

The percentages of church-going people ending up in divorce apparently are lower. Over a period of ten years the ratio is 11% against 26% and over fifteen years 16% over against 34%. This shows a more favourable picture for church-going people than for non-church-going people. The percentage of church-going people ending up in divorce is still high – too high.

The Manitoba newspaper does not specifically take into account the Canadian Reformed Churches. What would a survey of all Canadian Reformed Churches show? Possibly the survey would show a considerable higher percentage of people attending church twice every Lord's Day and a much lower divorce rate over ten or fifteen years. Whatever the outcome of such a survey would be, one thing is sure. However low and favourable the divorce rate might be for Canadian Reformed couples, the number would still be too high. An important factor in the Canadian Reformed Churches is the strong bond between the church and marriage. Though solemnization of marriages no longer takes place in a regular worship service, the minister, elders and congregation are nevertheless fully

involved. The bans are announced, not only because of government requirement but also by congregational requirement. The solemnization of marriages takes place with the consent of the elders and the congregation. The church is teaching the members of the church the duties toward God and the neighbour. This includes the teaching concerning marriage.

The most effective prevention of divorce is preparing for marriage in holiness and with knowledge of what God requires from husband and wife in marriage. During marriage preparation sessions the minister leads the couple to the commitment they are making to each other before the Lord. In this manner the couple learns not just to be "willing to put up with more." Preparation for marriage in the Lord by the church teaches us the way of repentance and forgiveness by two living Christians bound together as long as they live. Instead of boasting in a low divorce rate in the Reformed Churches let us aim for an ever lower rate by entering into marriage well prepared in the bond of Christ. **C**



# BOOK NOTICES

By N.H. Gootjes

**The Westminster Standards: An Original Facsimile.** Audubon, New Jersey: Old Paths' Publications, 1997; hard-cover, 250 pages, \$ 49.95 US and **The Westminster Standards: An Original Facsimile on CD-ROM,** Audubon, New Jersey: Old Paths' Publications, 1997 \$29.95 US

Many important confessions and catechisms were made during the 16th and 17th Century. Among these, the Westminster Confession and Catechisms have a special place. It could be argued that these confessions form the end of the confessional development in the Reformed Churches, worldwide. Particularly the Westminster Confession and the Larger Catechism are more comprehensive than almost all confessions produced previously.

These confessional statements were made at an Assembly consisting of the most learned theologians in England and Scotland at the time. Many months of theological discussions and debates are reflected in the carefully worded statements.<sup>1</sup> Due to the peculiar situation of the church in England, the government determined the direction of the national church. Both the Westminster Confession and the two catechisms were intended as an advice to the Parliament of England for the reformation of the church in England. As such, they

almost failed completely. As a result of a turnabout in the political situation in 1652, these confessional statements never gained official status in the English churches. They never really functioned in the churches for which they were made.

They were, however, adopted in the Presbyterian church of Scotland. From there they were exported to the USA, and many USA missionaries carried these confessional statements with them to their mission fields. As a result, the Westminster Confession and the Shorter Catechism may well be the most widely used confessional statements in the Reformed world.


Of course, there are many editions of these confessions available, and the question must be asked why yet another edition was published. How does this edition distinguish itself from other available editions? This edition is valuable for its originality and comprehensiveness. It is original, since it is a facsimile edition of the first edition containing the Scripture proofs. No one can afford to buy an original edition, but now this edition can be consulted. According to a note in the front of the book, the text is more easily legible than in the slightly damaged original. Moreover, the book contains not only the well known Larger Catechism, the Shorter Catechism and

the Westminster Confession, but also the Westminster Directory for Public Worship. It also includes the revision of the first 15 articles of the Thirty Nine Articles, on which the Westminster Assembly worked before it was decided to make a new confession.

The whole is preceded by a brief Foreword by Dr. W.S. Barker. I, for one, would have liked him to say more about the history of the making of this confession, rather than elaborate on the history following the Westminster Assembly. This lack, however, is partly alleviated by the chronological chart printed on the back of the cover.

All in all, this is a valuable reprint of the Westminster Standards, splendidly bound.

Also available is an interactive, multi-media CD-ROM of the same material. It comes complete with Adobe Acrobat Reader installer software for Windows, Windows 95, Windows NT, Macintosh, Power Macintosh and Unix platforms. Printer drivers and installation instructions are included.

<sup>1</sup>See for a recent study that takes into account the history behind the Westminster Confession, R.D. Anderson, 'Of the Church: An Historical Overview of the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 25' in *Westminster Theological Journal* 59, 2 (1997), 177-199. 

# PRESS RELEASES



## Press Release, Classis Pacific-East October 1st, 1998

1. Opening: The chairman of the convening church at Aldergrove called the meeting to order, requested singing of Psalm 147:1, 4, read Ephesians 1 and led in prayer. He welcomed the brothers. After the credentials were checked, the classis was constituted. As moderamen were appointed Rev. M. VanLuik (chairman), Rev. R. Schouten (vice-chairman) and Rev. C. VanderVelde (clerk). Following some words from the Rev. VanLuik about recent

events in the life of the churches in this classical area, an agenda for the meeting was adopted.

2. Correspondence:

- a) A letter was received from the church at Aldergrove informing classis of the resignation and withdrawal of the Rev. H. Boersma and his family.
- b) A letter was received from the church at Aldergrove requesting Classis to appoint Rev. R. Schouten as counselor and to grant monthly pulpit supply. These requests were granted.

c) A letter was received from the church at Vernon requesting classical financial support. This request was granted.

d) Four appeals from church members against actions of their consistory were dealt with in closed session.

3. Reports:

- a) A report was received from the Classis Pacific East Needy Fund.
- b) A report was received from the Classis Pacific East Fund.
- c) Visitation reports was read regarding the churches at Aldergrove, Lynden and Yarrow.

- d) A report was read from the auditor of the previous Classis Pacific Fund for the period Jan. 01, 1997 - Dec. 31st, 1997 informing classis that the books were found to be in good order.
4. Question Period according to Article 44, Church Order. During question period, a church sought and received advice in a matter of church discipline.
5. Appointments:
- Chilliwack was appointed as convening church for the next classis to take place, Lord willing on Dec. 10, 1998 (alternate date is March 25th, 1999).
  - Suggested officers for the next classis: R. Schouten (chairman), C. VanderVelde (vice-chairman) and W. Wielenga (clerk).
  - The committee for examinations was reappointed as were the examiners in various subjects. Rev. D. Moes was appointed as examiner in Doctrine and Creeds (to replace Rev. H. Boersma).
  - Church visitors were reappointed (D. Moes, M. VanLuik, R. Schouten with W. Wielenga and C. Vandervelde as alternates).
  - Abbotsford was reappointed as archive church with Yarrow as Archive Inspection church.
  - R. Leyenhorst was reappointed as classis treasurer
  - Vernon was reappointed as church to audit the books of the classis treasurer.
  - The committee for financial aid to students of the ministry was reappointed.
  - The committee for needy churches was reappointed.
  - Classis appointed the following brothers as delegates to Regional Synod West, Dec. 01, 1998: Ministers: R. Schouten, M. VanLuik, W. Wielenga (alternates: C. Vandervelde, D. Moes – in that order). Elders: J. Bareman, B. Vane, P. VanSpronsen (alternates: G. Boeve, H. DeLeeuw, D. Doesburg - in that order).
6. Closing matters: Question Period was held. Censure according to Art. 34, C.O., was not necessary. The Acts were read and adopted, the Press Release approved. After singing of Hymn 63, the chairman led the delegates in closing prayer.

For Classis,  
R. Schouten, Vice-chairman e.t.

## Press Release of Classis Pacific West held on October 6, 1998 in Houston, B.C.

### Article 1: Opening

On behalf of the convening Church, Rev. J. Louwse requested the delegates to sing Ps. 122:2,3. After the singing he read the same Psalm and led in prayer. All were welcomed to the meeting. All Churches were properly represents. Classis was constituted. Rev. J. Visscher was appointed as chairman, Rev. E. Kampen as vice-chairman, and Rev. J. Louwse as clerk. The chairman complimented the Church at Houston on their beautiful new facilities. The agenda was adopted.

### Article 2: Instructions from the Churches

- In closed session Classis dealt with requests from the Churches at Cloverdale, Houston and Smithers for advice in matters of discipline.
- Since no objections were received regarding the Classical Regulations provisionally adopted at the Classis held on March 31, 1998, they were formally adopted.

### Article 3: Reports

- The Church at Smithers reported that the books of the treasurer had been audited and found in good order.
- A letter was received from Classis Pacific East held on Oct. 1, 1998 regarding support for Needy Churches.
- A letter was received from the Committee for Aid to Needy Churches with a suggestion for revision of their mandate. Classis did not see the need to take over the suggestion.

### Article 4: Question Period

Question period according to Article 44 C.O. was held.

### Article 5: Appointments

- The Church at Langley was appointed to convene the next Classis on Dec. 8, 1998, with the alternate date of April 13, 1999. Suggested as officers for that classis were: Rev. E. Kampen as chairman, Rev. J. Louwse as vice-chairman and Rev. J. Huijgen as clerk.
- Classis delegated the following elders and ministers to the Regional Synod West scheduled for Dec. 1, 1998 in Taber, AB.  
Elders: H. Hoogstra, F. Kleine-Deeters, J. VanVeen.

(Alternates: F. Hofsink, P. DeBoer, J. Knol.)  
Ministers: E. Kampen,  
C. Van Spronsen, J. Visscher.  
(Alternates: J. Huijgen, J. Louwse)

### Article 6: Personal Question Period, Censure, Acts, Press Release

Personal question was held. The chairman noted with thankfulness that censure was not necessary. The Acts were read and adopted. The Press Release was approved.

### Article 7: Closing

The chairman requested the members of classis to sing Hymn 40:1,5. After the singing he led in prayer. Classis was closed.

On behalf of Classis Pacific West,  
Oct. 6, 1998  
Rev. E. Kampen

## Press Release of Classis Ontario-South, Oct. 7, 1998 held in Attercliffe

The delegates of the church at Hamilton called the meeting to order. We sang Ps. 121:1,2, read the same Psalm, and called on the Name of the Lord asking for His blessing upon the meeting. Classis was constituted. A special welcome was extended to Rev. A. DeGraaf and his wife. The Rev. G. Van Popta served as chairman, Rev. J. Ludwig as vice-chairman, and Rev. C. Stam as clerk. After some additions the agenda was adopted. The documents for the approbation of the call extended to Rev. A. DeGraaf and for his colloquium were submitted and found to be in good order. A discussion was held with Rev. A. DeGraaf on Reformed doctrine and polity. In closed session Classis expressed its positive assessment of the colloquium and granted approbation of the call. Rev. A. DeGraaf, his wife, and visitors were invited back into the meeting and informed of the decision of Classis.

After thanking the Lord in praise and prayer, the delegates received opportunity to congratulate Rev. and Mrs. DeGraaf and wish them the Lord's blessing.

In closed session Classis dealt with the appeal of a brother. This appeal was declared inadmissible. Still in closed session the request of the Church at Rockway to approbate their decision to depose Rev. T. Hoogsteen was read and discussed. Classis, with the concurring


advice of the deputies of regional synod, approved their request. Following this decision Classis sang Ps. 102: 1,6 and sought the Lord in prayer.

Classis approved the following reports: Fund for Needy churches (\$12.00/communicant member); Classical Treasurer (\$3.00/communicant member); Fund for Needy Students (\$5.00/communicant member).

These appointments were made:

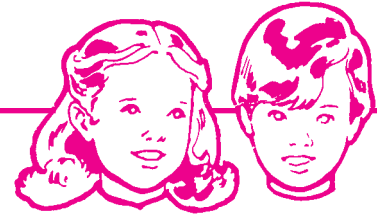
1. Delegates to Regional Synod East Nov. 11, 1998
  2. Convening church of next classis: Lincoln
  3. Place: Hamilton
  4. Date: Dec. 9, 1998 at 9:00 a.m.
  5. Suggested officers:  
Chairman – Rev. J. VanVliet  
Vice – Rev. C. Stam  
Clerk – Rev. G. VanPopta
- The delegates were given opportunity to reply to the questions ad article

44 of the CO. The chairman judges that everything was done decently and in good order (ad Art. 34). Question period was made use of. The Acts of Classis were read and adopted. The Press Release was read and approved. The chairman requested that we sing Ps. 121: 3,4 and Rev. J. Ludwig closed in thanksgiving and prayer.

Vice-chairman at that time,  
Rev. J. Ludwig 

## OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

By Aunt Betty



### Dear Busy Beavers

Don't you think that having a birthday is wonderful fun? You usually get lots of presents, have a party with all your brothers, sisters, cousins, friends, and lots of other people, and there's always lots to eat and do. Oh yes, I have always loved having a birthday, and I still do. There are several birthdays in November. I wish you all a happy birthday, and hope you have a wonderful time. May God grant you everything you need, both now and in the future.



### FROM THE MAILBOX

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Amber Aasman*. It's nice to have friends who are also in the Busy Beaver Club, don't you think. I'm glad you like school sometimes. History is fun to do though, isn't it? It tells you all about what happened many years ago, even when your parents and grandparents were younger. You do have a nice big family don't you, Amber. Thank you for your puzzle, Amber. I'll put it into the next Little Magazine, okay? Have a wonderful birthday on the 27th, won't you.

Thank you, *Jaclyn Nobel*, for your letter and the puzzle you and Kathryn sent. It was great. I did get your last letter, and I wrote back to you, but I guess you didn't see it. I'm glad you had fun going camping. Was that over the school holidays? Write again, Jaclyn.

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Kathryn Nobel*. Of course you can join the Busy Beaver Club. Thanks for your puzzle you made with Jaclyn. You have a great family – three boys and three girls. And the three oldest are the girls, and the three youngest are the boys! Have you made lots of new friends at your new school? It won't take you long, I'm sure. Bye for now.

Hello again, *Melissa Brouwer*. Thank you for your little letter. I'm glad you enjoyed your school holidays and the swimming lessons. Swimming lessons are very important, don't you think. And I can imagine how fun it is to have a baby sister. Bye, Melissa.

Thank you *Nelene Brouwer*, for your letter and puzzle. It must be wonderful to have a penpal, much less two. And

one all the way from Australia! Jessica must be able to tell you lots of stories about Australia. You must have had a great time during the holidays too, from the things you did. Boy, you were busy. It must be quite exciting to have a wedding anniversary and a wedding in your family. Have fun, won't you, and write to tell me about it.

Thank also to *Sophia Brouwer* for your letter. You'll have to practice for your swimming lessons, but keep them up. You must have had a lot of fun at the choral fest. And I'm glad your Dad is getting much better now. And Rosalyn must be fun to have around. Don't forget that needles from the doctor are to keep her healthy and to stop her from getting very sick. Write again, will you Sophia.

### BIBLE NAMES

by Jaclyn and Kathryn Nobel

A	B	R	A	H	A	M	Z	K	I	S	H	G
B	A	A	B	H	D	R	S	A	E	F	M	A
E	N	R	K	M	A	E	L	I	S	H	A	B
L	M	O	O	O	P	G	B	D	A	V	T	Y
L	D	S	J	N	K	T	A	O	U	E	L	I
E	E	L	I	J	A	H	J	R	R	Z	W	E
S	T	P	J	R	J	E	S	U	S	A	T	L
T	U	A	A	Q	S	I	D	Y	C	X	H	B
H	N	V	C	N	B	E	N	J	A	M	I	N
E	O	I	O	E	I	P	I	O	E	N	B	F
R	E	D	B	D	C	E	Y	N	S	W	O	X
F	D	Q	H	C	H	A	L	A	A	D	A	M
G	I	S	A	A	C	V	B	H	R	G	Z	E
C	G	O	L	I	A	T	H	P	E	S	O	J

<b>Find:</b>	Boaz	Elijah	Isaac
Aaron	Caesar	Esau	Jacob
Abraham	David	Esther	Jesus
Adam	Daniel	Gabriel	Jonah
Abel	Deborah	Gideon	Joseph
Benjamin	Elisha	Hagar	Kish