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Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by God, to represent Christ, and His benefits; and to confirm our interest in Him: as also, to put a visible difference between those that belong unto the Church, and the rest of the world; and solemnly to engage them to the service of God in Christ, according to His Word.

Westminster Confession XXVII. 1

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The Lord's Supper

IT seems to have become customary for the first Sunday of October to be designated as World Communion Sunday. The thought is that churches all over the world will on that day observe the sacrament and in so doing give expression to their consciousness of fellowship with all other churches. Even the sacrament is thus made to serve the interests of the modern ecumenical movement.

The Lord's Supper is certainly a sacrament which places emphasis on the idea of fellowship among believers. The very fact that it is termed a "supper" brings this to the fore. But it must never be forgotten that the fellowship among believers at the Supper is based first of all upon the fact that all who believe in Christ are united to Him. Our union with one another flows from our union with the one Head, the Lord Jesus.

Furthermore, it is union with Him as the divine Son of God. It is union with Him as the eternal Person who became incarnate for our redemption, but who never ceased to be God in the very fullest sense of that word. Thus where Christ is not so known and honored, though the formal procedures of the sacrament are carried out, there is no "Lord's Supper" and no fellowship with "believers."

Again, in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper there is a remembrance of the "sacrifice of Himself in His death" for our sins. The very elements employed, the bread and the cup, are intended to set forth His body and His blood, given upon the Cross to satisfy the holy justice of God and to remove the dread penalty of eternal condemnation from those whom He there represented.

To a great many who profess to name the name of Christ, the teaching that His death was just such a sacrifice seems most abominable. They rebel in loud and bitter words against the so-called "blood" theology, and against the thought that the Creator of heaven and earth would require such a sacrifice in order that He might forgive sinners.

Of course the natural man rebels against such

teaching. But it is not a man's teaching. And it is not up to us men to decide what God is like, or what He requires of His creatures. He has told us the answer to these questions, in His own Word. And that which He has declared is not something terrible, but something wonderful. He has told us that He so loved the world, that He sent His own Son to redeem His people. And they who possess that redemption by His grace, can do nothing save rejoice in the event which brought their salvation.

This rejoicing reaches its heights as they obey His instruction: "This do ye . . . in remembrance of me." Thus the Lord's supper has here too a meaning for the true believer that it does not have and can never have for those who reject this doctrine of the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ. So that when there is no fellowship of doctrine at this point, there can be no fellowship of sacrament.

Moreover Paul told the church that in observing the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper they were holding Christ in remembrance "until He come." The Supper is an interim sacrament, an observance that takes place in the church on earth, to keep that church reminded of its Saviour Head, until the time when in power and great glory He shall come again to receive all His people into His eternal kingdom of blessedness. The Supper, in other words, also carries the message of hope, and points to the realization in glory of the complete fellowship between Christ and His church, which is but signified in the present observance. So also where this hope is not in the minds of men, the sacrament is not truly observed.

Many churches will observe the sacrament of the Lord's Supper the first Sunday of October. Whether or not it be as part of the "World Communion," let us remember that the true Communion exists only among those who hold the "Head," Christ Jesus as He is presented in Scripture. And let us remember that whenever true believers observe the sacrament properly, then there is always fellowship with the whole multitude of those that name His Name.

L. W. S.

which has been applied to it since its inception, The Reformed Ecumenical Synod. Some would have changed the name to assembly, or convention, or council, and cogent reasons were adduced therefor. However, in the eyes of the majority of the delegates, the above was most acceptable, carrying as it does not only certain ecclesiastical connotations, but also the proviso that Synod will continue to offer "advice" only, looking forward expectantly toward the day when all truly Reformed bodies will be united in one grand Calvinistic Synod.

Relations with Other Groups

The earliest matter to draw the attention of Synod was that of the affiliation of member churches with such ecumenical movements as the World Council of Churches, the International Council of Christian Churches, and the World Evangelical Fellowship. These are the respective world-wide projections of the National Council of Churches of America (formerly the Federal Council), the American Council of Christian Churches, and the National Association of Evangelicals. For clarification of things theological, it might be said that the WCC is the party of the left, with the RES on the right, the WEF holding down the center, and the ICCC standing somewhat to the right of center.

How was Synod to view membership of its affiliates with these international religious movements?

The committee charged with handling this matter brought in a report which occasioned some sharp debate and considerable lingual dubiety. In one place its report stated that membership in the World Council was "inconsistent" with membership in the Synod. This term was unclear to some of the Dutch brethren who felt that churches holding such joint membership were thus being "kicked out" of Synod.

In a moving and crystal clear speech Dr. Stonehouse pointed out that it was the position of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church that the constitution of the ICCC was not thoroughly satisfactory, especially because it did not sufficiently safeguard the evangelistic task of the Church from the encroachment of some sort of super-organization whose membership was mixed Reformed and evangelical, and that practical difficulties arose because publicity

pronouncements often involved associated churches in controversial social and political matters.

Regarding the ICCC, the following resolution was adopted: "While commending many features in the Statement of Faith constituting the basis of the International Council of Christian Churches, the Synod recognizes in the constitution and practice of this body certain features to which exception must be taken, and therefore does not at this time recommend membership in it, but leaves such membership to the judgment of the several churches."

Despite what some present felt to be a mediating viewpoint as expressed by Dr. J. B. Marais of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa (who took the stand that the theological position of the WCC was not in conflict with the Reformed position of Synod), Synod adopted the following motion: It advises member churches of Synod not to join the World Council of Churches as now constituted, and, without intending to limit the freedom of the churches to determine their own affiliation, it requests those Reformed

Churches which are already members of the WCC to reconsider their position in the light of the basically divergent confessional statements of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and the World Council of Churches.

At the same time Synod did not recommend membership of its churches in the World Evangelical Fellowship.

Apartheid

A great many hours were spent one day in examining the resolution of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church concerning the attitude of the South African Churches toward the *apartheid* (segregation) policy of the Malan government.

Dr. Stonehouse set the scene when he made two statements—(1) *Apartheid* is widely understood and publicized in the United States as being supported and sanctioned by the Reformed Churches of South Africa; and (2) that we in the churches in the United States have not by any means arrived at a satisfactory solution to the race problem, that we therefore do not at
(See "Betzold," p. 175)

A More Excellent Ministry

Sermon at an ordination service

By C. VAN TIL

"But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." II CORINTHIANS 3:18

THIS passage of Scripture is the climax of a chapter that the Apostle Paul devotes to the privileges of those who have the task assigned them by the Lord of the Church to preach the gospel.

It is formed in the pattern of a contrast, a contrast between the Old Testament situation and the New Testament situation. The Old Testament period was signalized by the fact that God's people must stay at a distance. A portion of Exodus 19 was read to you. The stress of that chapter is on this, that God's people, though they are not like others who know not God or His ways or covenant, nonetheless must stay at the foot of the mountain while Moses alone, the servant of God, might come

into the presence of God to the top of the mountain. So there is contrast between the servants of God in the New Testament period who are called to build up the church of Jesus Christ, and the servant Moses who in the Old Testament period had to lead the people of God closer to God, but also had to keep them at a distance.

But back of this contrast between the Old Testament and the New Testament preaching of the gospel is a deeper contrast—the contrast between those who know not God, and those who know Him through the Saviour Jesus Christ. For the Old Testament believers as well as those of the New Testament ate of that same spiritual food, Paul tells us, and drank of that same spiritual rock, which was Christ. Thus there is one company of people, Old and New Testament believers together, constituting the church of Jesus Christ, the body of the redeemed, those for whom Christ gave His life, and for

whose justification He rose from the dead. And on the other hand are those not His people, who will not hear the gospel call, who have been disobedient in Adam, have not obeyed the gospel, and are not now God's people.

Those that are not God's people are portrayed to us as being in darkness, and those that are God's people are portrayed to us as living in the light of the Son of God.

Those in darkness have had their own prophets to speak to them. Plato, for instance, the great Greek philosopher, in that matchless allegory of the cave, spoke of men as being chained by their necks, their heads turned into the cave, away from the sunlight back of them. They can see only shadows on the wall. They hear only echoes. It seems that these shadows are speaking with one another. And these echoes and shadows typify mankind. And when one of these men, for some reason Plato cannot explain, has his chains removed and comes to the sunlight and sees things as they really are, and then goes back to his fellowmen who are still bound, they will not believe him. They say he is seeing visions and has been dreaming dreams. They think they are the ones that see the truth, and that he is a visionary who has imagined things for himself, so that he talks wildly about seeing the sun and the colors of the rainbow. He is a dreamer.

Yet he has seen the sun, and he it is who does see things as they are. And he proclaims the truth of God to men. So the Apostle says that it is we, God's people, who have been given this task, to bring the light of the gospel to those in darkness, that they too may be translated out of the darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son.

And as ministers of the gospel we of the New Testament dispensation are not only taken out of darkness into light, but also in distinction from Old Testament believers we have a greater fulness of light. It is of that greater fulness of the light of the gospel which New Testament ministers preach and teach that this text speaks.

Notice these three points. We New Testament believers and preachers see better than Old Testament believers and preachers did. Secondly we see more. We see something they did not see. We see the glory of the Lord. And in the third place, we are changed more thoroughly than they were. As

Eternal Predestination

These sentences are from John Knox's Preface to his writing known as "Of God's Predestination." We believe they are so relevant to the church's need at this time that we commend them as worthy of serious study. The language and spelling have been slightly modernized to bring out the great Reformer's meaning. Submitted by the Rev. Norman Caswell, Parry Sound, Ontario, Canada.

THE doctrine of God's eternal predestination is so necessary to the Church of God that without the same faith cannot either be truly taught or surely established; man can never be brought to true humility and knowledge of himself, neither can he be ravished in admiration of God's eternal goodness and so moved to praise Him as he ought.

For first, there is no way more proper to build and establish faith than when we hear and believe that our election, which the Spirit of God seals in our hearts, consists not in ourselves, but in the eternal and unchangeable good pleasure of God. And that in such firmness that it cannot be overthrown, either by the ravaging storms of the world, nor by the assaults of Satan, neither yet by the wavering and weakness of our own flesh. Then only is our salvation in assurance, when we find the cause of the same in the bosom and counsel of God.

In Jesus Christ do we find liberty and life, and in the promises of His gospel is founded the stability of our salvation. But yet we have a joy which far surpasses this. For although we should feel that our hearts were some-

what moved to believe, yet only as the very cause of our faith be known can our comfort and joy be full. For if we shall think that we believe and have embraced Christ Jesus preached because our brains are better than the brains of others, and because we have a better inclination and are by nature more tractable than the common sort of men, Satan, I say, can easily overthrow all comfort built on so weak a ground. For it may be that those who today are tractable and obedient and have some zeal for godliness may shortly after sin and be left so barren that they rather tremble at the sight of God's judgments than rejoice in the free adoption of His children. Therefore I say that except our comfort is grounded upon that foundation that never can be moved, it is not perfect. And that ground is this—when we understand that we now believe in Christ Jesus because we were ordained before the beginning of all times to believe in Him, as in Him we were elected to the society of eternal life (Romans 8:28-34; Eph. 1; II Thess. 2:13; *et al*). Then is our faith assuredly grounded, and that because the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, and He is faithful that called us. For however we are changeable, yet is God in His counsel (purpose) stable and unchangeable. The comfort of this none feel except the chosen children of God.

Therefore as faith springs from election, so is it established by the true knowledge of that doctrine only which this day is most furiously fought against by those who do not understand it.

a result of what we have seen, we are changed as by the Spirit of the Lord.

The Better Vision

The Apostle begins by saying—But *we all*, with open face . . . In contrast to the fact that Moses went to the mountain top alone, he says we *all* go up. Moses prayed that famous prayer, Oh that all God's people might be prophets,—that they might have spiritual understanding, that I might be able to take them to the mountain top and display to them the glories to be seen there. But they are of poor vision.

They see not the end, the meaning, of these sacrifices they bring daily. They understand not that the blood of bulls and goats points to the blood of Him who is the Son of God and Son of Man, who alone through His shedding of His blood can bring remission of man's sins.

So they wander in the valley. They do not perceive clearly and persistently the purpose of these things. But we all go to the mountain top. None must stay behind. No aged or sick, no mothers with infants need remain at home. In the New Testament all

God's people without exception may take this trip to the mountain top, to glory, to see what is there to be seen.

And we see *with open face*. This again is in contrast with the Old Testament. They saw with veiled face. When Moses had been to the mountain, in the presence of God, he came down with glory shining in his face. The glory was too bright for them. So as it were they put veils on their faces, and Moses put a veil on his face. He adjusted the glory of the revelation of God to the poor eyesight of the believers.

But we all, with open face, with good eyes, with telescopes, good telescopes that bring distant things near so that we can see them clearly and exhaustively in their relationships one to another, behold the glory of the Lord. This is our privilege as New Testament believers.

On the old Route 30 through Pennsylvania, there is a place at the top of one of the mountains where you can stop and look through a telescope at various sections of the country, even at several states of the union. And when a family stops there, and each one looks, then each one individually says, O, how wonderful! But in that of which Paul speaks, each as it were has his own telescope. He has it in his eyes. And so all say simultaneously, O, how wonderful! That is the communion of the saints, to give expression simultaneously to the wonder of the glory of the Lord.

Further, Paul says, *beholding*. He uses the present participle. In the Old Testament even Moses went to the top only once—or twice because of the disobedience of the people. But after that he had to live on the memory of that one great event of the past. If you have been to Europe or somewhere, and you've seen strange things, you come back and tell your relatives and friends about them. At first they stand out clear in your mind. But after fifteen or twenty years memory dims, and you speak in more vague terms.

But in this of which Paul speaks, you live there every day. You don't make one vacation trip to the mountain top, or have one mountain top experience of an emotional uplift sort, but each morning you rise in the presence of the panoramic vision of the glory of God. Every day you see the glorious scenery.

So Paul describes the privilege of New Testament believers. They all

may see, instead of Moses going alone. They all may see with open face and clear vision, and they all may see constantly, not dependent, as was Moses, on one distant event.

But supposing this more excellent vision all existed, and there wasn't much to be seen. It has happened on occasion, when a family planned a picnic visit to some mountain to see beautiful scenery, and all the preparations were made, that the day turns out to be misty. In spite of good eyes, and telescopes, and all, you find a fog, and you can't see anything.

The Better Object Seen

But in the things of which Paul speaks, this does not happen. It was to some extent true of the Old Testament believers. They saw vaguely, in the distance, things yet to come. Those things were delineated to them more specifically through God's prophets as time went on. But even the greatest of them did not see what we in the New Testament have seen and can see—the glory of the Lord.

What does he mean by this? It seems to me he means, the glorified

Lord, the Lord of glory, who humbled Himself though He was God and thought it not robbery to be called equal with God, humbled himself to death, even the death of the cross. In that humiliation He was glorious. We have seen Him, says the apostle John, and He was altogether lovely and beautiful. But especially in His resurrection He was glorious. By the glory of the Lord He was raised from the tomb, He could not be holden of it. Then He ascended into glory. Open wide the gates of the temple! Let the Lord of glory return with His spoils, the Victor over Satan and all his host.

That Lord of glory it is that the minister of the gospel may display before his people, before the congregation of Jesus Christ, and offer as a challenge to the darkness of this world, that they too may see and be glorified.

Now we all, he says, may see that, in this book. He says, beholding *as in a glass*. We behold through the glass of Scripture. That is the instrument, the window through which we see this. And the minister of the gospel has the task and privilege of taking that glass, (See "*VanTil*," p. 174)

A Home Study Course in Christian Doctrine

The Application of Redemption

By JOHN MURRAY

LESSON II

Justification IV

JUSTIFICATION is an act which proceeds from God's free grace. It is an act of God and of God alone. And the righteousness which supplies its ground or basis is the righteousness of God. It might seem that this emphasis upon divine action would not only make it inappropriate but inconsistent for any activity of which we are the agents to be given any instrumentality or efficiency in connection with justification. But the Scripture makes it quite clear that activity on the part of the recipient is given its own place in relation to this act of God's grace. The activity on the part of the recipient is that of faith, and it is faith alone that is brought into this relationship to justification. We are justified by faith, or through faith, or upon faith (*cf.* Rom. 1:17; 3:22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30; 4:3,

5, 16, 24; 5:1; Gal. 2:16; 3:8, 9; 5:4, 5; Phil. 3:9).

There have been good protestants who have maintained that this faith is not the antecedent of justification, but the consequent, that we do not believe in order to be justified but we believe because we have been justified, and that the faith referred to is the faith that we have been justified. The witness of Scripture does not appear to bear out this view of the relation of faith to justification. It is true, of course, that there is a faith which is consequent to justification. We cannot believe that we have been justified until we are first justified. But there is good reason for insisting that this reflex or secondary act of faith is not the faith in view when we are said to be justified by faith and that this faith by which we are justified is the initial and primary act of faith in Jesus Christ by which in our effectual calling we are united

study. Miss Marjorie Pascoe, a member of Immanuel and a leader in the Women's Society, is spending September in England visiting relatives and sight-seeing. She was recently honored by her employer, Campbell's Soup Company, on completing 25 years in their employ.

Van Til

(Continued from p. 168)

holding it this way and that, asking people to look at it from here and from there. As a guide when he takes people through a museum, will have them stand first on one spot, then on another, and look first from a distance, then close up, and so displays step by step the glorious beauty of the whole portrait—so is the minister as he portrays the glory of the Christ. Often people with little artistic sense walk past the greatest treasures of the world with unseeing eyes. But the minister is speaking to people who are God's people, who have artistic sense. What a glorious task it is for the guides who lead these people through this art gallery, when they see that the people appreciate, that they follow, they understand, they are elated, they greatly rejoice at seeing the glory of the Lord.

That, says the Apostle, is the privilege of everyone who, as a humble minister of the gospel, follows in the steps of Paul.

The Greater Change

Then finally the Apostle says, when we have thus seen the glory of the Lord, we of the New Testament are changed into that same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

This passage of Scripture is hemmed in with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. In the preceding verse we read, "The Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Liberty from Plato's cave. The chains are removed, men are set free. They see, whereas they formerly were blind and did not see, the truth as it is in Jesus.

It is not automatically that we are changed, but it is by the Spirit of the Lord, which is the Lord, whose work it is to take the things of Christ and give them to us. And how are we changed? He says, into that same

image—into that glorified image of that glorified Lord. We are molded after Him, fashioned, made over, re-woven, so that we become, from having been one thing, something totally different. All things, says the Apostle, are made new for us in Christ Jesus. It is a process. It is not attained in fulness all of a sudden. It is from glory to glory. It is disappointingly slow, sometimes. We may be discouraged at our little progress in sanctification. And the minister of the gospel may be disheartened because he sees not in himself and in his people and in the community that transformation he would fain accomplish for his Lord.

But he must not be discouraged, because it is ultimately not dependent on him, but is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Therefore be not disheartened nor discouraged, ye ministers of the gospel. Let no one despise your youth. You may be just beginning after a long course of preparation, and you may be modest and you must be humble. But

Love and Longevity

Theodore T. Snell

CHRISTIAN love is a happy medium between the rigidity and severity of law and the laxness often incident to its absence or non-observance. Although Christ revealed that God is love, his summary of the commandments of the Mosaic law, like the commandments themselves, was in the form of commands—Thou shalt Love the Lord thy God; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (Matt. 22:37).

Therefore it is incumbent upon us as good children of God and lovers of Christ, although not under the law but under grace, gladly to obey His law of love as a blessed privilege, because God first loved us and gave His Son for our redemption (I John 4:10). Thus we may grow into His likeness, and through His grace and mercy abide with Him in the prepared mansions (John 14:2).

One of the joys of a child of God growing old and having a "second childhood," is the happy recollection of the first childhood in the old home and church, where many Scripture passages and gospel hymns were used and

you must not fear the wrath of man, because it is God's Spirit who takes God's Word through your simple life and testimony and preaching of that Word. And He will accomplish His glorious purpose.

It is this passage of Scripture that stands before us as we think of young men entering upon the ministry of the gospel. As they follow Paul's example, as they would treasure this great light that by the grace of God they have seen, as they would rejoice in the fact that with the company of the Old and the New Testament saints they have been redeemed through the blood of Jesus, and if they would enter into the fulness of the inheritance of the New Testament revelation of God, may they by the power of the Spirit urge God's people to keep their eyes fixed upon that glorified Lord, not to look to the left nor to look to the right, but being fixed in mind and heart upon that glorified One, thus to be changed from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord.

memorized. They are a blessed heritage and a real aid to faith in God and faithfulness in our obligations.

A constructive suggestion to elderly Christians whose tastes and talents run along the line of English composition and writing, is to compile a notebook for private devotions, containing favorite passages of Scripture and Christian hymns. The present writer has used this method for several years, grouping together verses on the same subject and indexing Scripture and hymns separately. This not only facilitates reference, but is an aid to memory; the process too is enjoyable, and conducive to frequent Bible reading and meditation.

The following stanza of a hymn which was a favorite in our childhood is much more meaningful now:

O, if there's only one song I can sing
When in His beauty I see the great king;
This shall my song in eternity be,
O what a wonder that Jesus loves me!

May each of us be included in the heavenly throng which joins in this blessed ascription to our Lord and Saviour.