

PERSPECTIVES IN COVENANT EDUCATION

ARTICLES

Practice of Counselling (Lecture II)

Prof. Herman Hanko

**Strategy for Survival and
the Standard Required**

Rev. Jason Kortering

**The Danger of Government Funding
of the Christian School**

Rev. David Engelsma

Gratefully Accepting the Children God Gives

Miss Jessie Dykstra

Objectives For The Teaching of Writing

**A Position on the Teaching
of Formal Grammar In Grades 4-6**

Mr. James Hulzinga

PERSPECTIVES IN COVENANT EDUCATION

VOLUME VI

SPRING, 1981

NUMBER 2

Published semi-annually in the spring
and fall by the Protestant Reformed
Teachers' Institute.

EDITORIAL STAFF

Miss Agatha Lubbers, Editor-in-chief

Mr. Darrel Huisken

Mr. Jon Huisken

Mr. James Huizinga

Mr. Gary Vander Schaaf

Miss Winifred Koole, Business Manager

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

Perspectives In Covenant Education is a journal regulated and published semi-annually, in September and March, by the Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute. The purpose of this magazine, in most general terms, is to advance the cause of distinctively Christian education as it is conceived in the Protestant Reformed community. More specifically, the magazine is intended to serve as an encouragement and an inducement toward individual scholarship, and a medium for the development of distinctive principles and methods of teaching. The journal is meant to be a vehicle of communication: a vehicle of communication, not only within the profession, but within the Protestant Reformed community and within the Christian community in general.

EDITORIAL OFFICE

MISS AGATHA LUBBERS

7227 COCONUT DRIVE

JENISON, MICHIGAN 49428

Forms 3579 should be returned to

SUBSCRIPTION OFFICE

PROT. REF. TEACHERS' INSTIT.

C/O COVENANT CHRISTIAN H. S.

1401 FERNDAL AVENUE S.W.

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49504

Third Class Postage paid at
Jenison, Michigan 49428

EDITORIAL POLICY:

Perspectives In Covenant Education exists for the purpose of furthering the cause of Protestant Reformed Christian education. This principle therefore regulates the entire contents of the journal. **Perspectives In Covenant Education** will publish any article written by a teacher, parent, or friend of Protestant Reformed education, provided the article is in harmony with the stated purpose of the magazine. The journal will publish articles whether theoretical or practical. All manuscripts must be signed and all authors are solely responsible for the contents of their articles.

SUBSCRIPTION POLICY:

Subscription price, \$3.00 per year. Unless a definite request for discontinuance is received, it is assumed that the subscriber wishes the subscription to continue without the formality of a renewal order, and he will be billed for renewal. If you have a change of address, please notify the Subscription Office as early as possible in order to avoid the inconvenience of delayed delivery. Include your Zip Code.

REPRINT POLICY:

Permission is hereby granted for the reprinting of articles in our magazine by other publications, provided: a) that such reprinted articles are reproduced in full; b) that proper acknowledgement is made; c) that a copy of the periodical in which such reprint appears is sent to our editorial office.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

From the Editor's Desk - Agatha Lubbers	2	
Practice of Counselling (Lecture II) - Prof. Herman Hanko	5	×
Strategy for Survival and the Standard Required - Rev. Jason Kortering	18	×
The Danger of Government Funding of the Christian School - Rev. David Engelsma	30	×
Gratefully Accepting the Children God Gives - Miss Jessie Dykstra	43	×
Objectives For the Teaching of Writing	46	×
A Position on the Teaching of Formal Grammar in Grades 4-6 - Mr. James Huizinga	47	×

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

by Agatha Lubbers

The months roll past with relentless regularity and it is once again time that our faithful subscribers receive their copy of the *Perspectives*. With this issue we complete our sixth volume of the magazine and are thankful to God that He has made it possible for us to publish this magazine dedicated to His praise as we instruct and help others to instruct the children God has given to us.

* * * * *

We know that it is once again that time of the year when various societies and organizations in our churches will be making decisions concerning the dispensing of funds and collections that have accumulated through the year. We are always grateful to our churches and organizations who contribute largely to the successful operation of this aspect of the Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute business. One-half of the total printing and publishing costs of the *Perspectives* is dependent upon the generosity of individuals and organizations who have given liberally in the past. The need still exists!

* * * * *

We continue to have interesting contacts with the Christian Parent-Teacher League of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. Anyone desiring a copy of their Newsletter can write to Mr. David Silversides, editor; 13 Pinewood Rd.; EAGLES-CLIFFE; Stockton-on-Tees; Cleveland, England, TS16 OAH. The December, 1980, issue of the Newsletter, includes a tribute of gratitude to the P.R.T.I. by Mr. Silversides. The December, 1980, edition of Newsletter also contains an article that appeared in the 1980, spring, edition of *Perspectives*, i.e. "The Decline of Nations" by Mr. Fred Hanko.

Another aspect of the contact with Mr. Silversides was the reception recently of a little magazine, *Biblical Creation*, published three times a year by the Biblical Creation Society. The

magazine exists to "further the aims of the Biblical Creation Society."

The editorial, February, 1981, by Nigel M. de S. Cameron acquaints the reader with the workings of the Society. We quote parts of the editorial.

When a group of friends met together to plan the launch of the Biblical Creation Society late in 1976 they had little idea how things would turn out. They thought they might gather two or three score of like-minded people, who would work together in the cause which united them. But, though their expectations were limited, their hopes were high and their goals especially so. They did not aim simply to give mutual encouragement to scattered creationists about the country. They aimed to change the whole climate of opinion amongst evangelicals in Britain.

For in this country, it seemed to them, theistic evolution had become well-nigh established as 'the' evangelical approach to the Genesis problem.

The editorial ends as follows:

But the Society is no more than its members. It is financially rather frail, . . . Contacts with other similar groups, not only in the USA but all over the world, confirm us in our belief that the whole climate of evangelical opinion is beginning to change. But we believe that this is not our work alone. We do not attempt to separate our belief in creation from its Biblical roots and basis. On the contrary, it is a harmony of science and Christian theology that unites us and gives us our message. So our work is not ours, it is the Lord's; and our message to our members and readers and all who sympathise with what we are about is simply this: at this moment of opportunity, at this time of challenge and hope, **brethren, pray for us.**

Those that would like to receive copies of this periodical should write to the Business Manager, Dr. C. H. Darnbrough, 51 Cloan Crescent, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow, Scotland, G64 2HN.

* * * * *

From a reader in our own country we received a letter from which I will quote only an excerpt. "As new subscribers having received our first issue of *Perspectives*, I would like to say how much we have appreciated it. Its ministry seems unique.

My wife and I are completing our Masters in Religious Education. We have looked in vain for a journal true to historic Reformed and Covenantal Education until now."

* * * * *

Our readers would also like to know, I am sure, that two articles that appeared in the *Beacon Lights*, November, 1980, edition have been reprinted by the *Christian Home and School* magazine, February, 1981. These articles were "I Can't Understand It!" by Mr. Fred Hanko and "A Teacher's View" by Mr. Vern Huber.

* * * * *

This issue of *Perspectives* contains the continuation of the presentation of Prof. Hanko at the 1980 Mini Course. The first of these lectures appeared in the Fall, 1980 issue. Rev. Kortering's article, "Strategy for Survival and the Standard Required" was presented at the mass meeting of the P.R.T.I. Convention last October in the Doon Protestant Reformed Church. The article by Rev. Engelsma, "The Danger of Government Funding" was a lecture he presented for a group of principals in N. W. Iowa.

"The Christian teacher must be trained by diligent study and dependence on the Lord in order to have a proper comprehension of the integration of spiritual and earthly truth. It takes time to convert theory to practice. The school which desires to be thoroughly Christian in actuality, not in name only, must be constantly at work applying this philosophy to the daily facets of the school program. Parents and teachers alike must tackle the job, for the home is no less a teaching station for God's truth than the schoolroom. Indeed it is primary."

quoted from "Integrating The Bible With Other
Subjects in the Christian School" by Herman Fransen,
principal at Bellevue Christian School
in Bellevue, Washington.

PRACTICE OF COUNSELLING

[LECTURE II]

by Prof. H. Hanko

Prof. Hanko, professor of theology in the Protestant Reformed Seminary, presented this lecture at the August, 1980, Mini-course sponsored by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Christian Schools. Lecture I appeared in the fall, 1980, issue of Perspectives.

It is one thing to have a clear grasp of principle but quite another to put principles into practice. It is always dangerous to act except on the basis of principle. It is dangerous to entrust the cooking for a family to one who does not know the difference between sugar and arsenic. It is dangerous to entrust your malfunctioning car to one who does not know the difference between a carburator and a spark plug. It is dangerous to entrust a man, no matter how great his zeal, with the responsibilities of the office of elder who does not know that Hezekiah is not a book of the Bible.

But principles which are well-known and not practiced are also worthless. In various branches of learning, people who have heads full of principles but no ability to practice them are called eggheads. In the church such people are said to be fools and the danger of dead orthodoxy is a continuously lurking evil.

To be able to apply principle, to put principle into practice requires what Scripture calls wisdom. Wisdom is a spiritual gift which is earned on the cross of Calvary and which is given to the people of God. And, if any man lack wisdom, James tells us, let him ask of God Who giveth to all men liberally.

No one, least of all I, can tell you what to do in every circumstance which requires counselling. We can draw the lines, define the problems, spell out the general methods of solution. But if you lack wisdom, you must ask of God.

I. The Problems Requiring Counselling.

We speak of problems which require counselling. In fact, we have defined counselling as the bringing of the Word of God to bear upon the entire behavior of the child. Before we speak of more problem-oriented counselling, however, I wish to make some general remarks.

There are three thoughts which come to mind in this connection.

In the first place, there is what may be called *preventive* counselling. There is, in fact, little counselling which is more important than this. In the Church of Christ, if the ministers are faithful in their calling to preach the Word and if the elders do their work according to the commands of Christ, there is a great deal of preventive counselling which takes place which anticipates problems and warns against them before they actually begin to trouble the life of the believer. To use one example: when young people are to be married, ministers of the Word usually spend some time with these young couples to point them to their calling, to warn them of dangers that lurk on the path of their married life, to suggest positive programs in harmony with the Scriptures which will enable them to cope with problems which arise before they get out of hand.

This type of counselling must also be done in the school and the classroom is the ideal situation to put this into effect. As soon as a child begins school and throughout his years in the halls of learning, the child must be impressed repeatedly with his positive calling as a student; he must be warned of the dangers which he will face in that calling, and he must be shown what must be done to prevent problems from arising. It simply is a fact of life that the counselling which has to be done after problems arise is counselling which is far more difficult. Preventive counselling is essential.

In the second place, there is greater room, especially in our high school, for vocational counselling. I have found many times that this is somewhat lacking and that it creates serious problems for the young people of God's covenant. While this must be done in connection with the parents, nevertheless, a great responsibility rests upon the school in this respect. Young people must be compelled to face the question: What does God want me to do in life? And the child must be helped to answer that question so that young girls, e.g., are properly impressed with the joys of motherhood in the sphere of God's covenant; so that not simply earning money, dating and marrying, and getting a job so as to

buy the things of life are paramount in a child's thinking; so that a child is impressed with the glory and dignity of every kind of work if it is done to the glory of God; so that a child knows that he must prepare himself for his place in God's kingdom wherever God calls him to serve.

In the third place, counselling must be done with the students who have no problems. They are in school to study, to enjoy their schooling, to walk as children of God's covenant in their relation to their teachers and their peers. This becomes especially critical in the sadly deteriorating moral climate of our Christian schools. Those who love the Lord and find their delight in His commandments must be encouraged in their efforts. They must be pointed to their responsibilities to be witnesses to the truth—also in school. And they must be helped so that they can be the ones who determine the spiritual atmosphere in the school.

Things have changed over the last decade or so. Everyone knows that every school has always had its problem children. But for many years these were in the minority. They were shunned and excluded by most of the students. And the moral climate of the school was determined by those who were faithful to their calling. But this has all changed. Today, in many instances, the balance has shifted. Not the God-fearing students but the wicked students determine the moral and spiritual climate of the schools. It is of critical importance that this be changed. If it is not changed, we will lose our schools and they will cease to be the instruments of faithful and Godly covenant instruction. But this can be changed only if we encourage continuously those students who fear the Lord to exert to the utmost of their ability their good influence in the school.

And this brings up a problem which stands unique among problems. There is a growing number of children, in the minority in school, who have serious problems in the classroom and in their relationships with their classmates because they will not do what the others do. They will not swear. They will not tell dirty jokes. They will not cheat in class. They will not go to parties where there is dancing and drinking. They will not engage in mocking the teacher and speaking evil of their fellow classmates. But as a result of this, they are ostracized and mocked, isolated in the classroom and from the fellowship of their fellow students. This, in itself, creates problems for them which are serious to the point of nervous breakdowns.

It is this type of situation with which we have to cope. And

an important area of positive counselling becomes clear to us. I have wondered from time to time, if, especially in our high school, it would not be possible for the young people who are spiritually minded to come together two or three times a week on a voluntary basis and under the supervision of a teacher, for mutual devotions, to discuss their mutual problems, to read Scripture and study it briefly, and to help and encourage one another in their calling.

But we must turn to specific areas of counselling; i.e., counselling of specific problems.

There are different ways in which to categorize problems. Fennema, in his book, *Nurturing Children in the Lord*, speaks of all problems as pursuit of wrong goals, and then proceeds to categorize them as follows:

1. Desiring attention
 - being a nuisance - active form
 - by laziness - passive form
2. Questing after power and superiority
 - through rebelliousness - active form
 - through stubbornness - passive form
3. Seeking revenge
 - through violence - active form
 - through passivity - passive form
4. Accepting real or imagined inadequacy - through an attitude and demonstration of hopelessness. (p. 136)

Jay Adams categorizes problems as they arise in relation to the school. He speaks:

of problems (1) children bring into the school milieu, (2) problems that grow out of the school milieu and hopefully, as they learn to carry over biblical patterns by extension (3) problems that arise after leaving the school milieu. (*Competent to Counsel*, p. 255)

The committee suggested a different classification on the basis of the age of the child. They spoke of problems which arise in kindergarten through fourth grade and mentioned: establishing friendships, subordinating one's own needs to the needs of the group; getting along with peers; problems in coping with wicked behavior in others. In grades 5 through 8 the problems are especially those of self-discipline, the forming of exclusive groups, idolatry especially in hero-worship, dress, boy-girl relationships. In grades 9 through 12 the problems are

especially boy-girl relationships especially on the level of dating, conflicts between relationship to authority and growing independence, dealing with sin in one's elders, especially parents, and making truth internal.

Another classification could be suggested. Following somewhat the lines laid down by Adams, we could, e.g., classify problems as those which arise out of the home, which group would include such problems as wrong attitudes in the home which are carried over into the children in school, marital problems which affect children, problems of discipline in the home which had bad effects upon children and problems of alcoholism and drug use among members of the family which carry over into children. The second category would include problems which arise in the school and would include problems with studies or problems with peers. The third group would be problems which arise out of one's relation to the church which would include spiritual apathy and lethargy, an antinomian attitude, questions concerning the confession of the church, and such like things.

It is evident that none of these classifications is satisfactory. In a certain sense, the different classifications overlap, look at problems from different points of view and cut across each other. Each classification has its advantages and disadvantages, but the real difficulty is that problems simply refuse to be categorized. This is partly because problems are as infinitely complex and the human personality as varied as the complex relationships of life. And this is true partly because every problem is unique, for there are never in life two problems which are exactly alike.

What must be stressed however, is the fact that all problems arise, for one reason or another, because of sin. It is not only sin in general which creates problems, but specific sins which create specific problems. And it is this viewpoint which we must consistently maintain if we are to be effective in the area of counselling.

II. Methods.

We turn now more specifically to the methods of counselling.

Although I have spoken already of the qualifications of the counsellor, it must be stressed here once again that God will use only that teacher who is a godly and upright person. A counsellor must himself have learned the requirements of discipleship, i.e., to deny himself, take up his cross and follow the Lord. A counsellor must be one whose treasures are in heaven, for where

a man's treasures are, there will his heart be also. A counsellor must be himself a student of the Scriptures and a man of prayer who has learned to live in fellowship with and in dependence upon his God. And all this requires constant, unceasing, courageous and even ruthless self-examination. No teacher can expect to teach a child that which he himself has not learned at the feet of Jesus. Without this, efforts to counsel will not only fall upon deaf ears (Physician, heal thyself), but such counselling will do untold harm, for it will make a mockery of a righteous walk. We must learn to root sin out of our own lives if we are to lead others in a holy way.

In counselling students, the teacher will face many reactions to his efforts in the individual child. Broadly speaking, there are, of course, only two reactions possible. There is a positive reaction when those who are confronted with the problem of their sin, respond to counselling, speak freely of their problems, eagerly seek help, cooperate with the teacher and earnestly strive to bring change about in their lives. But there is also a negative reaction. And this negative reaction can come in various forms. The teacher may confront someone who is totally unresponsive. He does not say anything at all, or perhaps limits his responses to a few mumbled words. There are students who, when confronted with sin, begin to argue about points of doctrine in an effort to get the discussion directed into other channels. I have had those, e.g., who were more interested in discussing whether the approach which I had adopted was not, in fact, Arminian and who made a considerable point of it that they were and wanted to remain Reformed in all their confession. There are others who enjoy a counselling session because it gives to them an opportunity to play intellectual games. They try, some with considerable skill, to make such discussion a chess game in which each must try to outwit his opponent. There are still others who are insolent, who attempt to cover up their sin or who simply do not care about their sin one way or another. In pride of spirit, they take the attitude: "You can say all you please; it makes no difference to me."

Somehow the teacher must break through all this if he is to be successful in counselling. Central to this effort to break through the barriers is the importance of reaching the will. No counselling will ever have positive results unless the will is reached and a person wills to change according to the Scriptures. There is implied here a certain doctrine of the primacy of the will. From the viewpoint of the intellectual life of the person, there is

no question about it that the intellect is primary. In fact, the functioning of the will is dependent upon the intellect. Nevertheless, from a moral and spiritual point of view, the will is primary as the deepest impulse of the life of the child. God works in such a way that the person, an accountable creature before Him, always functions willingly. The whole truth of responsibility rests upon the foundation of the controlling power of the will. When God, according to our Canons, accomplishes His good pleasure in the elect or works in them true conversion, "he not only causes the gospel to be externally preached to them, and powerfully illuminates their minds by his Holy Spirit, that they may rightly understand and discern the things of the Spirit of God; but by the efficacy of the same regenerating Spirit, pervades the inmost recesses of the man; he opens the closed and softens the hardened heart, and circumcises that which was uncircumcised, infuses new qualities into the will, which though heretofore dead, he quickens; from being evil, disobedient, and refractory, he renders it good, obedient, and pliable; actuates and strengthens it, that like a good tree, it may bring forth the fruits of good actions." (Canons III & IV, 11.)

It is for this reason that central to all counselling is the Word of God. This follows from the nature of the case. The Scriptures teach that all problems are rooted in sin. The solution to the problem of sin is the Word of God as it reveals Christ. That is the means of grace which God uses and it is only through that Word which He works. It is the power of the Word to enlighten the mind and renew the will. This lies totally beyond our power. No counsellor ought ever to engage in counselling without relying totally and utterly upon that Word. He must come to counsel with the Bible in His hand. Take your Bible with you or stay home.

We must remember, however, that the Scriptures must be specifically applied to our life. This also, it is true, can be overly emphasized. I recall when a relative of my wife's, her mother in fact, was in the hospital, that, while we were visiting her, the chaplain of the Holland Home came to see her. She was very distressed and confused and it was difficult to reach her. I was interested in what the chaplain would say and do. Much to my surprise, he read a few verses from Romans 4 which dealt with the doctrine of justification by faith and dealt with that in a very objective way. As he read the passage to my mother, he made a few comments about this doctrine as he went along and made little effort to apply it specifically to her. After praying, he left and my mother-in-law's comment was: "What a wonderful visit

that was and how much he helped me." I learned a lesson there which I hope I do not readily forget.

Nevertheless, the Scriptures must not be applied without thought as to how the Scriptures specifically address the problems of life. If a student is being counselled by a teacher concerning the problem of the sin of cheating, it would not be advisable, generally speaking, to read to such a student the narrative of Paul's shipwreck. All the while however, we must remember, on the one hand, that we do not always know the deeper problem which a student has and, on the other hand, God knows that problem better than we and better than the student himself. And God can use His own Word in a surprising and wonderful way—if we put our trust in that Word.

As we seek to apply that Word to the specific problems which students face, the following may well serve as guidelines.

We ought, where possible, to prepare before hand so that we can choose that Scripture which seems to us most appropriate to the situation. It is well to begin every session with a student with Scripture reading and prayer. This will have the effect of reminding the student from the very outset that we are, in our discussion, going to be guided by the Scriptures and by them alone. In choosing that Scripture which seems to us appropriate for the situation and in our further use of Scripture, we must, if we are to bring that Word to bear on specific problems, know and understand the child as much as possible. We must know all that there is to know about him personally and in all his relationships of life. We must know the kind of child he is, the kind of life he leads, the kind of influences which direct his life and govern his walk. And to know the child, we must learn all we can about the child before he ever gets into a situation where he requires counselling. We must learn this by observing the child, by watching him in his activities, by understanding as much as possible his home, his friends and his church. But above all, we must do this by listening. We ought to listen, however, with the heart as much as with the ears. Rarely will a person actually tell us what his problem is—sometimes because he does not want to talk about his problems and partly because he does not understand himself what they are. The way to listen with one's heart is to put one's self, as much as possible, in that person's place so that we hear what that person has to say with love, with sympathy, with understanding.

But in all this it cannot be emphasized enough that our complete reliance must be on the Word. We ought to understand

that this is very difficult to do. There are a number of reasons why this is so difficult. Surely, one danger which tempts us away from the Word is our own tendency to be enamoured with "the tricks of the trade". We are so deeply imbued with the principles of psychology that we do not want to abandon them. And it ought to be understood that there is also an element of pride in all this. The counsellor has a certain amount of power over the counsellee. This can very well be a dangerous thing. It is not at all difficult, e.g., to persuade a person who is so overcome by his problems that he can scarcely think straight, that his problem is of such a kind—when in fact there is no element of truth in this at all. But this leads to pride of the worst sort. And the way to avoid this is to trust in the Word. Further, we are sometimes tempted to forsake the Word because God works through His Word in His own way and at His own time. And sometimes it seems to us that the Word is not solving the problem because it is taking far longer than we think it ought. Sometimes there is resistance to the Word from the counsellee partly because the Word hurts so badly when it comes to us to condemn us of sin and partly because the counsellee wants, sometimes desperately, to avoid the changes in his life which the Word requires. In such situations we could easily be tempted to try other approaches in the hopes of breaking through. And then again, the Word has its negative effect. It is, also in the hands of the teacher, a savor of life unto life and a savor of death unto death. We can very well repeat what Paul says in this connection: "And who is sufficient for these things?" We do not like to see this negative fruit. And we think that, in our superior wisdom we will accomplish what the Word cannot do.

But the Word is the only power which we have.

Fennema (*op. cit.*) speaks of counselling as including confrontation, confession and covenanting. A person must be confronted with his sin, must be brought to confession and must, through covenanting, be brought to alter his life in conformity with the Word of God. This is a correct analysis, but it must be remembered that only the Word has the power to do this. A student must be confronted with the Scriptures. It must be brought forcibly home to the student that we all, with one accord, must bow before the Word of God regardless of what that Word requires of us. There must be no equivocation, no excuses, no rationalization, no efforts to dodge the demands of the Scriptures. The Word speaks and there is no alternative but to listen—or, go to hell.

This Word will, and that is its amazing power, bring to confession. Confession includes sorrow for sin because, through the Word we learn that our sin has been committed against God's holy law. Confession must be an acknowledgement of sin to those who have been offended by our sin. If we sinned against God—as always we do—to God must confession be made. If we sin against our teachers, to our teachers must confession be made. If we sinned against certain of our classmates, to them must we express our sorrow. And if our sin is public in nature, before the whole student body must we make confession. "Confess your faults one to another," James says, "and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." There is no other way to healing than this. Scripture prescribes it. We have no choice but to follow Scripture's directives. But that same confession includes also a determination to forsake the way of sin. This must be done with the help of the counsellor and guidance and direction and encouragement is essential. But there is no confession without this. And through it healing will come to all who are under the influences of and effected by such sin.

It is well to remember in this latter connection that the child who has sinned needs to be reminded of the emphatic truth that no righteous and holy walk is possible apart from Christ. There is great need among us to emphasize that we must learn to live in Christ and out of Christ. We must learn to walk in fellowship with Him, to rely upon Him and His cross, to be consciously led by His Spirit, to express in all our walk that we are a part of His body. Apart from Christ we are weak and helpless and will certainly fall into sin. In the awareness of this, the student must be instructed and encouraged to make spiritual exercises a part of his life. Bodily exercise, after all, profits little—although our present generation seems to think it is the only thing that counts. But to exercise one's self unto Godliness is far more valuable than any bodily exercise can ever be. Such spiritual exercises include especially the Scripture reading and prayer of personal devotions. Every child in the school must be encouraged to begin a daily program of Scripture reading and prayer. It is surely an indisputable axiom that such a child who reads his Bible and prays will also be able to cope with the problems of life and solve them as they appear as sent by God

III. The Role of Discipline.

Our discussion would not be complete without a discussion of discipline. We will not be extensive on this subject, for last year

Prof. Decker and Mr. Lamm Lubbers conducted an entire mini-course on this matter. But a few remarks are necessary.

In the first place, we must recognize in counselling that there is a two-fold seed in the church. There are elect seed and reprobate seed, and both often come to manifestation early in life. In connection with this, we do well to remember that God's Word will have positive effect only upon the elect seed of the covenant, but that it will have a negative effect upon the wicked.

Two points must be made in this connection. The first is that the Word of God will have its effect. It may not always operate with the speed and clarity with which we hope it operates. But it is not our purpose which is important, but God's. God always accomplishes His purpose in the preaching of the Word. The result will be that the working of that Word will also show us what we ought to do. Elders in the Church, when they are called to discipline the wayward, always make it a practice to go with the Word to a person as long as he will still listen. Perhaps he will not immediately receive that Word and perhaps there will be no immediate evidence of repentance. But they must continue their work until such a person refuses utterly to listen to that Word any longer, or until he repents of his sin. And that will come. The Word hardens or saves. It will do one or the other. The same is true of counselling.

You may object and point to the fact that it is possible for a young person especially to walk for a long time in a way of sin and only after a long time to come to repentance. There is no doubt truth to this. But I need also remind you that discipline is also the God ordained way to bring to repentance, and we must not be fearful of using it.

This needs to be stressed. Our schools are in very great trouble. The moral and spiritual atmosphere is more and more being determined by those who will not walk in the ways of the covenant. The situation is getting so bad that some of our teachers have told me that they have simply given up with discipline. They will teach as best they can, but to try to exercise discipline, to try to do something about the prevalent sins, is something which no longer concerns them for it is similar to banging one's head against a wall. If we continue in our present course, we are going to lose our covenant schools. We may hide our heads in the sand and act as if these problems do not exist. But that will solve nothing and the dangers will become all the greater.

About these things we must do something.

Fundamental to our understanding of this matter is a recognition of the fact that the child, no matter what his age, is ultimately responsible for his own conduct. It is true that there are many forces acting upon the child which make him do what he does. And an understanding of these forces are essential also to help the child find his own way through the tangle of problems. But ultimately, before God, each child is responsible for his life and for what he does. He may not, finally, put the blame upon the home—even if the home is a decisive factor in all this. He may not blame peer pressures for his wicked course of action and for the sins which he commits—even though peer pressures are probably one of the strongest of all forces acting upon a child. Nor may he, in some kind of antinomian sense, blame his own old man of sin. Every child is responsible before God. He is responsible for all that he does. This must be impressed upon him with urgency. But, and equally important, he is also responsible before God for the conduct of his peers. This too is a responsibility which he cannot escape. And, even beyond this, he is responsible for the reputation of the cause of Christ and, particularly, of the school where he is a student, before the world. When David confessed to Nathan his sin of adultery and murder, Nathan assured David that his sins were also forgiven. But Nathan also told David that the sword would never depart from his house. There was good reason for this, for, as Nathan reminded David, David had, by his sins, given occasion for the enemies of God to blaspheme. The sword which remained in David's house was a constant reminder to those who were inclined to blaspheme that God does not deal lightly with sin—even when those sins are committed by His own people.

Thus surely, when we bring the Word of God in every counselling situation, we must also continuously remind those with whom we discuss these things that Scripture is very emphatic about it that true happiness and joy can only be found in the way of obedience to God. And there is the unfailing promise of mercy for sin and grace to help in time of need.

But the opposite is also true. And it is this negative aspect that we so often forget. Our Heidelberg Catechism (L.D. XXXI, 84) reminds us that the preaching of the Word brings the promise to the contrite that all their sins are really forgiven them of God, for the sake of Christ's merits; but also that it is a testimony to all unbelievers, "and such as do not sincerely repent, that they stand exposed to the wrath of God, and eternal condemnation, so long as they are unconverted; according to which testimony of the

gospel, God will judge them, both in this, and in the life to come."

We must learn to exercise more stringent discipline. This must be done in connection with and with the cooperation of the home, if possible. But if this cooperation is not forthcoming, then it must be done apart from the home, and, indeed, against the express wishes of the home. No teacher or administrator must be put into the position of defending to irate parents an act of discipline. The discipline which is administered must be a reflection of the same discipline with which God chastises and punishes us. And if parents object, they must be referred to the school board who ought to learn to stand behind the teachers and who can enforce the disciplinary requirements which will preserve the integrity of the school and the covenantal character of Reformed education. But the Church must also learn to discipline. We have tended to shy away from this on the grounds that only confessing members of the Church can be disciplined. But I do not find that distinction in the Scriptures. Rather, Scripture emphasizes the fact that any rebellious child who will not hear the admonition of his parents must be brought to the elders who will exercise the proper discipline. We must understand that there is no place in our schools for those who will not walk in the ways of God's covenant.

A great responsibility falls therefore upon you. It is greater than it ever has been because of the deterioration of our homes. This is sad, but a reality that needs to be faced. The school can and must exert its influence upon the child—an influence which, under God's blessing, will have desirable effects. God has called you to this. Do you have the grace? the courage? the wisdom? May God give it to you.

[illegible]

Who should pay for Christian Schools?

“There is a growing tendency for Christian day schools to become schools only for the well-to-do, for the upper middle class. At this point the structure of the humanistic public school has been more Christian than that of the Christian school. The citizens of the state pay taxes so that their neighbor’s children may be educated. But citizens of the Kingdom often say, “Let the parents pay for the Christian schools; it’s their responsibility!”

(Quoted from a talk by Robert L. Atwell, pastor of Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Westfield, N.J.)

STRATEGY FOR SURVIVAL AND THE STANDARD REQUIRED

By Rev. J. Kortering

Rev. Kortering gave this lecture at the fall Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute Convention in the Doon Protestant Reformed Church. Rev. Kortering is the pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church, Loveland, Colorado.

The theme for this convention has a ring of militancy. It is filled with the imagery of battle. Survival, the enemy has struck. The roar of the aircraft fades in the distance, replaced by the muffled groans of the wounded. Strategy, the military brass huddled in an underground dugout pouring over maps, men locked in mortal combat. Standards, what a difference they make, the great American flag or the much feared German swastika. They represented what the war was all about.

This is a timely theme for the Christian school movement in general and our schools in particular are involved in combat. The reason for this is that it is part of the battle of the ages. Did not Nehemiah have to gird the builders of the wall with swords as they worked with their other hand at the trowel, Nehemiah 4:18? The Apostle Paul describes in detail the armor for the Christian soldier as he fights in the battle of faith, Eph. 6:10-17. That battle extends into the arena of the Christian school.

As we deal with this subject tonight, we will follow somewhat these lines of thoughts. First, we should examine the standard! We realize that this word is used in two ways. On the one hand it identifies the army of cause. On the other hand it is

set up or established by authority as a rule for the measurement of quality or value. We intend to examine both of these ideas and apply them to Christian education. The standard for quality in education also makes up the rallying point for all to join. The higher this standard is raised, the more intense the battle. This necessitates strategy to deal with such attacks.

What are we fighting for when we fight for Christian education? Why do we labor intently to establish such schools and defend with all our might those already in existence? Why are you teachers willing to join the ranks of Protestant Reformed teachers when most of you could obtain much more lucrative positions in other professions? Why do we parents dig deep into our pockets to pay tuition and building costs in order to maintain our schools? You administrators and board members know the vexing problems involved in running such a school, yet we do all this work. Why?

The standard explains this all to us. It identifies the cause that is so dear to our hearts.

In one word that standard is the Word of God! The truth of the Holy Scripture came not by the will of men, God revealed that Word and inspired men to write it accurately. It is the revelation of God Himself in Jesus Christ His Son. It is truth. It forms the message of the gospel which is preached unto us. By faith we believe what God says to us.

There are many truths revealed in the Bible and they all stand very close to one another. Yet, I would like to draw out four specific truths which are revealed to us in the Bible that serve as the standard for Christian education. First, the Bible reveals to us the great truth that God is a covenant God of believers and their children. The words to Abraham speak to us, "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant to be a God unto thee and unto thy seed after thee," Gen. 17:7. The triune covenant God of friendship embraces us and our children. He speaks the words of promise to us and makes us to be His friends. This covenant includes children, not all children, but the children of the promise, Rom. 9:8. Concerning these children Jesus said, Suffer the little children to come unto me for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Secondly, the Word of God directs our attention to Christ as Lord of all. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in

earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father, Phil. 2:9-11. That Lordship of Christ is the Father's reward for His faithful mediatorial work. By His suffering and death, Jesus took away the cause of death and misery for His people, namely, sin. The Father exalted Him to His right hand and made Him to rule over all things. He rules over His precious church by His grace and Spirit and causes that by His power all things serve their welfare.

Thirdly, the Bible directs our attention to the kingdom of heaven. Indeed, this is a future promise which will ultimately be realized in the second coming of Christ. According to Revelations 21 and 22 the present heaven and earth will be dissolved with fire and God will create a new heaven and earth upon which the New Jerusalem, the perfected heavenly church will dwell forever. The rule of that kingdom will be perfect love as the citizens drink of the water of life freely. Yet, we know that the kingdom of heaven is also a present reality. Jesus said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there! for behold the kingdom of God is within you," Luke 17:20, 21. By this Jesus distinguishes His kingdom from all earthly kingdoms, made up of empires, armies, earthly rulers, he said in John 8:36, "My kingdom is not of this world". His kingdom is a spiritual reality. It begins to take hold of a person by the mysterious work of the Spirit in the heart. This work of conversion provides spiritual direction for the whole life of the child of God. As "kingdom people" we confess that the whole of our life must be brought in subserviance to King Jesus! Our thoughts, our desires, our ambitions for the future, our daily work in the home, in school, in business and industry, our moments of entertainment, all must be brought into the service of the King.

Finally, the Bible directs our attention to the presence of the Holy Spirit. The glorious account of His coming recorded in Acts 2 explains the significance of His presence. The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Holy Trinity, given to Christ in His glorification in order that He might realize the salvation of His church and the establishment of His kingdom through Him. The Holy Spirit inspired the authors to write the Bible, the Holy Spirit guides the ministers to declare the truth. The Holy Spirit applies that word to the hearts of His dear people. The Holy Spirit abides with us, gives to us and our children the spiritual strength to serve God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. He is the one Who brings all the work of salvation to its glorious

culmination in the song of Moses and the Lamb in heavenly glory.

The Word of God, and in particular these four great truths given to us in the Word of God, make up the standard of Christian education. Well may this standard be written upon the door of every Christian school, upon every board room, on the chalk board of every class room, in all our teachers' lounges. The Word of God teaches: God is our covenant God, Christ is King over His kingdom, and the Holy Spirit is present with us.

As a standard this defines for us the reasons for Christian education in a three-fold way. First it determines the material that will be taught in a Christian school. The Word of God will be the sourcebook for the interpretation of the facts presented. All the subjects stand related to Christ the king and the kingdom of heaven. The challenge to the teacher is to hold up the standard before the students that they see God's sovereign design in all areas of life. Secondly, this standard will influence the method used in teaching. A teacher that has this standard in his/her heart will not teach *opinion*, but truth. The pupil will not be given the option to accept or reject what is taught, but the truth will be taught from a deep conviction of the heart. In addition such a teacher acknowledges that discipline is essential to good instruction. The standard requires obedience and good behavior by the student. The demands are high in a Christian school because God demands much of all of us. It will be the teacher's duty to enforce such discipline that the students learn to do their work well and co-operate in the class room for God's sake. Finally, the standard of God's Word and these four truths will also provide the proper motive for teaching and learning. It will reach far beyond the empty demands of humanism, for individual respect and human good. Rather, the standard will lift the perspective for all of us to see God and His kingdom in Christ Jesus. It is not a matter of getting rich, easy life, pleasures and the world, rather what does God want me to do in the furtherance of the Kingdom of His Son.

When that standard is held high in the class room the children learn to love the truth and reject error. The standard clearly exposes what is wrong with all other ideas, it shows the natural man at enmity with God. It condemns the world and draws a sharp antithetical line between truth and error. It extols God and His covenant of friendship.

At the same time the presence of this standard draws enemy fire! The same standard that produces school programs,

graduations, sons and daughters that come forth with the knowledge of their calling in this world and the conviction of faith and makes tears of joy well up from our souls, causes the enemy of the faith to gnash their teeth. The battleline is drawn by the standard. The enemy in varying degrees says man is god, man has his own kingdom, man must plan his own destiny, man must learn to eat, drink and be merry. This opposition is not a matter of curious indifference on their part, their hostility is such that they hate God and hate God's people. Today, we can see evidence of the enemy intent on ending Christian education in the Christian school.

How is this attack taking place today? In answering this question, we must make a distinction between the attack from without the Christian school movement and the attack as it takes place right within the movement itself.

Turning to the attack that comes our way from without, we first of all think of government interference with Christian education. The Bible reminds us of this in Revelation chapter thirteen. You will recall that two beasts are mentioned in this chapter. The first rises out of the sea and represents the political power of antichrist as he gains ascendancy over all the nations of the world. The second beast receives power from the dragon but has the appearance of a lamb. This beast represents all attempts on the part of the antichrist to get people to willingly bow down and worship the beast. This includes false religion, education, science, falsely so called. The end product of the work of this beast is to do great wonders, even miracles, so that all wonder after the antichrist. What if a person does not go along with the antichrist, then this beast also has power to learn of their whereabouts and to persecute them and kill them. Government has many avenues to pursue in order to get people to follow after the goal of world rule. The school system of our land (public school system) is a powerful weapon in the hand of such evil men. In order for it to succeed they must remove all alternatives and opposition. Hence the Christian schools become the objects of their hatred and contempt. Christian schools hold up the standard of God's Word which is the very opposite of all the antichrist stands for. It may sound high and mighty to call out for pluralism in education, but in the long run, it will not convince evil government to allow the right of Christian education.

We have heard for quite some time now, the evils of federal aid to education. Not only do many parents clamor for some aid, but many legislators are equally eager to give such aid. To some

it is an appeasement to quiet down the sector of society that supports private and Christian education, to others it is an attempt to get something started, to get the government committed to support in principle other schools than public. It might be anything from a milk program, book loaning, to tax relief. In this area, the supporters of such aid are working on three methods. A voucher system in which parents get a voucher worth so many dollars determined by the number of children they have, which can be redeemed at any school of their choice and the school in turn would get the monies from the government; a tax credit system in which parents who send their children to schools other than public would be able to take a deduction from their income tax; and getting B.E.O.G. grants (Basic educational opportunity grants which the government now gives to qualifying students on the basis of ability and need and which are given to public as well as Christian colleges) for high school and even grade school students. The danger with all these attempts is the same as always, the government never gives anything without some degree of control, whether that is given directly to the school or indirectly as a benefit to the parents or school. In a recent article in *Time* magazine (Sept. 22, 1980) reference was made to Wheaton College:

“So far the college has escaped Washington’s wrath because it gets no state or federal aid for either capital or operating costs. But its students receive \$4 million a year in government grants, loans, and loan guarantees. Since two-thirds of Wheaton’s revenues are from tuition and fees, ‘it would be difficult, if not impossible to replace such student aid, says admissions director Stuart Michael Worse, the government might one day strip the college of tax-exempt status. If Wheaton were forced to change its admission policies, its defenders argue, it would no longer be Wheaton—whose motto since 1860 has been For Christ and His Kingdom’”.

This indicates to what extent government grants and loans have already influenced private education and the fear of tax-exemption.

This leads us to our second consideration and that is the attempt to take away tax exemption. We are acquainted with the attempt in Aug. 22, 1978 by the I.R.S. to enforce integration through tax exemption. It drew a protest of 155,000 letters which had the effect of defeating any necessary legislation to implement it. We can be sure however that the battle on this front is not over as yet.

Add to this the battle that has been going on for some time

already over the crucial question as to who owns children, the parents or the state. Long ago Plato in his Republic contended for state ownership. Did not Adolph Hitler as well as all totalitarian rulers contend for this? Here we have the same thing in our country. The leaders in this pernicious struggle are from the women's movement who battle for the Equal Rights Amendment. In the White House Conference on the Family held during the International Year of the Child opportunity was given to everyone to participate whatever their sex, race, religion, political affiliation, sexual orientation, age, or ideological orientation (stated on the advertisement blurb). In that movement there is room for those who would advocate homosexual families and sexual communes. Gloria Steinam, a wicked proponent of this movement said, "We really don't know how to raise children . . . the fact that children are raised in families means there's no equality . . . in order to raise children with equality, we must take them away from families and raise them together" Significant court battles have been fought, and some won, over the issue whether a parent has the right to educate children at home or whether they must attend a state approved school.

Other signs of danger involve the establishment of a department of education on the cabinet level, support for the licensing of teachers (not certification, but examination by the state to determine qualification) and even the proposal to license the school itself, much like a business needs a certain license to operate. The point is, more and more government involvement with a view to control.

There is also an attack from within the Christian school movement itself. Satan, our arch-enemy is very clever. He knows that if he can get the Christian school destroyed from within, he doesn't have to get too concerned to attack from without, or the outward attack will be fatal if the school movement is weak from within.

Hence, we have to deal with such movements as the A.A.C.S. which we should identify as the Association for the Advancement of Christian Studies and not the American Association of Christian Schools. We are acquainted with this movement as much has been written about it already. It is divisive, it seeks to turn the Christian School movement away from the Word of God and direct it to many words. It sets as its goal a kingdom concept, couched in traditional Reformed language, but very much different from it. It is definitely mutiny within the ranks and must be dealt with accordingly.

Closer to home however, is the influence of apostasy and spiritual lethargy which affects our homes and consequently our schools as well. As our homes go, so go our schools. It stands to reason for we believe in parental schools which are an extension of the home. Our schools are the best mirrors of our homes. What do we see?

We can best examine ourselves on four scores. First, it is our great calling to be *responsible* for the instruction we or others give our children. That means, we must give account to God how and what we teach them. This is expressed in those awesome questions we answer at the baptism of our children. Accountability demands knowledge. Do we know what our children are being taught and more importantly, do we care? Our duty is not finished when we finally get a P.R. school built and in operation. It has just begun! We say this not to sow suspicion about our faithful teachers, rather this is the spiritual foundation for our next point. Secondly, we are concerned about *involvement*. Do we examine the papers our children take home from school? Do we ask them about the things they learned for that *day*? Do we visit school when we have opportunity? Do we attend P.T.A. meetings and school conferences? Are we interested in the chapel exercises when invited to join the children? Are we willing to serve on the school board and canvass for the financial needs of the school? Proper involvement demands a yes answer to all the above. What do we see? Thirdly, do we have a right *value* concerning Christian education? It really hasn't changed one bit that school is still teaching the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic, though they call it something different today. The heart-beat of the school is the class-room where this teaching and learning takes place. Youth may clamor for something else, they like "snap courses", sports programs, trade skills, and a host of other things. Parents however, must be more mature. The homes that produce these children must recognize that hard earned money, precious time, dedicated teachers are brought into the school to *instruct* children of the covenant in the knowledge, wisdom, and skill needed to serve God in the whole of life. Especially sports programs can easily get out of hand both in time and money involvement. Excessive emphasis on these things reflect a wrong value on education. Finally, discipline is so crucial to instruction that any lack of it is an attack upon the educational process. A body cannot stand without a skeleton, a school cannot operate without discipline. Here too, it must be the discipline that extends from the home.

Lack of discipline at home produces chaos in the school. If students think they can get away with wrong at school and not be disciplined at home, we run into the same hopeless situation which is evident in the public schools and in some Christian schools: the kids run the school. Discipline more than anything reflects the spirituality of the home and the school. Evil must be put away from among us. Wrong must be punished for God's sake. Something is very wrong if the "toughs" are the popular ones around the school. Parents must support the teachers in loving but firm discipline.

Pointing out these things, we must ask ourselves, are we right on these scores or wrong? Is there lack? If there is, we must see this tool as a subtle attack of Satan upon the standard!

Now, what is the strategy we ought to follow in dealing with any of these attacks upon our Christian schools?

The first and most important thing I see is to revitalize our forces. Could it be that our morale is low? Sometime the soldiers get battle weary, lose sight of the danger of the enemy, fail to anticipate the sweet joy of victory; are we perhaps that way spiritually as regards Christian education? I think we need some old-fashioned pep rallies to get our troupes stirred up. We have so much going for us; we have the Covenant God of heaven and earth Who promises us grace sufficient to every task. We have King Jesus sitting at the right hand of God directing all things toward victory. We have the standard that represents everything precious to us and our children. Yes, we must be keen on knowing the enemy, but it will do no good unless we have a sharp understanding of our cause and its blessing. Imagine a soldier saying, my country is not worth dying for, then you have a defeated soldier! Imagine parents saying, Christian education is not worth fighting for, then you have closed schools and children swallowed up in the world about us.

What is the strategy, let's rally around our Lord Jesus Christ and promote gladly His cause in our schools. I recently thumbed through a series of lectures given by Dr. Clarence Bouma at the N.U.C.S. convention in Holland, Michigan during the summer of 1932. It struck me that that was the year of the great depression. In his address he stirred up the people to carry on Christian schools in such dark times. He made three points that we do well to observe. First, Christian schools have come out of the deep conviction of God's people. He asked, "Can an economic depression touch this conviction except to deepen, to strengthen it, to reemphasize it." God's people act out of conviction, we do.

that too. All the attacks from without and within, will not cause God's people to give up the fight for Christian schools; there is too much at stake. Secondly, the alternatives make it plain that in essence there is no alternative to Christian education. We are either for Christ or anti-christ. Who can put a price on duty? Thirdly, Christian schools were never built out of luxury or surplus, rather by God's people who by faith put up schools, hired teachers, and run their schools taking the money out of the daily bread that God provided. Rich people never put up Christian schools, abundance never stimulated the cause, rather conviction of heart and firm trust in God did it. Now, when the battle seems to get more difficult, we must not panic, we must remember from what spiritual mettle God has made the soldiers of the cross. The world says, when the going is tough, the tough get going. History shows that this is more so for God's people. We need to rally to the cause as our Captain challenges us to the battle.

Secondly, I see that the strategy must be for victory, not survival! I know what you mean when you word it the way you do, you are concerned with Christian *schools*. It might very well be that Christian schools will not survive, the battle we face from without, especially government involvement, may lead to the closing of Christian schools. It has happened before in history and in many countries, we do not know what God has in store for us here in the United States. The point we want to make is this, Christian education is not dependent upon Christian schools. Nothing will stop us as parents from rearing our children in the fear of God, unless they are taken away from us by force and even then we will commit them to God who cares. As long as we have our children, *we* rear them. A school helps us do this better in many ways, but we as parents do this before God. And God promises to bless this effort and any strategy we may employ to preserve our Christian schools will ultimately end in the victory for our children, they will be instructed in the fear of God with God's blessing.

Finally, I would like to suggest three areas that cry for leadership. If this convention will produce any lasting results it must be in obedience to Christ Who calls us to carry on the cause in these evil days. The Federation seems the likely place to expect and bring to reality such leadership.

First, our school boards need leadership in dealing with the threat from the government. Recently, the call came forth in the *Standard Bearer* to write congressmen regarding legislation

concerning schools. Fact is, that was a good call, but I dare venture that very few actually wrote because it was not handled on a local level. If this is truly important as strategy for survival, our school boards ought to take lead and they should be counseled from this federation that should make it a matter of concern. Similarly, we are reading a great deal of law firms, and Christian lawyers who make it their speciality to deal with test cases to legally preserve the rights of Christian schools, etc. Here too, our local school boards need leadership. Ought we back up some of these efforts? Should we lend our moral and financial support to these decisions that will affect our schools as well? Someone ought to be involved in a knowledgeable way and operate this federation for the good of all our schools:

Secondly, it seems to me that this federation is doing a wonderful work in advancing and promoting the educational knowledge and skill needed to teach what the standard requires. You have now institutes, conventions, teacher's manuals and aids, books are being written concerning education of covenant children. I thank God for this and this federation after many years is making progress. You need encouragement in this. There is one thing I would like to add as inquiry and encouragement. Can't you also somehow offer leadership regarding the education our teachers receive in preparation for teaching? It's tough to be a teacher, just like it's tough to be a preacher. Yet, we preachers get solid education that prepares us to preach. Where do you teachers get anything like that? You have to pretty much strike out on your own, glean from manuals and books how to teach distinctively Biblical and Reformed material and methods. I would think that you who have gone through this process and know its difficulty would be the most enthused to try to get something going perhaps like we do as churches for our pre-sems. Couldn't some of you take a position of leadership to teach certain subjects that have a direct bearing upon the task of teaching, and take courses in the local colleges and receive degrees that would make it possible to get certificates. Maybe you are exploring these things, but I would think it a great advance if some of the teachers who are gifted and able to develop this field, were given the opportunity to contribute this knowledge for the benefit of future teachers.

Finally, I am convinced also that the church must be vitally concerned with the continuing welfare of our Christian schools. Let me put your mind at ease that I'm not advocating that consistories run schools. Rather we have three articles of the

church order, Arts. 21, 41, 44 that concern the church's duty over against Christian schools. The point is that Christian schools are the spiritual offspring of the church's ministry to parents. When parents show signs of neglect or spiritual indifference or error, the church must make this her concern. Herein lies the great power of Christian discipline. We must not think of that as a terrible word, a power reserved for the worse in the kingdom or a lever to kick out of the church the undesirables. God forbid! As the Word preached must set forth the truth in doctrine and life, so the work of the elders must support that preaching with loving action. A word of warning from the elders may save a soul, an admonition to a recalcitrant child may have a lifelong effect. If the teacher encounters evidence of home trouble that teacher should do what is necessary on the level of discipline in the school, perhaps even with the administrator or school board, but ultimately if correction at the home level does not take place, the minister and consistory should be notified so that they can work pastorally. The spiritual concern for teachers and students remain that of the consistory. This requires caution not to violate Matthew 18 in methodology, it requires care to remember that one does not appeal decisions of school boards to consistories. Rather, my concern is for the spiritual over-view of the school. If wrong is done by students of the school and parents do not deal properly with that, one may not blame the teachers, one may not blame the school, one should place the blame where it belongs at the door of the church. If these parents are members of one of our churches and their children are walking in open sin in the hand of Christian discipline must be extended in the love of God.

In closing I want to say a word to you teachers. In many ways you are on the forefront of this battle to preserve Christian schools. God has called you to be a teacher, to set aside your life for this great task. Many times you get shot at, from without the school and even from within the school. These may even be occasioned by your holding high the standard that is so dear to us. God has called you to a difficult task, to expose yourself to danger, to be so involved that God is pleased to use you to mold the minds and hearts of children who are preparing themselves to take their place in the battle of faith along side of the rest of us. Think of what that means and never forget that such a task is of God and the strength is of God alone. Be faithful to that standard! Look to our Captain our Lord Jesus Christ, and hold your head high as you give God all the glory.

THE DANGER OF GOVERNMENT FUNDING OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

by David Engelsma

Rev. David Engelsma has frequently been featured in our magazine. He is the pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church, South Holland, Illinois.

This article is the text of a speech given for the Minikota Principal's Club at Rock Valley, Iowa on April 19, 1980. The Minikota Principal's Club is made up of Christian School principals from Iowa, Minnesota, and South Dakota. I express my indebtedness to South Holland, Illinois attorney, James Lanting, for making available to me the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States concerning government funding of Christian education.

* * * * *

Two main reasons are given for the Christian School's seeking and accepting government aid. First, this is just, since Christian School supporters pay the taxes that the State uses for education and are entitled to their fair share of the money. Second, this is necessary, since without this aid the Christian School cannot exist. On the one hand, the taxes of the Christian School people keep rising, strapping them for the money needed for the Christian School. On the other hand, the public schools, having unlimited access to State funds, will outstrip the Christian Schools in quality of education.

These reasons, and the urgency of the matter, are expressed by Dr. Marion Snapper in a pamphlet entitled, "Should the Government Support Our Christian Schools?": "Simply stated, our reason for saying yes to government support is that justice demands it, and the Christian schools need it." He begins the pamphlet with the statements: "It is a pleasure to deal with so urgent an issue. At stake here is the future of our Christian schools."

Accompanying these reasons for government aid is the belief that such help is benign, that it will not entail the loss of control over our schools or the sacrifice of the Christian character of the instruction.

I confess that I am not untouched by these reasons. That the Christian School people pay for the education of their own children in full and for the education of the children of others is unjust on the face of it. As the oldest of 12 children put through the Christian School from first grade through high school, and myself helped in attending a Christian College, by a father who was a laborer in a factory, I have seen and felt the pinch of the financial hardship involved in Christian education. As the pastor, in time past, of a small, country church whose members maintained a little Christian grade school, I saw several teachers working for wages that should have made the angels weep (or sing). As the parents of 8 children, 6 of whom are in Christian grade school and high school, my wife and I are paying several thousands of dollars in tuition annually.

But it is my studied and firm conviction that the receiving of State support by the Christian School is dangerous, dangerous to the very essence of Christian education and the very existence of the Christian School. Indeed, I am convinced that the acceptance of government aid is wrong on principle. The practical dangers are nothing but the necessary consequences of the violation of a principle. As Christians, and especially as Reformed Christians, we are concerned about principles. We know well that "principles work through."

This conviction, I will demonstrate.

At the outset, I should indicate that by "government funding," or "State aid," I mean both state and federal monies, or other help. Also, I have in mind government money for payment of the main expenses of Christian education—teachers' salaries, buildings, and the like. I refer to government help for "tuition." Now, I know that some defend government help for milk, lunches, and textbooks, but reject government help for

tuition. Nevertheless, I think it correct to refer to government help for the major expenses for the following reasons. First, a strong movement is afoot among supporters of the Christian School to get parochial aid, or a voucher system, or some other form of full government support of the Christian School. This movement is not content with a few dollars for milk. Second, acceptance of the lesser help implies the propriety of the greater help. Third, the grounds put forth for receiving government help in any form, namely, justice and necessity, certainly apply to help for the main expenses of the schools.

The Objection of Principle

The principle that is violated by State aid is this: our children are ours, under God; their education is our privilege and duty, as a demand of the covenant that God has made with us believers and our children; accordingly, in the Christian School, we must oversee the instruction and support it financially. Holy Scripture teaches this truth in Deuteronomy 6; Psalm 78; the entire book of Proverbs; Ephesians 6:4; and many other passages. This truth is precious to Reformed parents, not only on account of the natural bond, but also because of the covenant. Our children are dear to us as the little ones of Christ. Our educational task is precious to us as the work by which they are reared to be men and women of God. On behalf of this work, we willingly give of ourselves and our money.

Our children are not the State's; the State does not have the duty to educate them; the State is not required to support their education financially. The State has, in fact, taken the education of the children of its citizenry upon itself. We have all but forgotten that the public school system is fairly recent in our country, dating from about the middle of the 19th century. It is little regarded that by doing so the State has transgressed the bounds set for government by God in Scripture. But we see all too clearly that the result is a vast system of godless education; a training in immorality; a most expensive and wasteful institution; and a pronounced failure to educate, in many instances.

With the takeover of education by the State goes the notion that the children belong to the State. Both the State and the parents suppose this to be the case. Maybe, the children belong to the State and to their parents; but they do belong to the State. And the rights of the State override the rights of the parents. This notion is law in the totalitarian countries such as Russia and in the liberal countries such as Sweden (which recently forbade

parents to spank their children—a decree that may stand as a monument to the lunatic folly and grasping tyranny of political liberalism). But this notion makes headway in our land also. The Educational Code of the State of Ohio can state: “The natural rights of a parent to custody and control of...children are subordinate to the power of the state to provide for the education of their children.” Various state authorities can and do threaten, fine, imprison, and otherwise harass parents, whose only offense is that they educate their children, refusing to give their children over to the State for their education. Although the Supreme Court, in *Pierce v. the Society of Sisters* (1925), acknowledged the rights of parents, there are today, even on the federal level, ominous efforts towards viewing the children as wards of the State.

A Religious Issue

In keeping with the principle that the Christian School is the believing parents' instruction of their children according to the demand of the covenant, the education in the Christian School is, through and through, religious, i.e., Christian; even as the education in the public school is, through and through, irreligious, i.e., anti-christian. True, the Christian School is bound to give a good, liberal arts education; instructs the children in every aspect of God's creation; develops their abilities; prepares them for life in our country; and even provides an “informed electorate.” But in all this, the instruction of the Christian School is religious. It is based on Holy Scripture, as interpreted by the Reformed Creeds. ¹ It is permeated by the Reformed doctrines of the sovereignty of God, the total depravity of man by nature, redemption of the Church by the cross of Christ, the antithesis, the return of Christ to judgment, and the like. It has as its goal the glory of the Father of Jesus the Christ. The Christian School is itself, in its entirety, service of Jehovah God and is devoted to Reformed thinking and Reformed life in the world; this is its purpose with the students. The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of the wisdom and knowledge of the school.

This is at stake in the acceptance of government money. The State has decided that it will help only secular schools, or secular instruction in religious schools. The cost of receiving government money is the secularization of the instruction in our schools.

Because the Christian School is religious, it is constitutionally unable to accept much of the State aid that is available.

To accept the aid, the Christian School would have to deny itself. The Supreme Court of the United States has decided, on the basis of its interpretation of the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution, ² that State money may not be given to religious institutions for the purpose of religious instruction. The Court expressed this in *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947), a case involving New Jersey's reimbursement of parents for expenses incurred in busing their children to parochial schools:

No tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion.

The Supreme Court's own interpretation and application of this stand are instructive. In many cases of aid to Christian schools by the states, the Court has struck down the state statutes as unconstitutional on this ground, namely, a violation of the establishment of religion clause of the First Amendment and a violation of the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. A case in point is *Lemon v. Kurtzman* (1971). In 1968, the Pennsylvania legislature authorized state aid to non-public schools for teachers' salaries and other expenditures. The law was drawn up in the form of a contract by which the State of Pennsylvania purchased "secular educational services" from non-public schools. The legislation specified that the aid applied solely to courses in secular subjects, namely, math, modern foreign languages, physical science, and physical education. It explicitly excluded "any subject matter expressing religious teaching or the morals or forms of worship of any sect."

The Supreme Court ruled this law unconstitutional. Certain remarks by the Court are most significant:

We simply recognize that a dedicated religious person, teaching in a school affiliated with his or her faith and operated to inculcate its tenets, will inevitably experience great difficulty in remaining religiously neutral. Doctrines and faith are not inculcated or advanced by neutrals.

Justice Douglas remarked that "secular instruction cannot be separated from the religious teaching." Besides, the Court noted that the Pennsylvania law would necessitate "a comprehensive, discriminating, and continuing state surveillance."

In certain other cases, the Court has permitted State aid to Christian schools, specifically in the form of government funds

for college buildings. However, it has done so under a condition that makes it impossible for a Christian School to take the aid. The condition is that the building be used exclusively for the purpose of secular education. The case in which the Court decreed this stipulation was *Tilton v. Richardson* (1971), concerning Title I of the Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963, which provides construction grants for buildings and facilities "used exclusively for secular educational purposes." H.E.W. had granted money to Roman Catholic colleges, and tax-payers appealed. In a divided decision, the Court upheld the grant; but the argument of the Court is significant:

(The) federally subsidized facilities would be devoted to the secular and not the religious function of the incipient institutions.
(The) facilities . . . would be used for defined secular purposes, (and it is) expressly prohibited (that the buildings be used) for religious instruction, training, or worship.

Chief Justice Burger wrote that:

there was no evidence that religion had seeped (sic!) into the use of any of the facilities financed in part with the aid of the federal grant.

He continued:

religious indoctrination is not a substantial purpose or activity of these church-related colleges and universities.

The Christian School could not accept funds with such a stipulation. This would be to compromise Christian education fatally. We have no secular and no neutral education, into which the truth of Christ has not "seeped." Every building and every brick of every building is consecrated to the Lordship of Jesus Christ (and to the pulling down of the strongholds of secularism and neutrality). We would cry out in pain were the Chief Justice of the United States to declare about us that there is no evidence that religion had "seeped" into the use of some of the facilities.

Justice Brennan was correct in his dissent, when he deplored the secularizing impact of public assistance on church schools: by accepting government funds, the Christian school teachers "surrender the right to teach religious courses" and promise not to inject religion into their secular courses.

On principle, we may not accept government funding: our schools are covenantal, religious schools, giving religious instruction to our children.

To be able to give this instruction, freely and fully, we must remain completely in control of the schools; and this leads us to the practical aspect of the matter of government funding.

The Practical Objection

Opponents of State aid warn that aid necessarily involves State control. This is challenged by those who advocate State aid. Dr. Snapper writes, "Those who fear that control follows support never offer a shred of evidence from the field of education in the U.S." (cf. his pamphlet, "Should the Government Support Our Christian Schools?"). The Citizens for Educational Freedom (C.E.F.) dismiss the fear of government control this way:

A large, unmeasurable amount of intelligent discussion is also foreclosed voluntarily by the emotional response that 'we don't want aid—it means state control.' (This objection to State aid to Christian schools is merely) the bare personal psychology of fear of control. (cf. William D. Valente, "Freedom in Education")

Let us see.

First, the wisdom of common sense teaches that with State aid to our schools will come State control of the schools: Whoever pays the fiddler calls the tune.

Second, the Supreme Court itself has warned private and parochial schools that State aid will certainly be accompanied by State control. One of the main reasons for striking down laws that give aid is "excessive entanglement" of the State and the Christian School. By permitting the aid, the State would be committing itself to significant involvement in the Christian School, in order to exercise oversight of the use of the money. This, the Court says, must be avoided.

In its decision in the case of *Lemon V. Kurtzman* (see above), the Supreme Court declared:

A comprehensive, discriminating, and continuing state surveillance will inevitably be required to ensure that these restrictions are obeyed and the First Amendment otherwise respected. Unlike a book, a teacher cannot be inspected once so as to determine the extent and intent of his or her personal beliefs and subjective acceptance of the limitations imposed by the First Amendment. These prophylactic contacts will involve excessive and enduring entanglement between state and church.

In *Walz v. Tax Commission* (1970), concerning tax exemption of religious property in New York, the Supreme Court stated:

Obviously a direct money subsidy (to religious organizations—DE) would be a relationship pregnant with involvement and, as with most government grant programs, could encompass sustained and detailed administrative relationships for enforcement of statutory or administrative standards. . . .

What about other forms of State aid than direct aid to the schools themselves?

First, there is the proposal of State aid for tuition that would be given to the parents and children, rather than to the schools. The parents would then cash in the aid at the school of their choice. This is the "voucher plan." Such a system of aid to the Christian School would not avoid State control, if indeed a voucher plan is ever approved. We may consider the plan that was to be presented to California voters in June of 1980, the plan known as "The Initiative for Family Choice." The chief architect of the plan is John E. Coons. In an article in *Phi Delta Kappan* (September, 1979), "Of Family Choice and 'Public' Education," Coons describes this voucher plan and its implications for the schools that participate:

A curriculum with political or religious content could be required, but no profession of belief or participation in ideological ceremony could be demanded of the student.

Each new school would be required to disclose relevant information about itself, including curriculum and teaching methods, the qualifications of its teachers, and its use of resources.

Mr. Coons argues for his plan by stating that all schools subsidized by the State would be regulated by the State and that one of the rules for all participating schools would be that the schools are open to all students. It is plain that, whatever the merits or demerits of the voucher plan, State control of the schools is part of the package.

In the recent Grove City (Pennsylvania) College case, H.E.W. insisted upon government authority in the college, even though the school takes no federal aid. This agency of the federal government took this position on the ground that the *students* attending Grove City College received government grants (Basic Educational Opportunity Grants and loans through the Guaranteed Student Loan program). H.E.W. demanded signed compliance with Title IX by the college, concerning the school's not practising sex discrimination or discrimination on the basis of race or religion. In March, 1980, a U.S. Federal District Court judge ruled against H.E.W., but in such a way as to suggest that government grants to students *is* aid to the college and does indeed warrant government control (cf. *Christianity Today*, April 4, 1980, pp. 48, 49). This case demonstrates that the State is bent on getting control of Christian, or private, schools and that its means for getting control is financial aid to the school, whether direct or indirect.

Then, there are several kinds of aid to parents who support

Christian education that have been approved by the courts: milk; lunches; bus transportation; textbooks; and special education. Courts have upheld these kinds of aid. Does not this aid come with "no strings attached"? By no means, but there is good reason to fear State influence and control by means of this aid.

Take the matter of textbooks under Title IV. In the case, Board of Education of Central School District No. 1 v. Allen (1968), the Supreme Court upheld a law of New York loaning textbooks to students of private schools. The Court pointed out that only "secular textbooks" may be loaned to the students of private schools and noted that "this Court has long recognized that religious schools pursue two goals, religious instruction and secular education." The Court expressly disagreed "with appellants . . . that all teaching in a sectarian school is religious."

Can a Christian school accept textbooks under such a view? Should a Christian school desire secular textbooks? Ought we not have Christian textbooks? Was not Justice Black correct in his dissent, when he wrote, "Books are the most essential tool of education;" and Justice Douglas, when he wrote, "The textbook goes to the very heart of education in a parochial school"?

Further, in Illinois, textbooks may be loaned only to students enrolled in a school that complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which reads (in Section 601 and the first part of Section 602):

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. Each Federal department and agency which is empowered to extend Federal financial assistance to any program or activity, by way of grant, loan, or contract other than a contract of insurance or guaranty, is authorized and directed to effectuate the provisions of section 601 with respect to such program or activity by issuing rules, regulation, or orders of general applicability which shall be consistent with achievement of the objectives of the statute authorizing the financial assistance in connection with which the action is taken.

Now it is likely that the Christian School, by its own nature, complies with this regulation; but is it not a dangerous thing to subject ourselves to the State's authority in this matter and especially to some bureaucrat's conception of how this is to be effectuated?

In the January, 1979 issue of *The Education Digest*, in an

article entitled, "Uncle Sam's Heavy Hand in Education," Roger A. Freeman writes, "Many of the new laws and regulations appear quite sensible and unobjectionable as written, though their enforcement is not."

That the officials of the State do in fact view these seemingly innocuous forms of aid as coming to the Christian School with strings attached appears in a quotation of an Iowa State Senator in *The Sioux City Journal* of May 5, 1978. The issue was a provision of the Iowa House to permit religious schools to discriminate in hiring teachers. ("Discriminate" is the State's word. The reference, of course, is the right of the Christian School to hire whom it will. Clearly, the issue is one that is fundamental for the Christian School.) The Iowa Senate struck out the provision, and one Calvin Hultman remarked: "Earlier this year we gave \$400,000 in textbooks to parochial schools; we give them transportation. If they are willing to take public money, they ought to live under the law of the land."

The Arabs have a proverb, "If you want to keep the camel out of your tent, keep his nose out. Time-tested wisdom advises, *obsta principiis*—resist the beginnings. At a conference of the Illinois Advisory Committee on Non Public Schools held on October 10 and 11, 1977, at the Center for Continuing Education of the University of Chicago, Attorney David Gibbs, who has defended Christian schools and Christian School supporters against the heavy hand of Ohio, said:

People, when they ask me if they should take aid, I give them one of two answers. I say take none or take it all; because when you take it, you have sold your rights to run your school and you might as well get a good price. (This, because) a court said if you are going to take aid, the government has a right to control that which they finance. (**Whose Child is This?**, p. 13)

This also enters in, that State aid is like a narcotic—once on it, it is hard to get off it; and there is the need for more and more, and stronger, doses, until finally the school is dependent on it. Then, there is no giving it up, regardless of the State's conditions and demands.

These are the aspects of the control that the State will exercise, wherever it gives aid. It will require secular instruction. It will demand acceptance of students without regard for their convenantal position, their religion, their church, or their behavior. It will insist on the school's hiring teachers without regard for their faith or lack of it. It will interfere with the standards, discipline, and required behavior in the school.

Our fear of governmental control is not due to some

personal, psychological disorder; but it is a fear that takes into account the stark realities of life in the U.S. today. Government as such is a good institution of God. The Reformed believer honors the State as servant of God. But the State is always tempted to overstep its God-ordained bounds and to usurp power in every sphere. This is taking place in our country. And the power it exercises in the sphere of education is not a friendly power towards God, His Law, and Christianity. It is hostile: it banishes God and His Word; it promotes evolution and immorality; its religion is the religion and worship of man. This is Anti-Christ.

Keep it at bay!

It is wrong that everybody today stands with his hand out for money from the State; this is ruining our country. It is financially foolish to approve a system of education in which we send away a dollar to the State in order to get a quarter back. But more importantly, our Christian School is at stake. Nor should we allow ourselves to be thrown off guard by the apparent sincerity of the State in helping us. We do well to remember the dictum of Justice Brandeis: "Experience should teach us to be most on our guard to protect liberty when the government's purposes are beneficent."

The Solution

There is injustice in the system of education in our land, and this injustice creates financial hardship for the supporter of the Christian School and for the School itself. I do not believe, however, either that this will cause the Christian School to go under or that the inequity will mean that public education will outstrip the education of the Christian School in quality. There have been hard times for the Christian School in the past, but it did not die. The idea that vast expenditures of cash, elaborate buildings, and the latest equipment mean better education is fallacious; and the public school system of Chicago provides eloquent proof of this.³

But it is unjust that the State forces us to support the public schools, when we are educating our own children. It is unjust that we must pay twice. But not only this; it is unjust that we must support the religion of the public schools. This is unconstitutional, a violation of the First Amendment. The First Amendment arose out of the "Virginia Bill for Religious Liberty," originally written by Jefferson, Madison, and Henry. The preamble reads, in part:

...to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves is sinful and tyrannical.

The statute itself reads:

That no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief.

In the taxation for public education, we are compelled to finance a religion opposed to the God of the Bible and devoted to the god of humanism.

What action can we take?

We call the State to get out of education.

Failing in this, we can petition for tax relief, inasmuch as we educate our own children. Those citizens who educate their own children, or support Christian schools, should be relieved of their tax-burden on behalf of public education.

This, however, is not the main solution.

The response of those who love Christian education must be that we bear the injustice patiently, that we be renewed by the grace of God in our zeal for His covenant, and that we give ourselves and our all to the work of the instruction of God's children.

I am concerned about the encroachments of the State. I am more concerned about the understanding and zeal of Reformed people with regard to the Christian School. At the present time, no one takes our schools away from us; but we may be giving them up. Do we understand the work as a covenant responsibility? Do we have the heartfelt zeal for Christian education that our fathers did in harder times? Is Christian education conviction with us—the conviction of faith?

If this is true for us, we will *sacrifice* for the Christian School. "Sacrifice"—a strange word today, and a rarer reality. I am painfully aware that there is truth to the remark of teachers that when people call for sacrifice in the work of Christian education, they often mean sacrifice by the teachers. But this does not take away from the fact that sacrifice is the law of the Kingdom of Christ, the Kingdom of Him Who loved us and gave Himself for us; and Christian education belongs to the Kingdom.

Footnotes:

1 I was speaking as a Reformed man to Reformed administrators and Reformed teachers.

2 These two Amendments to the Constitution of the United States are of special importance in the controversy over State aid to Christian schools. The First Amendment reads, in part: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." The Fourteenth Amendment reads, in part: "...No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." Roughly, the argument of the foes of State aid to the Christian School is this: State aid for the Christian School supports a certain religion, thus violating the "establishment of religion" clause of the First Amendment; and the use of tax-money for the Christian School deprives citizens of their property on behalf of this religion, thus violating the "due process" clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

3 At the conference of the Illinois Advisory Committee on Non Public Schools held in Chicago in 1977, the Rev. George Edgar Riddeck, staff Vice President of Operation Push, commented on the failure of the public schools, despite their access to vast sums of money. Having referred to an article in the *New York Times* which stated "that though we were spending almost 75 billion dollars for the public education process, we were getting very little in return," Riddeck remarked that "money has not produced in any sense and any wild sense of the imagination in terms of correlation, the kinds of results that we had expected it to produce in the public schools." He cited a national assessment on educational progress that reported that "21% of our urban students are functionally illiterate." He asserted, concerning Chicago, that "between 29% and 55% of the time in classrooms is spent on issues of discipline or the question of unassigned homework or homework that is assigned and not turned in, one or the other" and that "of children who go to school over a 12 year period may be expected to lose upwards of 10 I.Q. points (cf. *Whose Child is This?*, pp. 20-24).

Since making this speech, I have noted Russell Kirk's indictment of American public school education, in the December 31, 1980 issue of *National Review*: "From kindergarten through graduate school, American education is an extravagant failure."

Surely the cause of the Christian School must never allow itself to be discouraged by its exclusion from the public treasury.

GRATEFULLY ACCEPTING THE CHILDREN GOD GIVES

by Miss Jessie Dykstra

Miss Jessie Dykstra is a former teacher in our schools and has most recently been active in educational counselling.

To the measure that one can accept himself, to that extent he may be able to accept others. Parents who are content with themselves, their place in society, in their larger family, in their church community, in their financial stratum, are content with themselves as people; these can be expected to be able to accept their own children. One who is ashamed of his place in society, is dissatisfied with his work and financial situation, is not content with himself, is the person who may be expected to find it very difficult to accept his own children, especially as he sees that they are reflections of himself. Such a one may either tend to withdraw from being an active, involved parent, or may dedicate his life to the effort of trying to prove that he is really other than he feels himself to be and to desire to try to manipulate his children to be different that he perceives them to be.

We probably all find ourselves in between these two extremes, and some days are more confident and accepting and on other days more dissatisfied. At those latter times we may either be depressed or may feel the need to pressure ourselves. We exert pressure to be more than we perceive ourselves to be, i.e. more successful, able, active, producing and even more spiritual. The pressures on ourselves may overflow to pressures on those close to us or may be focused on one or two people who seem to

irritate this gnawing feeling of incompetence.

Sometimes our perception of ourselves is almost entirely based on our accomplishments rather than on what we are. Then we feel compelled to work feverishly and to require the same of those near us. We feel the need to prove our worth by what we do, not by what we are.

When we are in this state, we tend to look at children in terms of what they will become or do rather than at who they are and how they are growing. We tend to see our duty to be that of task master or manipulator. How to get the kids to perform to their utmost at all times. Get on them. Bargain with them. Nag them. Anything to try to move them to achieve! We may even scheme and plan what kinds of rewards to hold out to them in order to spur them on to greater heights.

When we see that they are trying to advance, we may find ourselves eager to tell or show how a task is done instead of allowing them to experiment and learn from their failures, and delight in their own independent learning.

Questions like these are asked. "What can I do to prepare my child for kindergarten?" "What activities should I encourage my pre-schooler to engage in so that he will begin school with a running start?" To me, these questions may suggest that the parent may be trying to manipulate the child to be a high achiever.

Sometimes while the children are still pre-schoolers, we try surreptitiously to teach them the beginnings of academic skills like the numbers and letters. That these symbols may be very foreign to them and unrelated to their everyday life, seems unimportant. If we get them to remember the symbol names, we may feel very accomplished. If the child appears to be picking up academic skills at an early age, we look forward with hope and pride in our accomplishment. We lose sight of the fact that there are reasoning skills that must be developed before reading skills are really beneficial.

One little girl who was just beginning kindergarten came home and announced that she now knew how much one and one was. For this she was praised effusively and the next day she announced that she now knew how much two and two was. This fact was again recognized with abundant praise. Later, when her parents were not around, the girl asked me how much three and three was. When I furnished the answer, her retort was, "No, that can't be, because one and one are two, and two is right next to one. Two and two are four, and four is not that far from two,

but six is not even near to three''. She had obviously learned by rote that one and one is two, and that two and two are four, but she hadn't learned to add.

This seems to me to be a good example of children learning by rote what they do not have a background of experience for. It is a nice concise example, but of course this can happen in every field of learning and at various levels. The child who feels that acceptance is dependent on accomplishment can be too motivated toward accomplishment and the 'learned' material is not integrated into a larger body of knowledge and is therefore not used but easily forgotten. When this happens, the child may excel during the early primary grades and then find difficulty in the later grades, because he is not able to generalize from what he was supposed to have learned, but does not recall.

If acceptance were closely associated with accomplishment, the child may feel compelled to find acceptance in some other way than the kinds of accomplishments recognized by the adults in his life. Peer approval may become the important avenue toward acceptance and academic achievement may be relegated to lesser importance, to be a thing to be disregarded, or even to be an area of tension and associated with feelings of guilt. Parents (and teachers as well) may tend to feel disappointed, let down and discouraged. They begin to feel rather negative about the child that had showed so much promise, and they could find themselves encouraging seldomly, and reprimanding often. This situation is not conducive to nurturing growth.

Trust seems to be the answer. It tends to exclude worry and anxiety. It fosters contentment. Contentment with God's way for one's life and confidence that God will surely guide and control all circumstances so that His church will be gathered and children will grow up and take their places in the church.

If one has the faith to trust that God does all things well and that God accepts him for who he is, an elect in Christ, rather than for what he does or accomplishes, then one can accept himself and be at peace. He can accept the children God gives and delight in their unique development. When he shows that delight, he furnishes a nurturing environment in which the child is able to develop to his full potential. Our Heavenly Father does not accept us on the basis of what we accomplish. We are accepted because we are in Christ. It is proper therefore that children should be accepted because they are covenant children. They need to grow and learn at their own rate, not in order to find acceptance or be able to compete.

OBJECTIVES FOR THE TEACHING OF WRITING

1. We teach the covenant child to write so that, despite the corruption of the curse, he may fulfill the creation mandate to use his talents to subdue the earth (Cf. Genesis 1:28; 3:17-19; Psalm 104:23).
2. We teach the covenant child to write so that he may appreciate the language God has given him (Cf. Genesis 11:1-9; Acts 2:5-11; James 1:17; John 1:1-3; Psalm 68:11).
3. We teach the covenant child to write so that he may be trained to express his heart-directed response to reality, i.e., God and works (Cf. Psalm 51:10; Proverbs 4:23; 16:1-2 and 23-24; 22:6; Ephesians 6:4; I Thessalonians 4:11-12).
4. We teach the covenant child to write so that he may know and interpret reality in the light of the Scriptures (Cf. Psalm 19:14; 119:105; Ephesians 5:16).
5. We teach the covenant child to write so that he can communicate precisely and permanently his interpretations of reality to his fellow man (Cf. Job 19:23-26; Isaiah 30:8; I Corinthians 14:8-9).
6. We teach the covenant child to write so that he may use and sharpen the senses (sensory tools) God has given him. (Cf. Exodus 4:11; Psalm 25:15; 34:8; 40:5; 85:8; 139:14; Matthew 13:16-17).
7. We teach the covenant child to write so that the exercise of writing will stimulate, cultivate, and refine the imagination, a function of the mind (Cf. Proverbs 21:5; 29:18; Joel 2:28; Isaiah 26:3; Acts 2:17-21; II Corinthians 2:16; 10:5; Colossians 3:23-24; I Timothy 3:17).
8. We teach the covenant child to write so that he may experience the delight of communicating a fresh insight into and about reality (Cf. Proverbs 15:23; 25:11; Matthew 13:16-17; James 3:17).
9. We teach the covenant child to write so that he may be able to express the revelation of God in a stimulating and provocative mode (Cf. Psalm 150; I Corinthians 12; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:14-17; 4:2-6).
10. We teach the covenant child to write so that he learns to share knowledge and insight, thereby fostering the nurture and growth of the body of Christ (Cf. Psalm 149:1; I Corinthians 12; Ephesians 5:3-7; Colossians 3:14-17).

quoted from *A Writing Program for the Covenant Child*, 1972.

A Position on the Teaching of Formal Grammar in Grades 4-6

by Mr. James Huizinga

Mr. Huizinga teaches literature and other courses at Covenant Christian High School. This essay appeared first in "A Writing Program for the Covenant Child", a manual for teachers, 1972.

The members of the Language Skills Workshop maintain that the teaching of formal grammar ought to be reserved until grade seven. By formal grammar we mean the systematic study of language that aims at a complete mastery of the inner characteristics of the language. Formal grammar is a scientific study that investigates all of the intricacies of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. Traditionally the study of grammar formally has begun in the primary grades with repetition and further development in succeeding grades. We have no quarrel with the teaching of formal grammar as such. We do not agree with the increasing number of educators who would completely discard the teaching of formal grammar on the grounds that it has no relevance to the student's life. We wish to be staunchly traditional and maintain that there is something far bigger and vastly beyond the student that is the real object of our teaching, even our teaching of grammar. We insist, however, that grammar ought not to be taught as a formal discipline in grades four, five, and six.

The teaching of English in the schools of our country, and in our Protestant Reformed schools as well, has suffered greatly in the past as a result of confusion of goals and methods. All of the trouble seems to center in the question of what should be the content of language instruction. We have all been convinced that our students should by all means learn to write, but the fact remains that we have done very little as far as teaching them to write is concerned. The idea that a formal knowledge of grammar will automatically guarantee good writing is patently false, and the idea that a thorough mastery of the principles of grammar is necessary for good writing is only partly true. It ought to be a principle that every Protestant Reformed teacher accepts that the basic aim of the language program in the primary grades is to

help the students learn to express themselves in writing. Then hopefully they will see that the business of writing and the business of learning grammar are really not two separate and largely unrelated disciplines. The study of formal grammar is valuable because in language there is structure and order and design. There is beauty that reflects the wisdom and genius of the Great Designer. The study of grammar, however, is an exacting, exhausting study. It requires a good deal of concentration, a good deal of energy, and considerable ability to understand and to appreciate the abstract. The older the student, the more likely he will be to master and appreciate the principles of the grammar of his language. One reason that students must be drilled year after year in grammar is that for most youngsters it is painfully difficult. It seems to be a wise move, practically, to postpone the teaching of grammar formally until the student has acquired the mental equipment necessary to make such a study meaningful and worthwhile.

If the teacher does not have to spend hours and days, even weeks, teaching all of the minute items of English grammar, she will have the freedom to initiate a writing program in which the emphasis is on how to use language rather than on what language looks like on paper. A solid writing program will involve teaching various writing skills specifically and will expose the students to as many kinds and forms of writing as possible. Naturally the students will have to have a working knowledge of some grammatical principles. It would be futile to try to teach writing without teaching what constitutes a good grammatical sentence. One cannot teach writing without talking about verbs and nouns, adjectives and adverbs. All of these things can and should be taught incidentally, however. Grammar need only be taught when and where it relates directly to the process of writing.

What we are trying to say is that grammar is only one aspect of the English class at the primary level. It plays an important role, but really a subordinate one. Nothing should take up more time or be more important than writing. We teachers of English have to begin thinking of ourselves as teachers of writing. We have to make the concept of communication central in all of our thinking, planning, and teaching. If we do, maybe then our schools will begin to produce more outstanding writers. We have the richest language in the world. Our students have potential that we have only begun to tap. We have to make English a vital subject. A good deal depends upon it.

The following is a list of the manuals for teachers that have been produced by teachers at summer workshops and through personal study. These educational helps have been funded in part or totally by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Christian Schools. Copies of these are available.

Biblical Perspectives in the Social Sciences (1971)
A Writing Program for the Covenant Child (1972)
Suffer Little Children (Bible manuals 1,2 &3) (at a cost)
Workbooks for *Suffer Little Children* (at a cost)

History Units on Medieval World History (1979)

On the following topics:

Unit I. The Barbarian Migrations
Unit II. The Eastern or Byzantine Empire
Unit III. The Rise and Spread of Islam
Unit IV. England and the Middle Ages
Unit V. France in the Middle Ages
Unit VI. The Crusades

* * * * *

"The teachers, especially, should be living examples of what real Christian education means. No stream rises higher than its source, and it is not to be expected that an educational institution will rise higher than the life and loyalty manifested by its faculty and administration. Every teacher and administrative officer of a Christian college or university, should be, not merely a professing Christian or church member, but a spiritual, active Christian, a person to whom Christ is the object of faith and to whom the Triune God is all-important."

Dr. J. G. Vos

Back issues of *Perspectives* are available to yourself or for a friend.

Perspectives continues to experience a need for manuscripts or articles from teachers, parents, or any other interested person. We will also print any pertinent letters regarding our publication.

PERSPECTIVES
1401 FERNDAL E S.W.
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49504

Non-Profit Org.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
JENISON, MICH.
PERMIT 71

Published semi-annually by the
Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute.