

life there is abundance of faith, hope, and patience. He that endures to the end shall be saved. For this is the infallible proof of true faith.

There is also the part of the earth which is cursed. The entire earth is cursed for man's sake. But there is also a relative difference between the good ground now and the bad. And this bad brings forth weeds and thorns and thistles. One thinks here of the desert lands. Much rain, but to no avail. And all that grows on the same is useless. It is fit to be burned. It is nigh unto a curse. Thus it is with those who have tasted the good word of God and have fallen away. They deny the Son of God, crucify him to themselves, and put him to an open shame, and thus are cursed forever. Nothing can refresh them. One cannot even bring them back to their natural enthusiasm. No amount of mission work is of any avail.

Did it ever occur to you that that is the reason why missionaries sent to the land of Mohammed have no positive fruits upon their labors? Those who swear by Allah have crucified to themselves the Son of God. That Christ is God is the one thing which a Mohammedan will not accept. That is the barrenness too of all Modernism and humanism. It leaves man reaching out and searching beyond the sea in his lostness since he does not believe that God has come to man, God-with-us, Immanuel!

What a horrible end of unbelief over against the gospel of Christ!

Hebrews 6:9-12 (read from own Bible)

BETTER THINGS CHARACTERIZING THE HEBREWS
(*Hebrews 6:0*)

The term "better" (*kreissoon*) is a very commonly used term in the book of Hebrews. In fact, in many ways, it characterizes the entire book. It is the book

of "better things." These better things are connected with Christ. *He* is better! A simple survey of the entire book of Hebrews shows that the term is used some thirteen times; and each time it is used to designate the superiority of the heavenly realities over the temporal typical shadows of the Old Testament in one way or another.

Thus we read in Hebrews 1:4, ". . . being made so much better than the angels, as he hath y inheritance obtained a *more excellent* name than they." Here the KJV characterizes the term "kreissoon" not by the term "better" but by the phrase "more excellent." The kingship and glory of the Son is "better," that is: more excellent than that of the angels. God never said to the angels: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Here we see that the basic usage of the term "better" in the book of Hebrews is, to say the least, very noteworthy.

Let us then pursue this further.

In Hebrews 7:7 we read of Melchizedec blessing Abraham when the latter returned from the battle with the nations, and when he had rescued Lot. At this time Melchizedec blessed Abraham. He did this as a priest of the Most High God. He was "better" than Abraham. He was greater in power and in Majesty. His dignity was greater. Hence, the writer can write here in Hebrews 7:7, "And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better." This shows that the term *better* here too is not a mere comparison on an earthly level, but that it comprises the comparison of heavenly verities in the order of majesty and greatness. It is connected with the better things which the Son has brought with His coming, and through His death and resurrection. Wherefore the writer can say in Hebrews 7:19, "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a *better* hope did; by which we draw nigh unto God."

SPECIAL FEATURE—

Covenant Faithfulness and Joy

by Rev. J. A. Heys

Speech delivered at the "date-stone" laying ceremony of Covenant Christian High School, April 20, 1968.

This afternoon we are gathered to witness the laying of the stone that will from this day onward record the date that the first Protestant Reformed Christian high school was erected and its doors were opened to give that distinctive instruction which the Word of God demands of us as His covenant people.

We are gathered here because within six months we hope to see *covenant* young men and young women,

through the *covenant* faithfulness of their parents and friends, enter through the doors of *Covenant* Christian High to be taught the matters of their natural life by *covenant* teachers, in the light of and from the viewpoint of the *covenant* promises given us, expecting *covenant* blessings to be bestowed upon them, through this instruction, by our *covenant* God. The discerning listener will have noted that I used the word *covenant* seven times in the preceding sentence, even as in Scripture the number seven is the symbol of God's covenant. And, indeed, the word *covenant* belongs there in each instance, if this high school is truly to

be a Christian high school and worthy of its existence amid countless numbers of existing high schools.

Without covenant parents, pupils and teachers this school will be a Christian school and a covenant Christian school only in name. Without a covenant God giving covenant promises there are no covenant blessings; and we might just as well go home and forget about it all, admitting that we foolishly duplicated the efforts of others to build schools to perpetuate their philosophies.

But, since we do, as covenant parents, pupils and teachers have a covenant God Who promises covenant blessings, I would like to see engraven over the doors of our high school for pupils and teachers, for parents and board members, yea for all who enter, to read and consider, those beautiful words of Psalm 103:17 and 18 as they are versified in our Psalter number 281, the last stanza. The words are these:

All the faithful to His covenant
Shall behold His (God's) righteousness;
He will be their strength and refuge,
And their children's children bless.

We have in these words a wonderful promise, whether we hold to the versification or to the literal text in Psalm 103. But let me read to you the text, since the versification is rather free, "but the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children; To such as keep His covenant, and to those that remember His commandments to do them."

In the light of the teaching of the text and its versification let me call your attention briefly to three matters concerning our new high school. Let me point out that Covenant Christian High represents covenant faithfulness; that Covenant Christian High holds promise of covenant blessings; and that Covenant Christian High is possible because of covenant mercy.

You may be sure that building and maintaining a Protestant Reformed Christian high school is our covenant calling. Psalm 103 declares that when it equates keeping God's covenant with remembering to do His commandments. Let us remember that keeping God's commandments is keeping His covenant. And the commandment is spelled out for you and me more specifically in Deuteronomy 6:1, 6 and 7, where we read, "Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments which the Lord your God commanded to teach you... and these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up." Here we have a calling in regard to our children. And here also we have plainly enough the law of the ten commandments. The whole idea in this command of Deuteronomy 6 is that which is expressed in the first two commandments. Our children may have no other gods before Jehovah. And they may have no mental images of Him that corrupt the truth concerning Him. Therefore as far as the matters in the house of our natural life, the things by

the way in business life, in every department of life, from early morning till late at night, in all that which the child contacts, he must see God, and He must see Him as God has revealed Himself in His word, and not out of the eyes of the unbelieving philosopher and false teacher.

What is more, Deuteronomy 6 shows that this is the duty of parents and therefore of the extension of the home, the school. And it means that we must provide positive teaching — which is possible only in a school which we control ourselves — and not merely protect our children from these mental, rather than graven, images which plague us and our children today. We must shield them from the perversion of the truth which denies a total depravity that makes man spiritually dead; that, therefore, produces a world and life view that erases the antithesis and has no room for eternal and unchangeable election of individuals; and that proclaims a universal atonement which presents a god who is not able to save all whom he loves.

And now that you have begun the work of building and of operating a high school where your children may receive the positive truth of God as revealed in His Word, may I congratulate the Society for P. R. Secondary Education as the first graduates of that high school? No, not in the sense that you have graduated *from* it but unto it. For years we have had elementary schools where we could present to our children positively the truth concerning God in all the matters of their natural life. You have graduated from this stage to begin a high school in covenant faithfulness. And Covenant Christian High represents another step in covenant faithfulness before our God.

There will be, you may be sure, a covenant blessing also in Covenant Christian High. There will be a blessing upon the children. The graduates from our high school will not become famous and prosperous according to worldly standards. They will not become men and women to whom the world will go for advice and for their opinions. Rather we may expect that they will be hated and despised for their belief and for their world and life view. But they shall behold God's righteousness in the sense that they shall enjoy that righteousness. They shall know that God is righteous. But they shall also know that they themselves are righteous in Christ. They shall know God's righteousness in the sense that they shall know that which His righteousness has prepared for them: salvation full and free. And that is what counts. All their knowledge of science and of literature, of mathematics and history will do them no good on their death beds and before the judgment seat of God and in the new Jerusalem. But knowing God's righteousness will give them peace and comfort and go with them into the new Jerusalem. Parents, have their everlasting good in mind, and through Covenant Christian High teach them by the way and in all their lives to see this righteous God. Give them knowledge they can take along into the new Jerusalem.

And then the apostle John says it for us all, "I have no greater joy than to behold that my children

walk in truth." II John 4. There is a blessing for the faithful parent as well. And a joy that these parents can take with them into death and the grave. There is a reward and blessing also for the church. For although the church instructs the school and the school is dependent upon the church, the vine bears its fruit on the branches; and the church shall see fruit in the school. Out of Covenant Christian High will come future ministers, elders, deacons, school teachers, covenant fathers and mothers who know God in His righteousness, will maintain the truth vigorously, sacrifice and work for the kingdom.

But this is no time to boast either of our faithfulness in building this school or of what we intend to do in the future through this school. Boasting is not keeping God's commandments and is not teaching our children in the home, by the way, from morn till night that Jehovah is God. It is denying Him and attempting to steal His glory. Once again let us return to the versification. "All the faithful to His covenant Shall behold His righteousness." It is in the way of faithfulness to His covenant that God blesses us, our children and our children's children. But let us not overlook the next line, "He will be their strength and refuge, and their children's children bless." God will bless us and our children and children's children with His righteousness in the way of a faithfulness which He will work in us. He will be our strength and refuge in the battle and when we seem ready to faint and cannot go on in the struggle. "His saints shall not fail but over the earth their strength shall prevail."

Because He is a covenant-making and a covenant-keeping God; because He is faithful to all His promises

He will give us the strength and will to keep our part of the covenant. He established that covenant with us, and we did not with Him. He moved us by His Word and Spirit to build Covenant Christian High, and He will keep us faithful. Otherwise this cause is sure to fail.

But you may say, The versification promises this, but does the text? Dare we take man's versification as a promise of God? Indeed we may in this instance, for although the versification is rather free, Psalm 103:17 also declares that the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon those that fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children. That mercy of God never leaves His covenant people. They are never without it. And it does not depend upon our faithfulness to that covenant, for then it must surely come to an end. It began in eternity before we knew of the covenant, and it caused us to know it and to begin to be faithful. It will abide on God's people everlastingly to keep God's church for the day of Christ.

When the way gets rough, when problems arise and sacrifices are demanded, when the enemy ridicules and even takes away our schools pretty soon, rest in that assurance that God is faithful to His covenant promise and that His mercy is upon us to cause us one day to see in the new Jerusalem the fruit of the labours wrought in Covenant Christian High. And if we cannot have those beautiful words engraven in stone over the door of our school, may God grant that they be written in that mercy in the hearts and lives of the pupils of Covenant Christian High by the covenant instruction given unto them.

TRYING THE SPIRITS—

The Lordship of Christ

by Rev. R. C. Harbach

The truth before us as a topic is rare. It is by no means found everywhere in the theological *Bibliothek*. One may scan many volumes before place is found where the subject is treated, or taken up with more than passing notice. Nor where the name *Lord* is explained is lordship necessarily elucidated. The subject is to be distinguished from the deity of Christ. In His person He is God of God, true God of true God. But that divine person took into everlasting union with himself true manhood, in which He was invested with the sovereign position of absolute, universal sway. The subject is also to be distinguished from the royal office of Christ. The former is a finer aspect of the latter. Christ as King governs, defends and preserves us in

the salvation He has purchased for us. As Lord He has purchased us, soul and body, delivered us from all our sins with His own blood, and made us His own property (HC, 31, 34). As King He has right over us by creation. As Lord He has right over us by redemption. As King, His office is creative and providential. As Lord it is restorative. By His lordship He makes peace between God and man: "preaching peace by Jesus Christ; He is Lord of all (Acts 10:36)." He was "exalted to be a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins (5:31)." As King He lays down His law. As Lord He writes it in the hearts of His people.

Two eminent defenders of the lordship of Christ