



REFORMED

— P A V I L I O N —

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*For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion:
in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me;
he shall set me up upon a rock.*

—Psalm 27:5

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REFORMED
— PAVILION —

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And thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go. And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty: but every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.

—Exodus 3:18b–22

God declared to Moses the end from the beginning. Before Moses ever went to Pharaoh, God declared that Moses would go to Pharaoh. Before Moses ever relayed God's message to Pharaoh, God declared that Moses would relay his message to Pharaoh. Before Pharaoh's heart was hardened, God declared that Pharaoh's heart would be hardened. Before God sent a single plague upon Egypt, God declared that he would smite Egypt with plagues. Before Pharaoh finally relented and let Israel go, God declared that Pharaoh would let Israel go. And long before the Israelites spoiled the Egyptians on their way out of the land, God declared that the Egyptians would fill Israel with all of Egypt's riches.

All of this God declared to Moses out of the burning bush as Moses stood upon Mount Horeb. All of this God declared to Moses while Moses was yet a stranger in the land of Midian, many long miles from Egypt. All of this God declared to Moses before even the smallest portion of these things had come to pass. God's great deliverance of Israel from Egypt had not yet begun, and yet God declared to Moses the end from the beginning.

Why did God do so? First, because God has eternally decreed the beginning, the middle, and the end. All things that shall be are known to

God, for he has determined all things. Nothing happens by chance. Nothing happens by the will of man, angel, or devil. All things happen according to the perfect will and counsel of God. God knows his good pleasure and has predestined all things according to his good pleasure. Before the end God has determined the end. Before the beginning God has determined the beginning. Therefore, God can declare the end from the beginning.

Second, God reveals to his church that he declares the end from the beginning for the church's comfort. The church lives her life in the midst of great turmoil and struggle. Her cause is the cause of God and not the cause of man, so those in the church whose cause is man hate her and harry her. Her life is not the life of excess and riot, so the world thinks her strange. The nature of her members is the depraved nature of corruption, so she stumbles and falls into sin. The frame of her members is dust, so she is weak and broken. In the midst of such turmoil and struggle comes the unspeakable comfort that God has declared the end from the beginning. And the end is Christ. The end is God's kingdom. The end is Israel delivered from Egypt and brought into Canaan. Come what may, the church's end is salvation, life, and peace.

Third, God revealed all his counsel to his chosen servant. Moses was God's servant to lead Israel out of Egypt to Canaan. God would not hide from his servant what he did but spoke to him face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. In this Moses must point us to God's true servant, the Lord Jesus Christ. God sent his Son Jesus to be about Jesus' Father's business. And the risen

Christ now sits at God's right hand, bringing to pass all of God's perfect counsel, which God has declared from the beginning.

With such a God all things that God has said must come to pass. For God declares the end from the beginning.

—AL

FROM THE EDITOR

Day leads on to day, and suddenly the summer is half finished. Rather, half of the summer yet remains. There is still time to fill the long days and pleasant nights with a little reading. If you are looking for an article or two for your Sunday afternoon, then grab your tablet and settle into your favorite chair with this week's *Reformed Pavilion*.

A note about Herman Hoeksema's *Banner* article this week. As you will see, Hoeksema divides his article into two topics. Although this is the first time that he has done this, it will not be the last. This will become a common device for Hoeksema in his *Our Doctrine* rubric.

Hoeksema's first topic in this week's reprint is "Pseudo-Calvinism." This topic was tremendously important for Hoeksema and for what would become the Protestant Reformed Churches. Although Hoeksema was speaking in the broadest possible terms and although he was being a bit cryptic as to who these pseudo-Calvinists were, Hoeksema was beginning to deal with the rot of common grace in the Christian Reformed Church (CRC). Already in 1918 Christian Reformed men were characterizing the Reformed doctrine of the antithesis as a kind of narrow-minded, Anabaptist isolationism and world flight. There were powerful forces in the CRC in 1918 that were agitating for the CRC to take its place on the ecclesiastical landscape in America. Christian Reformed men were willing to shed Reformed distinctives in order to fit in both with the American church world and with

the worldly in America. In this article Hoeksema began to push back against that mentality within his Christian Reformed denomination. Over against that mentality Hoeksema warned that there is a true Reformed faith (what he called "Calvinism") and a pretend Reformed faith ("pseudo-Calvinism"). The true Reformed faith maintains the sovereignty of God and the antithesis with the world, while the pretend Reformed faith seeks amalgamation with the world. These were the very themes that would be fleshed out and developed from 1918 to 1924, when the CRC would officially adopt the doctrine of common grace and expel Herman Hoeksema and others for their rejection of common grace. The seeds of the battle of 1924 could be seen already in principle in 1918.

This context also explains Hoeksema's perplexing willingness to grant Methodism, Anabaptism, and Lutheranism as having a somewhat legitimate Christian form and expression of doctrine. Keep in mind that Hoeksema was dealing with the age-old charge that Reformed people think they are the only ones going to heaven. Apparently within the CRC in 1918, Christian Reformed men were using this false charge to attack the Reformed doctrine of the antithesis and to press for amalgamation with the American church and the American world.

Hoeksema saw that the charge was false. The Reformed faith does not maintain that only members of Reformed churches go to heaven. Hoeksema sought to expose the charge as false

by asserting that Methodist *men*, Anabaptist *men*, and Lutheran *men* were Christian men, dear brothers, and members of the true church of Jesus Christ. But, in my judgment, Hoeksema went too far when he also lumped in Methodist *doctrine*, Anabaptist *doctrine*, and Lutheran *doctrine* with Reformed doctrine. Granted, Hoeksema maintained that Reformed doctrine is “the purest expression of Scripture.” But he seemed to compromise that statement by allowing that Reformed doctrine was not “the only form or expression” of scripture, just as Calvinists were not the only Christians on earth.

Hoeksema was on the right track, and it is no wonder that he did not have everything worked out yet. It was 1918, with six more years of development to go before the CRC’s decision of 1924. But the truth of the matter is that the Reformed faith makes a sharp distinction between itself and other doctrinal systems. While the Reformed faith does not maintain that only members of Reformed churches go to heaven, the Reformed faith does maintain that only the Reformed faith is the truth and that other systems of doctrine are the lie. We confess the Reformed faith to be “the true and complete doctrine of salvation” (questions for public confession of faith). Reformed officebearers vow to “keep the church free from” any errors that militate against the doctrine of the Reformed confessions (Formula of Subscription). The Reformed faith grants no quarter to the doctrinal systems of Methodism, Lutheranism, and Anabaptism, all of which teach salvation by the will or work of man. The Reformed faith, Reformed officebearers, and Reformed church

members are unashamedly the sworn foes of Methodism, Lutheranism, Anabaptism, and any other doctrinal system that suspends salvation upon the sinner.

With regard to salvation, the Reformed faith and Reformed people do not pretend to know which particular men are elect and which are reprobate. Wherever God’s elect are, they are saved by the work of Christ alone. There may be men whose churches teach salvation by the work of the sinner, but those men themselves do not believe what their churches teach. On the other hand, there may be men who boast in words of believing in Jesus, but they deny him by their doctrine that salvation is in some part dependent upon man (see Lord’s Day 11). Salvation is of the Lord, and salvation is of no other.

All of this illustrates the problem with the false charge that the Reformed faith teaches that only Reformed people go to heaven. That false charge shifts the entire focus to the question of who is going to heaven. That false charge is meant to muddy the waters by making Reformed men appear to be unloving, proud, harsh, wicked, and judgmental. The truth of the matter is that only the Reformed faith is the Christian faith, and all other doctrinal systems are perversions of Christianity. And the truth of the matter is that all of those who believe the doctrine that salvation is of man’s works or man’s will are not saved. That is not unloving! For the call comes to those men, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts 16:31).

—AL



Singing with Christ

The topic of the doctrine class tonight is “Singing with Christ.”¹ The occasion for this doctrine class, in the first place, is the edification of God’s people who have been gathered together into the congregation of Remnant Reformed Church. The matter of singing with Jesus is a joyful, glorious reality. It is one of the aspects of worship that the church of Jesus Christ looks forward to with great anticipation. And the truth that when we sing as a congregation in our public worship, we are singing *with* Jesus Christ makes the singing of the psalms especially precious to God’s people.

The second occasion for this doctrine class tonight is the assertion that has been making its rounds that we do not sing with Jesus, that it is false to say that we as a congregation sing with Jesus, and especially the assertion that the truth of singing with Jesus was laid out as a kind of sneaky trap to ensnare the people of God. That assertion and charge states that a law of man was introduced. That law of man, supposedly, was exclusive psalmody. And the bait that drew God’s people in to ensnare them in the trap of exclusive psalmody was the bait that when we sing psalms we sing with Jesus, and only when we sing psalms do we sing with Jesus. A warning has been issued against that teaching that when we sing psalms in church we are singing with the Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore the purpose of this speech is to help prepare Remnant Reformed Church to be ready to give an answer in all things, to understand the truth of the matter of singing with Jesus Christ, and to dispel that notion that singing with Jesus was some kind of trap to ensnare God’s people in exclusive psalmody.

The truth of the matter is that we *do* sing with Jesus Christ. That is no snare; there is noth-

ing sneaky about that. For example, in I John 1 we read that our fellowship is with God and with the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 3). Again, in Romans 8:17 we read that we suffer with Christ. Doing things and having things with Jesus Christ is no false doctrine; it is no snare; it is simply the truth of the Christian life. And so tonight we open up this topic of singing with Jesus Christ.

Whether the Church Sings with Christ

The first point that needs to be established is whether we sing with Christ. Now, there is a further question that has to be asked. That further question is, how? How do we sing with Christ? But we must begin with the question *whether*—whether we sing with Christ. It is the contention of this speech that the church does indeed sing with Christ.

The teaching of the Reformed Protestant Churches from their beginning was that when we sing psalms in church, we sing with Jesus Christ; and when we sing psalms in church, Jesus Christ sings with us. That was the teaching in the Reformed Protestant Churches almost from day one. For two years that was the doctrine that came over the pulpit of First Reformed Protestant Church and all the churches that livestreamed First. That is now the doctrine that continues from the pulpit of Remnant Reformed Church. Since that time new assertions have crept into the Reformed Protestant Churches and in fact have won the day in that denomination. Now it is asserted that we do not sing with Christ and that really it is dangerous to talk about singing with Christ—we have to describe our singing in some other way. It is also asserted that to talk about singing with Christ is going to entangle us in all kinds of snares.

¹ This is a copyedited transcript of a speech given July 12, 2023, for Remnant Reformed Church, which can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1rHyaI4epII>.

Therefore, on the one hand there is the historic doctrine of the Reformed Protestant Churches that we do sing with Christ, and on the other hand there is the new doctrine of the Reformed Protestant Churches that we do not sing with Christ. Those two positions demand that the question that faces us at the beginning of this speech is a question of *whether*—whether we sing with Christ or not when we sing psalms in corporate worship.

That answer will be decided by this one truth: the psalms are Jesus' songs. The psalms are the songs that Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, sings with his own mouth and with his own voice. If it is true that the psalms are Jesus' songs—so that he sings the words of Psalm 22, and he sings the words of Psalm 1 and Psalm 100 and all the rest—then when the church sings those songs, she is singing with Christ. They are his songs. They are the songs he sings with his own voice and his own mouth. If it is not true that the psalms are the songs of Christ, then it is a lie that the church sings with Christ when she sings the psalms in corporate worship. The whole question of whether we sing with Christ or not is answered by whether the psalms are the songs of Jesus Christ.

And when we say that the psalms are the songs of Jesus Christ, we don't mean merely that at one point Jesus gave the psalms to the church, so that Jesus meant for those to be his church's songs but not Jesus' songs. Rather, what we mean by the psalms being the songs of Jesus is that the incarnate Son of God, come in our flesh, actually sings those songs with his mouth and with his voice, so that those songs proceed from him as his worship of Jehovah God. That is the question, then, that we face first of all to answer the question whether we sing with Christ: Are the psalms the very songs of Jesus Christ's own worship?

The answer of scripture to that question is a resounding yes. The psalms are Jesus' songs. That answer is a resounding yes in the Old Testament time period; that answer is a resounding

yes during Jesus' life on earth; and that answer is a resounding yes now, in the New Testament age. The psalms are Jesus' songs. It is a mistake to try to limit the psalms coming out of Jesus' mouth to the time when he was upon the earth. He sang them in the Old Testament, he sang them during his life on earth, and he sings them now in his church.

Let's begin with the Old Testament. Jesus sang the psalms in the Old Testament. That was explained at some length in *Reformed Pavilion* several issues ago.² Second Samuel 23:1 identifies a sweet psalmist of Israel. David is that sweet psalmist, and he is that sweet psalmist as a type of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the sweet psalmist of Israel, who was also raised up on high and is the anointed of the God of Jacob. In verse 2 Jesus says, "The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." Jesus there is describing his singing of the psalms as the sweet psalmist in the Old Testament age. The Spirit of the Lord spake by Jesus, and the Spirit of the Lord was in Jesus' tongue.

When we speak of Jesus' singing the psalms in the Old Testament, we do not mean merely that Jesus is the second person of the Trinity, who is the eternal Word. That is true. Jesus *is* the second person of the Trinity, who is the eternal Word. But we mean that Jesus as incarnate, Jesus as come in our flesh, spoke by his Spirit the words of the psalms in the Old Testament. He was the sweet psalmist as the incarnate Christ in the Old Testament.

How are we to understand that, since Jesus had not been born yet? He was not yet incarnate in the Old Testament. We are to understand it according to the eternal counsel of God. The counsel of God has Jesus Christ at its center. Everything that God decrees he decrees as centered in Jesus Christ incarnate, so that even in the Old Testament, before the historical birth of Christ, the Christ of the counsel of God was operating. You see that Christ of God's counsel make appearances in the Old Testament. He was the angel of Jehovah who appeared to God's

² Andrew Lanning, "The Sweet Psalmist of Israel (2)," *Reformed Pavilion* 1, no. 8 (June 3, 2023): 10–12.

people, one who was obviously God but one who at the same time was obviously the servant of God, the angel of Jehovah, the messenger of God. For example, in the burning bush Moses had to take his shoes off because the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob spoke. But that voice out of the burning bush also served Jehovah God as the angel of God's presence who was among the people of Israel. The second person of the Trinity in himself as the eternal Word is not the messenger of Jehovah. He doesn't serve God; he *is* God. He is served by others. But Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, according to his human nature, *is* the angel, the messenger, the servant of Jehovah, so that what we have in the Old Testament is the Christ of God's counsel singing already by his Spirit the songs that we call the psalms.

For further proof of that, we turn to I Peter 1:10–11, where we read of the prophets of the Old Testament, “who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the *Spirit of Christ* which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” There the Spirit in the Old Testament, who inspired the prophets—including the prophet David in his singing of the psalms—is named the *Spirit of Christ*. There was no Christ in the Old Testament—not yet. There were types of him; there were shadows of him; but there was no Christ yet in the Old Testament. He was born in the fullness of time, made of a woman, made under the law. And because there was no Christ historically in the Old Testament yet, there could be no Spirit of Christ. There was the Holy Spirit, but he had not yet historically been given to Jesus Christ as his Spirit. Nevertheless, Peter says that the Spirit who spoke in the Old Testament was the Spirit of Christ. The way we must understand that is in light of God's eternal counsel, which does and decrees all things in Christ, having Christ at the center, for all things were made by him and for him.

The Christ of God's counsel and the Spirit of the Christ of God's counsel spoke in the Old Testament, which means that in the Old Testament,

before Christ was born in the flesh, Jesus Christ sang the psalms. Those were his songs already then.

When it comes to Christ's time upon earth, perhaps nobody contends that Christ did not sing psalms on earth. There are rumblings that maybe Christ sang *more than* the psalms, but scripture knows absolutely nothing of that. Scripture knows Christ's singing the psalms during his time upon earth. Christ obviously sang the psalms because many of the psalms were words that the Lord himself would speak historically upon the earth—Psalm 22:1, for example: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” In Remnant Reformed Church now, and before that in the Reformed Protestant Churches, we have seen many times how the psalms were the songs of Christ and how Christ sang those words. He sang those words when he went to the synagogue, and Matthew 26:30 records the specific psalms that Christ sang on one occasion. At the conclusion of the Lord's supper, Jesus and his disciples sang an hymn, or literally, “they hymned.” They sang the psalms that were traditional to sing at the end of the pass-over, Psalms 113–118, sometimes called the Hallel hymns. Jesus and his disciples sang psalms at the institution of that New Testament worship element, the Lord's supper. Jesus in his life, then, not only sang those psalms, but Jesus also *instituted* psalm singing as an element of the church's worship by that singing of a psalm as he instituted the Lord's supper.

And then, to take us to the New Testament church today, Jesus sings psalms in the New Testament church. That is, the incarnate Son of God, who died, rose again, and ascended into heaven, in heaven sings the psalms of scripture. And he sings those psalms in and with his New Testament church, so that when we sing the psalms today, we are singing those psalms with Jesus Christ.

The evidence for that is many of the psalms themselves. In Psalm 22 Jesus says, “I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee” (v. 22).

Then a little bit later: “My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him” (v. 25). The explanation of those verses is not that in the Old Testament there was merely a prophecy of the time when Jesus would walk upon the earth, so that Jesus in the Old Testament was saying, “There will come a time, for thirty-three and a half years, when I will sing thy praises, God, in the great congregation; and then after thirty-three and a half years, that time of my singing in the great congregation will cease.” That cannot be the explanation of that passage because the intervening verses speak of things that go on forever. “Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel. For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him he heard” (vv. 23–24). That goes on now in the New Testament. God hears the cries of his afflicted. And the afflicted, especially as they come together in church, call upon God together. Those verses that speak of things that go on today sit sandwiched in between verses 22 and 25, so that when Jesus says in Psalm 22, “My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation,” he is speaking of today too. Jesus still says, “My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation.” And that is quoted in Hebrews 2. “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.” Those are Jesus’ words about Sunday morning in Remnant Reformed Church and Sunday evening in Remnant Reformed Church and every Lord’s day in every true church of the Lord Jesus Christ over the length and breadth of the earth. Jesus Christ himself, in the midst of the church, sings psalms.

Jesus’ declaration there is not a free-for-all. Jesus’ declaration is not “Any time you happen to sing anything, I sing with you in the midst of the great congregation,” so that a congregation could choose to sing whatever it wants. But ra-

ther, Jesus is talking there about his own songs. “I will sing *praise* unto thee.” And the word that Jesus uses for *praise* in Psalm 22:25 is the same word that God used as the title of the book of psalms. In Hebrew the book of psalms is entitled “Praises.” When Jesus says in Psalm 22:25, “My *praise* shall be of thee in the great congregation,” Jesus there is speaking about the psalms. Without doing any violence to the text, one could translate Psalm 22:25, “My psalms shall be of thee in the great congregation.”

All of that demonstrates that the psalms are Jesus’ songs that he sings with his own voice, so that they are the words that proceed out of his own mouth. And now, when this book of psalms is given to the church and these psalms are called the songs of Zion, the clear implication is that when Zion sings psalms, she is singing with Jesus Christ. He is in the midst of the congregation singing praise with his own voice and his own words to God. And the church sings with him.

So now we can give an answer regarding the two rival assertions: on the one hand, the historic assertion of the Reformed Protestant Churches that the church sings with Jesus and Jesus sings with the church, and on the other hand, the assertion that has taken over the Reformed Protestant Churches now, that it is dangerous to say that the church sings with Jesus Christ. Because the psalms are the songs of Jesus which he sings in the midst of the church, the church sings psalms *with* Jesus Christ.

How the Church Sings with Christ

The question is, how? How does the church sing with Christ? We can answer that in two steps.

We could call step one *he in us*. That language comes from the Lord’s supper form in reference to Christ’s living in us and we in him. But that language can be applied to singing with Christ. How do we sing psalms with Jesus Christ? *He in us*. That means that the Lord Jesus Christ dwells in his church as a whole and in the individual elect members of his church by his word and Spirit.

Much has been made of late about Jesus' dwelling in the church by his Spirit. That is beautiful doctrine. Jesus *does* dwell in the church by his Spirit. What is sometimes and maybe often and maybe even always left out is that Jesus dwells in his church by his *word* and by his Spirit.

Jesus dwells in his church, first of all, by his word. That is, the word of God is put into the heart of the church, so that the church of Jesus Christ knows that word, believes that word, and confesses that word. The church of Jesus Christ is nothing apart from the word. The church of Jesus Christ has nothing apart from the word. The word of God that dwells in her is God's revelation to her through the holy scriptures of her salvation, of God's majesty, of the Lord Jesus Christ. As Peter says, "This is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (I Pet. 1:25). And in Romans 10:8 we read that that word is nigh us, even in our mouths and in our hearts. The word is in us. That word is the Word of God, who is Jesus Christ himself, who is known in the scriptures and in all the doctrine of the scriptures. That word is in the heart of the church of Jesus Christ.

You can think of it this way when it comes to singing the psalms: when the church sings the psalms in church, she does that with Jesus Christ because he has put those very words, which are his own songs, in her heart. And she sings those songs, then, with Christ.

Christ is also present in his church by his Spirit. And the word and the Spirit go together. You can never separate the two. You can never have one without the other because the Spirit is simply the breath of God: that living breath; that powerful breath; that breath who is himself God; that breath who is sovereign, who bloweth where he listeth, accomplishing all of his purpose. And that breath of God carries forth the word of God to the church. That is how your own speaking works. If you would speak a word, your word must be carried out of your mouth on your breath. And if you try to say a word without breathing, you won't be able to say anything. So with God: he breathes forth his word and by his

Spirit carries his word to his people. That Spirit is the indwelling Spirit of Christ. "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15). God breathes his Spirit into us, and that Spirit abides with us. And on that breath of his Spirit comes the word.

That is why there can be any confidence that the preaching of the gospel or the word of God that parents bring to their children will be effective. It is not because the minister or the parents can be so persuasive. It is not because they are so eloquent of speech. But the effectiveness of the word is that the *Spirit* carries it. And when the Spirit carries that word, the Spirit accomplishes his purpose, whatever that purpose is. There can be absolute certainty of the effectiveness of the word because of the Spirit who carries that word.

That Spirit abides in us, and that Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus Christ. In John 14 Jesus said, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (John 14:16-18). Jesus there, describing the Spirit, says, "When I send this Spirit to you, I myself come to you. Because it is my Spirit, who is the Spirit of truth, I come to you by that Spirit."

Jesus dwells in his church and in the hearts of each of his elect people by his word and by his Spirit. When the church of Jesus Christ is singing psalms in church, then, she is singing with Christ, for she is singing his word by his Spirit.

The teaching that Jesus leads us by his Spirit is not the same as the teaching that Jesus leads us by our feelings. Men have often hijacked the truth of Jesus' leading by his Spirit and twisted it into the teaching that the church must do whatever feels worshipful or feels right to her. And men prove that their worship or their decisions are true and right by the false appeal that the Spirit led them to worship that way. But that is not the doctrine of Jesus in us, *he in us*.

You and I will fool ourselves tomorrow that our wills *feel* more worshipful than the next guy's will. That is simply our condition by nature, having fallen in Adam, that we would do anything in our power to raise our wills to sovereignty. And so if we rely on our feelings, our worshipful religious feelings, and we name those feelings "the Spirit" but we divorce that Spirit from the word, then we have gone very, very far astray. The Spirit does not lead us into our own wills. The Spirit leads us into *God's* will. And the Spirit leads us into God's will by God's word. The freedom of the Spirit is not that you do what pleases you. The freedom of the Spirit is that you do what pleases God. And God in his grace conforms our wills to his will. The truth of *he in us* as the explanation for how we sing with Christ is that by the Spirit of Christ, who brings the word of Christ to us, we sing the songs of Christ.

That is the first step to answering the *how—he in us*. The second step to answering the *how is we in him*. And that is the other part of that phrase out of the Lord's supper form, "He in us, and we in Him." When we speak of *we in him*, we are speaking of Jesus Christ as our head and us as members of his body, who are united to him by faith. *We in him* means that Jesus Christ as our head *is* the worshiper. It is not only that Jesus Christ *watches* our worship, observes our worship. It is not even only that Jesus *receives* our worship. But it is this: Jesus *is the worshiper*. Jesus was appointed by God as the head and mediator of his people (Canons of Dort 1.7). Jesus as the head is the one who does all things on behalf of his people. Jesus Christ as the servant of Jehovah worships Jehovah. The psalms, which are the songs of Christ, are full of Jesus' worship of Jehovah. Everywhere that the psalmist says, "I will praise thee," that is Jesus Christ saying to God, "I will praise thee." When the psalmist says, "I will rejoice in thee," that is Jesus Christ saying to God, "I will rejoice in thee." And that is not only for his thirty-three and a half years upon the earth. That is all through history, from the beginning to the end. The Lord Jesus Christ *is* the worshiper of Jehovah.

That is true with regard to Jesus' praying. Jesus prayed night and day. The members of the church of Jesus Christ often bemoan the lack of fervency in their prayers. And when your conscience accuses you that you are not a very good pray-er, then the solution and the answer of the gospel to that wounded conscience is that the Lord Jesus Christ was an *excellent* pray-er, the perfect pray-er and worshiper, so that your prayers are finished, all finished, in the praying of Jesus Christ. And now the praying that he gives you to do is simply the life of gratitude, the worship of gratitude, for what Christ has already finished.

And that goes for all your worship. Did you do a very good job of worshiping this past Sunday? How often did your mind wander? Well, your mind ought not wander, and you ought to do a better job worshiping, and I ought to as well. But our worship is finished in Christ. He already perfectly worshiped God; and all of his worship is counted as yours, so that the reason you go to heaven is not because of any of the worship that you brought but entirely because of the worship that Christ brought. He kept the first commandment perfectly: worship God alone. He kept the second commandment perfectly: worship God as he has commanded. He kept the third commandment perfectly: worship God according to his name. He kept the fourth commandment perfectly: worship God on the Lord's day. Christ kept all of the commandments of God. And that counts as yours. And now your worship that he gives you is a gift of his grace to you and is your thankful life to him for his perfect worship.

Jesus Christ is the worshiper. And we are *in him*, which means that the Lord Jesus Christ takes us now into the very presence of God himself, where he is our head, and gives unto us all of the worship that God has appointed for us to bring to him in gratitude. We worship God in the Lord Jesus Christ, for he is our head. That Jesus is the head of his church is taught in Canons 1.7, as well as in Ephesians 1: God "gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (v. 22).

Jesus is also our mediator. A mediator is one who brings God's people with himself to Jehovah God. The Lord Jesus Christ by his gospel and by his Spirit gathers his church unto himself, unites us to himself by faith with the same Spirit who dwells in him as the head and in us as his members, and takes us with himself into the Father's presence. Your access to God is through the way, who is Jesus Christ (John 14:6). And Belgic Confession 26: "We have no access unto God but alone through the only Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous." The mediator takes us with himself into the very presence of God, where he is singing the psalms of Zion.

How do we sing with Christ? He in us and we in him.

The Analogy of Preaching

All of that can be understood by an analogy to another aspect of worship that we are very familiar with, and that is the preaching of the gospel. There is an analogy between singing psalms with Christ and the preaching of the gospel. In the preaching of the gospel, who speaks? Reverend So-and-so? He is an instrument, but he is not the speaker. In the preaching of the gospel, Jesus Christ speaks. It is *his voice* that is heard by the congregation. The words that are spoken come out of Jesus' mouth, and they are his words. That is obvious to us from passages like "How shall they believe in him whom they have not heard?" (Rom. 10:14) and "My sheep hear *my voice*, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27). We wouldn't explain those passages to be referring only to Jesus' life on earth, that his sheep heard his voice during thirty-three and a half years on earth; no, that is now. "My sheep hear *my voice*." And Paul said to the Ephesians, "Ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus" (Eph. 4:20–21). The Ephesians never heard Christ with their physical ears when he was on earth, but they heard him very much in the preaching of the gospel. The voice in the preaching of the gospel *is* the voice of Jesus Christ, so that you

can say that Jesus Christ preaches the gospel in the church.

That is how it is with psalm singing too. Jesus Christ is the singer, just like Jesus Christ is the preacher. And the psalms are the words of Christ that proceed from his mouth.

Now, with that analogy in mind, we can make a few comparisons and see a few implications. The first implication is that there is tremendous mystery in both the preaching of the gospel and the singing of psalms in church. The congregation and the minister alike cannot fathom how it is that Christ preaches with his own voice through that minister. When the minister's grammar is all chopped up, that is still the voice of Christ. Though it sounds like the timbre and the tone of a man whom you might speak with after church, it is the voice of Christ and the word of Christ. "My sheep hear *my voice*." Who can fathom that mystery?

So also with the singing of the psalms in church. Who can fathom the mystery of it? How does it happen that we sing certain psalms on Sunday? Not because the minister took a psalter and paged through it and found a psalm to sing. He might do that; but when that psalm is selected, Jesus selected it. All unbeknownst to the minister, Christ selected that psalm, just as when the minister sits in his study and writes the sermon, that sermon is Jesus' sermon. All unbeknownst to the minister, Christ is giving the words to speak. A tremendous mystery. A wonder. What a wonder is worship.

And then there is also this implication: in the preaching of the gospel, Jesus does not say, "Whatever you decide to say on Sunday, I will say with you." Or "Whatever you decide to do on Sunday, I will do with you." If the minister comes to the pulpit with false doctrine and teaches a lie, that is not Jesus' voice. Jesus is not proclaiming that false doctrine. Jesus proclaims only the truth. And if a congregation and a minister in their folly seek to insert their own word in the place of the word of Jesus Christ, then Christ doesn't give his approval to that. The church of Jesus Christ, if it ever happens that

false doctrine is preached from the pulpit, depends on the forgiving blood of Jesus Christ to cover that sin for the minister and the congregation. The minister and the congregation depend on the word of God to correct them, teach them, and turn them. But the minister, knowing that Christ preaches when that minister preaches the truth, doesn't then say, "Okay, good, now I can do whatever feels good to me or whatever I want." No, he is to stick to the word that Christ has given to preach. "Preach *the word*."

So also in the singing of psalms. Christ doesn't say, "I will sing whatever you happen to select. If you want to pick"—to be utterly silly—"a rock song, I'll sing that with you in church. Or if you want to sing a hymn full of all kinds of false doctrine, I'll sing that with you. Or even if you select some song that I have not marked out as part of my songbook, I'll sing that with you." Christ doesn't say, "It's up to you, and I'll just do whatever you do"; Christ selects *psalms* to sing. And how do you know?

The same way you know what you are to preach: God's word tells you. What are you to preach? "Preach *the word*" (II Tim. 4:2). What are you to sing? "Sing psalms" (Ps. 95:2; 105:2; and many other places). Jesus selects those things, and he has shown the church what are the things that he selects to preach and to sing in the church of Jesus Christ.

We can understand the whole matter of preaching. We have studied that before and have some understanding of it. By an analogy, that can help us to understand how psalm singing goes in the church of Jesus Christ.

And this, then, is a joyful, glorious thing, to sing with the Lord Jesus Christ in the midst of his congregation. He himself sings in the church the praises of Jehovah. And as our head and mediator, who has delivered us by his blood, he graciously says to us, "You may come into God's house and worship him with me."

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Article XV. Pseudo-Calvinism and Mankind's Relation to the Fallen King (continued)

A. PSEUDO-CALVINISM

Just a little chat, reader. I don't know whether you have read my last two articles. If not I can't blame you. I don't know whether I would read them myself if they had not been of my own composition. They were rather dry and stiff and uninteresting, a collection of Bible passages and some dry exegesis, hardly fit to keep you from nodding if you tried to read them on Sunday afternoon after you ate a solid dinner.

I gladly apologize.

But at the same time I would have you to read them and to reread them if necessary, even though they are extremely dry, for they are important...though I say it myself.

In them I made the attempt to point out the Scriptural basis for the doctrine of the covenant, particularly for the doctrine of the covenant of works, still more particularly for that doctrine from a certain particular point of view, from the viewpoint namely, of our relation to Adam.

I did so purposely. Not to weary you and forfeit my every claim to your valued attention. On the contrary, I make it no secret that I am doing all in my power to keep your attention, but because it is absolutely necessary to see the connection between our Reformed Doctrine and the Word of our God. I said before, that the Word is after all the living fountain from which we must ever again draw the living water. If our faith is to be real, is to be a living faith, we have need of being conscious continually of the relation between our Confession and the Holy Scriptures.

But there is also another, a very practical reason why this is necessary.

You know, a Calvinist, (excuse the term; I am not any too fond of it myself. Never do I use it if I can help it. I don't think I have used it a half dozen times from the pulpit, which is not very frequent in three years and a half) I say, a Calvinist is after all a distinctive Christian. Not all Christians are Calvinists. Mark, I say: "not all Christians are Calvinists." They may be Christians all-right. Sure! Dear children of God, with whom I love to shake hands. I don't believe that there is a Calvinist that denies this. I don't think that there is a Calvinist who maintains that the Calvinists are the only Christians. And those who love to waste paper (and that in this time when paper is so valuable!) by fighting against Calvinists who maintain that they are the only Christians on earth, are fighting a shadow, a product of their own imagination. No, but I claim that a Calvinist is a Christian of a distinctive type, with distinctive principles and views, in distinction, namely, from other Christians. Never let any method of reasoning lead you to the belief that all Christians are Calvinists, for then things will be getting so dark, that you lose all power to distinguish. The Methodist is a good sincere Christian, all-right. Of-course he is! A dear brother. But he is not a Calvinist. The same is true of the Anabaptist, the Lutheran, etc. All together they constitute the Church of Jesus Christ on earth, as long as they confess that Jesus is the Christ. But within that large circle there are different shades and forms of faith, and the Calvinist also maintains his own distinctive world and life-view in

their midst. Now, what I mean to say is that to maintain your distinctive character as a Calvinistic Christian, you must not merely be able to discern clearly what distinguishes you from the rest, but you must have the courage of your conviction such as can be the fruit only of the faith in the Word of God. Only the conviction that our form of faith is the purest expression of Scripture (again, mark, I do not say: the only form or expression) can give us the courage to refuse amalgamation. And, therefore, it is necessary, that we are conscious of the relation between our Reformed Faith and the Word of God.

Still more.

You must also be able to distinguish and maintain the distinction between Calvinism and Pseudo-Calvinism.

You wonder what Pseudo-Calvinism is? Why, nothing but Calvinism in name without its principles, false Calvinism. Against this I would warn with all the more zeal because it is so dangerous. It is counterfeited Calvinism, adulterated, like a bottle of medicine with a wrong label affixed to it; like an enemy's ship sailing under the flag of our country. It may be recognized in a practical way by noticing several peculiar characteristics. First of all there is the characteristic that it calls itself Calvinism exclusively and looks with disdain upon whatever else might present itself as such. But in the meantime this form of so-called Calvinism is continually combating true Calvinistic principles. In the second place, it is characterized by a peculiar method of attack. It first draws a caricature of our Reformed belief, in order then to call the caricature Calvinism and fight it. The caricature is the presentation of a very narrow-minded Christian, strikingly resembling the Anabaptist, who limits the sphere of Christendom to his own church, and who would have nothing to do with the world as God's creation. In the third place, this Pseudo-Calvinism is forevermore warning against "Hyper-Calvinism," that is, against an overemphasis of doctrine, system, the sovereignty of God; in a word, it is warning against all that is dear to Calvinism in the true sense of the

word. And, in the fourth place, this Pseudo-Calvinism is very broad, but also immensely vague. By a very skillful play on the word "world" (or, if it is not an intentional play on words it's a most hopeless confusion of ideas,) it employs the beautiful world-embracing conception of true Calvinism for the purpose of making us amalgamate with the world in its evil, ethical sense of the word.

And, therefore, against this I would warn you. Whenever you meet with it, be sure, and recognize it. Don't make the mistake of accepting it for the genuine thing. Its acceptance will lead our church to inevitable ruin. Distinguish, therefore, we must, and have the courage of our conviction. And for that reason we must be able to see the relation between our doctrine and the Word of our God.

B. MANKIND'S RELATION TO THE FALLEN KING

Let me now continue my discussion. The question we are dealing with is that of the covenant of works, but then from a particular point of view and with a special purpose in mind, namely, to ascertain the judicial relation between mankind and Adam, the Fallen King. The idea of the covenant in all its fullness we rather discuss in connection with a different subject. Now it is sufficient that we obtain some general conception of the covenant of works, in order then to determine in what relation we as children of Adam stand to our first father because of this covenant. To various phases of our modern life we called your attention in order to illustrate the idea of a covenant. It is like the relation between friend and friend, between man and wife, between two allied parties. Are there also such illustrations in the Word of God? They are, indeed, abundant.

We read of a covenant between Jacob and Laban. After Jacob had served twenty years in the house of his uncle he secretly stole away with his wives and substance. Laban, furious, pursued the fleeing company with intentions none too friendly, which, however, were not realized because of the gracious intervention of Jehovah. After Laban had given expression to his wrath

and Jacob filled with indignation had answered his father-in-law, the two finally made a covenant together. A heap of stones was erected and oaths were sworn according to which neither of them was to pass the heap of stones with hostile intentions toward the other. It was a covenant between Jacob and Laban, based of the mutual pledge of faith and truth, for the purpose of warding off the danger of hostility and war.

The same may be said in regard to Rahab, the harlot, and the spies sent by Joshua to view the land. True, in this case the word “covenant” is not mentioned, but all the elements of such a covenant are clearly present. The spies are in danger. Their presence has been rumored thru the city and they are pursued. They are in danger of their life. On the other hand, Rahab, having heard of all the great things which Jehovah, the God of Israel has done for the people of Israel and against their enemies, perceives the danger that the city of Jericho shall be taken by Israel and destroyed, and that also she and her father’s house are to be killed in the general massacre that will follow. Both parties are in danger, the spies and the harlot. And they make a covenant. Rahab accomplishes the safe retreat of the spies out of the city and deceives the men that are sent after them, and the spies on their part swear that when the city shall be taken and destroyed Rahab and her house shall be spared in the midst of the general destruction. The sign is the scarlet cord that Rahab is to hang in the window.

Again, an illustration of the scriptural idea of a covenant we have in the case of Joshua and the Gibeonites. Joshua and the victorious armies of Israel have crossed the Jordan, captured the cities of Jericho and Ai, and are well on their way to complete control of all the central part of the country. The Gibeonites have heard, no doubt, of this mighty host for whom Jehovah fights, before whom He broke down the walls of Jericho and put to flight the armed men of Ai. And fear falls upon them. They realize the hopelessness of making a stand against such a host, on whose side the God of the heavens evidently is fighting. They conceive of a stratagem. We are acquainted

with the history of their deceptive device. Disguised as weary travelers that have come from a far country they enter into the camp of Israel and appear before Joshua, in order to make a covenant with him and have him promise them that no harm shall befall them from the Israelites. And Joshua promises. He makes the treaty or covenant with these supposed weary sojourners from a far country and discovers the plot when it is too late to retreat. The Gibeonites have a covenant with Joshua. But evidently, on account of this covenant the enemies of the armies of Israel have become the enemies of Gibeon at the same time. To an extent Gibeon and Joshua now have a common enemy, and soon this is proven to be a fact. For the five kings of the Amorites, realizing that Gibeon has made an alliance with their foe, come to battle against the city. By reason of the covenant with Joshua the former allies of the Gibeonites have now become their enemies. But by reason of the same covenant, Joshua listens to their cry for help and delivers them from the power of the Amorite confederacy. Joshua IX, X.

Perhaps the most beautiful example, however, of a covenant concluded between two human parties we find in the relation between David and Jonathan. On the one hand is the danger that threatens David from the side of king Saul and his growing envy and hatred. The malevolence of the king has gradually become more plainly revealed and it seems rather certain that the man after God’s heart cannot enter into the presence of the king but with danger to his life. On the other hand it is clear to Jonathan that the crown must inevitably go to David, whom the Lord has anointed to be king instead of his father Saul. The danger is more than imaginary that in the future a day will arrive in which David possesses power and authority to wreak vengeance upon the house of Saul for all the evil the latter devised and caused the former. And they make a covenant together. Jonathan is to ward off the danger that seems to be growing more imminent for David by faithfully reporting to the latter the king’s state of mind; and David swears

that he will show kindness to Jonathan and his house forever. The two have made a covenant together, an alliance, based on the pledge of mutual faith and truth for the purpose of warding off an evil.

And, finally, we still read of a covenant that was concluded between Jehoiada, the priest, and the captains over hundred against the wicked usurpation of Athaliah, the queen, and the restoration of the crown to Joash, the only remnant of the seed royal. After the death of Ahaziah his mother, as we know, had killed all the seed royal and herself had ascended the throne. Only Joash, a mere babe, had escaped the cruelty of his grandmother, being saved from death by his aunt, the sister of Ahaziah. When the time is considered ripe, Jehoiada the priest makes his plans to have Joash proclaimed king and the cruel queen deposed and punished. He calls the captains over hundreds and makes a covenant

with them against Athaliah to realize his plans regarding Joash. The covenant is concluded and the plan is carried out, the queen is killed and Joash is proclaimed and anointed king on the throne of Judah. It was a mutual agreement, based on the pledge of faith and truth, against the danger that threatened from the wrath of the queen, should the plot be revealed before the necessary precautions had been taken. And after Joash has been crowned king the latter and the people together make a covenant with Jehovah, the immediate result of which is that the people destroy the house and altar and images of Baal and kill the priests of that strange god. Also in this case, therefore, the covenant proves to be an alliance between God and His people against their common enemy, Baal.

—Holland, Mich.



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