MINUTES OF THE
FIFTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
of
THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Calvary Church
Wildwood, New Jersey
May 13-18, 1948
THURSDAY, MAY 13

Thursday morning

The Rev. John P. Galbraith, Moderator of the Fourteenth General Assembly, opened the devotional service preceding the Fifteenth General Assembly at 11:00 a.m., May 13, 1948, at the Calvary Church, Wildwood, New Jersey. Mr. Galbraith preached a sermon entitled, “A Prophet’s Commission,” based on Ezekiel 2:3-8. Following the sermon the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was administered by Mr. Galbraith, assisted by the Rev. Arthur O. Olson and the Rev. Robert E. Nicholas and by Ruling Elders Henry E. Wade, Trester Jentink, Earl E. Maier, and George O. Cotton.

Thursday Afternoon

The Fifteenth General Assembly was convened at 2 p.m., Thursday, May 13, 1948, with prayer by Mr. Galbraith.

The Roll was called by the Rev. Herbert J. Hoeflinger, in the absence of the Clerk of the Fourteenth General Assembly. The Roll is as follows:

THE ROLL OF THE ASSEMBLY

Presbytery of California
Elder: Henry E. Wade

Presbytery of the Dakotas
Ministers: Herbert S. Bird, Arthur O. Olson
Elders: George O. Cotton, V. Robert Nilson

Presbytery of New Jersey
Elders: Justus L. Bryan, Carlisle Gale (Robert Garrison, Jessie Gump, alt.), Floyd C. Graf, Matthew McCroddan, Wilfred R. Moses, Frank Stiles

Presbytery of New York and New England
Ministers: Calvin A. Busch, Ralph E. Clough, John J. DeWaard, William C. Goodrow, Floyd E. Hamilton, Raymond M. Meiners, Herman T. Petersen, John C. Rankin, John H. Skilton, Robert L. Vining, William Young, Th.D.
Elders: Earl E. Maier, C. Muller, G. Travers Sloyer
Presbytery of Ohio

Ministers: Martin J. Bohn, Charles H. Ellis, Lawrence B. Gilmore, Th.D., J. Lyle Shaw, Ph.D., D.D.

Presbytery of Philadelphia


Presbytery of Wisconsin

Ministers: Edmund P. Clowney, John Davies, Oscar Holkeboer, George W. Marston, John Verhage

Elders: Glenn A. Andreas, Trester Jentink

The Minutes of the Fourteenth General Assembly were presented in printed form and approved as corrected. Page 55, line 8 from the bottom was added as follows: “tent. Thus while the Old Testament Psalms were probably used by the New”

The Statistical Report was presented.

Nominations were declared in order for the office of Clerk. Messrs. Sloat, Eckardt, and Vining were nominated. Mr. Eckardt was elected on the second ballot.


Nominations were declared in order for the office of Moderator. Messrs. Kellogg, Price, and Cummings were nominated. Mr. Kellogg was elected on the first ballot.

Mr. Galbraith presented the gavel to Mr. Kellogg, and Mr. Kellogg responded briefly.

Nominations were declared in order for the office of Assistant Clerk. Messrs. Oliver and Meiners were nominated. Mr. Meiners was elected on the second ballot.

The Clerk read the following communications:

Paper 2

Leith, North Dakota
May 3, 1948

Dear Mr. Albright:

At its regular spring meeting at Lincoln, Nebraska, March 3, 1948, The Presbytery of the Dakotas voted to extend to the General Assembly a cordial
invitation to hold its 1949 meeting at the Byron Bible Camp, near Huron, South Dakota.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
WALTER J. MAGEE, Stated Clerk
The Presbytery of the Dakotas

Paper 3
April 28, 1948

To the Rev. H. Wilson Albright
Clerk of the Assembly

On motion the following resolution was adopted by the Presbytery of California at its spring meeting on April 22, 1948:

The Presbytery of California respectfully overtures the Fifteenth General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, professing to represent and speak for American Protestantism, is definitely anti-Christian in leadership and activity, presenting to the world an apostate testimony; and

WHEREAS the American Council of Christian Churches is unequivocally unashamedly and positively Christian in its origin, purpose and activity, offering its membership the opportunity of supporting and participating in a force designed to obtain every advantage for the proclamation of the pure Gospel of Salvation; and

WHEREAS The Orthodox Presbyterian Church was organized as a testimony against unbelief and as a defender and propagator of historic Christianity; and

WHEREAS affiliation with the American Council of Christian Churches would further the objectives of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church by taking a positive stand against unbelief and for the Gospel, without loss of identity, independence, or standards; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church submit to the presbyteries for approval or disapproval an overture granting the General Assembly authority and direction to commit The Orthodox Presbyterian Church to membership in the American Council of Christian Churches.

ROBERT E. NICHOLAS, Clerk

Paper 4
April 29, 1948

To the Clerk
Fifteenth General Assembly

The following motion was adopted by the Presbytery of California, meeting in Los Angeles, April 22, 1948:

Presbytery urges the Fifteenth General Assembly to send a reporter to the World Council of Churches and a representative to the International Council of Christian Churches, meeting in Amsterdam this summer.

Respectfully submitted for your consideration,
ROBERT E. NICHOLAS, Clerk
To the Clerk of the
Fifteenth General Assembly
Meeting in Wildwood, N. J., May 13

In response to the suggestion of the 14th General Assembly (Minutes, p. 49) that the Presbyteries make a study of ch. XIV and XV of the Form of Government with a view to . . . etc., the Presbytery of California wishes to report that a special committee was appointed to study the question; that the committee presented a written report (which may be made available to the Assembly on request); and that Presbytery voted that no action be taken.

Respectfully submitted,
ROBERT E. NICHOLAS, Clerk

To the 15th General Assembly

By motion adopted at the stated spring meeting of the Presbytery of California meeting in Los Angeles on April 22, 1948, this Presbytery cordially invites the 16th General Assembly to convene in the Los Angeles area.

Hopefully yours,
ROBERT E. NICHOLAS, Clerk

The Fifteenth General Assembly:

Dear Brethren:

During the sessions of the Fourteenth General Assembly much confusion was manifest, caused largely in my opinion by the great amount of unnecessary discussion. In the course of the consideration of the report of the Home Missions Committee, part of the report was not treated at all, and so in fact consideration of this report was never completed. From the floor I called attention to this neglect but was informed by the substitute moderator that consideration of the Home Missions report was finished. Later I called attention of the moderator, Mr. Galbraith, to the omission, just prior to my departure for home; but examination of the minutes fails to disclose that any action was taken.

I now call to your attention that report of the Home Missions Committee (Minutes, pp. 36, 37, 38, 39) and in particular the paragraphs headed “Work of the Committee”, “Work of the General Secretary”, “A Minority Report.” These items should not have been ignored and I am calling them to your notice in order that the Fifteenth General Assembly may, if it pleases, remedy the neglect of the Fourteenth Assembly and do justice to those concerned.

Sincerely yours,
J. H. McCLAY

P. S. For reasons set forth in a letter addressed to the Home Missions Committee, I do not desire re-election to the committee of which I have been a member for many years.

J. H. McCLAY
Paper 8

A communication from the Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons, requesting the Assembly to study the problem of displaced persons and the need for temporary legislation.

Paper 9

Foreign Relations Department
of
The American Council of Christian Churches
15 Park Row, New York 7, N. Y.
March 5, 1948

Dear Brethren in Christ:

In the name of the above Council we are honored to present to you the attached “International Call.” It is, as you see, our cordial invitation to you to send one or more representatives of your denomination to Amsterdam, the Netherlands, August 12-19, 1948. It is also our earnest invitation to you to add your voice to ours in sending forth this call throughout your land. It is our hope that denominations which stand in the historic stream of Bible-believing Christianity from all parts of the world will begin this matter with us. Please see that this communication is placed in the proper channels for consideration by your group.

An ecumenical movement pleasing and honoring to the God of the inerrant Bible must be one free from liberalism or modernism. This is our conviction—we would like to believe it is yours also. It is such a pure ecumenical organization we expect to see the mighty arm of God raise up in Amsterdam next summer—composed of God-fearing Protestants.

It is our deep conviction that an international council of genuinely Christian Churches can and will strengthen tremendously the cause of Biblical Missions the world over. Certainly, with the blessing of God, the Amsterdam meetings can be a spiritual mountain-peak reminiscent of the glorious days of the great Protestant Reformation. Let us pray that God may bring this to pass in a tremendous Twentieth Century Reformation—the world’s greatest need!

Through your participation in these meetings, we believe that you will make a valuable contribution to the cause of the Saviour you and we love. It is obvious from the “Call” that no denomination could simultaneously be a voting member of the proposed international council and the World Council of Churches, centered in Geneva. However, it is our hope that numbers of clergymen whose denominations have looked favorably upon the World Council will be sufficiently interested in the Amsterdam meetings of August 12-19, 1948 that they will be present at least for the information and Christian fellowship those sessions will afford. We hope that representatives of mission boards and others interested will also be present for fellowship and mutual counsel.

We wish to confer regarding the program with every denomination which plans to send one or more delegates. Our desire is only to serve in the most democratic manner the denominations which will be represented there. When we gather together in Amsterdam we wish to arrive at decisions concerning the name, credal basis, organizations, and purpose in a manner which will be endorsed by all present. We need to know as soon as possible the names of delegates you plan to send so that negotiations may be begun at once with them. If we can be of help concerning hotel reservations in Amsterdam, kindly communicate with the undersigned. If further information is desired, write to either our European or American address. We are waiting on the Lord and believe that He will give us a true council of Christian Churches which will be-
AN INTERNATIONAL CALL

The time has come in the providence of our gracious God when a council of Christian churches to bear testimony to "the faith once delivered unto the saints," and to represent Bible-believing churches throughout the world should be established.

The projection of the proposed World Council of Churches has given ample evidence that those who believe in an infallible, inerrant Bible and the whole counsel of God revealed therein cannot be a party to that body. Its use in its leadership of prominent Christ-rejecting and Bible-contradicting ministers, its championing of the inclusivist church displaying complete doctrinal indiffer- tism with believers and unbelievers partaking of the communion, its union with the Greek Orthodox churches with their idolatrous mass, superstitious intercession to the Virgin and the Saints, its open invitation to the Roman Catholic Church to join, and its deceptive use of traditional Christian phrases while denying the historic meaning thereof—all combine to project an organization which will be expressive of apostasy and filled with abomination. The untold harm which such a body will do in misleading the nations, in opposing the pure Gospel, in closing doors to faithful missions and in advancing socialism and political intrigue with the State can hardly be overstated. This situation challenges every Bible-believer throughout the world who desires to lift high the banner of the Cross, and to glory in the precious blood of the Lamb.

The American Council of Christian Churches, therefore, in dependence upon God, with the conviction that it is His will, in annual session in Detroit, October 18, 1947, hereby issues the following call: We ask that Bible-believing church bodies in true Protestant succession throughout the world send at least one duly authorized representative (more if desired) to a convocation for the purpose of organizing and establishing an international council of Christian churches. The purpose of such an assembly would be to adopt a name, to establish a doctrinal standard expressive of the common evangelical doctrines, and to set up a representative democratic body to give a constructive testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ and to stand against the World Council of Churches. Looking to the Lord to provide and to lead, and committing this whole matter into His hands, we name the city of Amsterdam, Holland, August 12-19, 1948, as the place and time of our first assembly.

We hereby direct the Foreign Relations Department of the American Council to take appropriate steps incident to the registration of those who desire to be represented at this proposed international council, and looking to the formulation, in consultation with these groups, of a suitable program and its execution.

May those of like precious faith join with us in prayer through the Lord Jesus Christ to the Father that He may be pleased to honor His Name through this proposed testimony, to cause His people to manifest true ecumenicity, and
to hasten the return of our blessed Saviour, who died for us, whom God raised from the dead on the third day and who now sits at the right hand of the Throne of God.

Paper 10a
Christian Reformed Church

Office of the Stated Clerk,
Rev. R. J. Danhof, Th.D.
944 Neland Ave., S. E.,
Grand Rapids 7, Michigan

Dear Fathers and Brethren:

Mindful of the blessed privilege and bounden duty of brethren in Christ to fellowship with one another in the Lord, and of the corresponding obligation to be one another's keeper on the way to the better, that is, the heavenly country, the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church of America hereby addresses itself to your honorable body with the purpose of proposing to you, that we enter upon (or, resume) fraternal ecclesiastical relations and in pursuance thereof exercise the sacred functions of spiritual fellowship with, and pastoral care over, one another in the Lord according to His Word.

In God's kind providence both you and we belong to the Reformed, or Presbyterian family of churches. A spiritual tie binds us, indeed to all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. But doctrinally and ecclesiastically you and we are close relatives. Our relations, then, should be correspondingly close in practical effect.

These considerations constrain us to seek ecclesiastical correspondence with you in the Lord. Permit us to say that in our opinion our ecclesiastical fellowship, as being grounded in Christian love, should be exercised particularly in the direction of helping each other in remaining true, alike in profession and practice, to the glorious Reformed faith which we hold in common; and in giving heed to each other "that we may live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts" by the grace of God.

The correspondence with you in the Lord which we desiderate for the reasons specified above and now would propose, we would construe in the following specified terms:

1. The appointment of delegates to each other's supreme judicatories as a token of mutual friendship and interest in the Lord.
2. Keeping each other duly informed of our "gesta ecclesiastica", notably through the exchange of the Acts of our General Synods (or Assemblies).
3. Bringing to each other's attention our spiritual and ecclesiastical problems together with our attempts at their scriptural solution; and offering each help upon request therefor.
4. Warning each other in respect of spiritual dangers that arise and spread and imperil the Church of Christ.
5. Correcting each other in love in the event of unfaithfulness whether by commission or remission on the score of profession and/or practice of the faith once delivered to the saints.
6. Consulting each other regarding the eventual revision of our respective ecclesiastical standards.

Trusting you will give the proposed ecclesiastical correspondence your earnest and prayerful consideration from the selfsame desire for fellowship and co-

(9)
operation which motivates us, and hoping indeed you will be constrained by the
love of Christ to enter upon correspondence hereinbefore delineated, we are,

Yours in our common Redeemer and King,

The Synod of the Christian Reformed Church
Meeting at Grand Rapids, June, 1947
R. J. DANHOF, Stated Clerk

Esteemed Brethren:

In addition to the letter of invitation enclosed, the Synod of the Christian
Reformed Church has recorded in its official decisions, (See Art. 162, Acts of
Synod, 1947) the following:

"The Advisory Committee on Church Order reports respecting the in-
viting of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church to church correspondence in
view of the ‘Rochester case.’ Synod approves the recommendation of the
Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Correspondence (See Supple-
ment, Report No. 16, Acts of Synod, 1947) reading as follows:

1) “Synod invite The Orthodox Presbyterian Church to seek ecclesiastical
correspondence with our church and also to request said church as far
as possible to remove the barrier known as the Rochester case by as-
suring us that such practices as involved in this case will not recur.”

2) Synod deems this decision an adequate reply to the two overtures of
1940 referred to the Committee on Ecumenicity and Church Correspond-

Cordially yours,
R. J. DANHOF, Stated Clerk

Brethren:

In response to the Fourteenth General Assembly suggestion that the Pres-
byteries make a study of chapters XIV and XV of the Form of Government, the
Presbytery of Philadelphia submits the following recommendations:

Chapter XIV

1. That the words “or Probationers” be omitted from the title of Chap-
ter XIV.

2. That as a substitute for sentence 2, paragraph 1, (XIV): "For this
purpose presbyteries shall license candidates to preach the gospel as probation-
ers. After a competent trial of their talents, and receiving reports that their
services are edifying to the church, the presbyteries may in due time proceed
to ordain such probationers, or licentiates, to the sacred office.”

3. That present paragraph 3 become paragraph 2, and that, in place of the
first sentence the following be adopted: “Prior to licensure candidates shall be
taken under care of a presbytery. In applying to be taken under care, a candi-
date must give evidence of being a communicant member of a particular church
of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and must come with a written recom-
mandation from the session of the church of which he is a member.”

4. That in present paragraph 3, “experimental” be changed to “ex-
periential.”
5. That paragraph 3 (old 2) read as follows: "Every candidate for licensure shall ordinarily be taken under care by that presbytery to which he most naturally belongs; and he shall be considered as most naturally belonging to that presbytery within the bounds of which he has ordinarily resided. In case any candidate should find it desirable to transfer to the care of another presbytery, he may be received by said presbytery on his producing a letter of dismissal as a candidate for licensure from the presbytery under whose care he had been. Every candidate for licensure must be a communicant member of a particular church of the presbytery in which he seeks to be licensed at least by the time he applies for permission to take the examinations prescribed below."

6. That the words "for licensure" be added after the word "candidate" in line 1, XIV, 5.

7. That the words "at the same time" in the second sentence of XIV, 8 be omitted.

8. That the words "candidate, after licensure" be changed to "licentiate" in XIV, 11.

9. That in XIV, 12, the word "churches" be made "church."

Chapter XV

10. That the words "in conjunction with" be substituted for the words "immediately after" in line 1 of XV, 3.

11. That the word "candidate" in XV, 5 be changed to "person."

12. That the word "candidate" as it appears in XV, 8 (three times), 9, 12, 13, 15, be changed to "licentiate."

13. That in XV, 14 after the words "to take part of this ministry with us" the following sentence be added, "Thereupon the moderator shall solemnly pronounce and declare the said minister to be constituted the pastor of that congregation."

14. That the word "called" in the second line of XV, 15 be changed to "extended a call."

15. That the words "provided, however, that" in the seventh line of XV, 16 be changed to "but."

It was moved and carried that these changes approved by presbytery be submitted to the Fifteenth General Assembly for appropriate action with a view to their adoption as amendments to the Form of Government.

Respectfully submitted,

HENRY D. PHILLIPS, Stated Clerk
Presbytery of Philadelphia

Paper 12

Brethren:

The Presbytery of Philadelphia at its meeting of May 3, 1948 adopted the following memorial to the Fifteenth General Assembly:

Whereas the Form of Government has been in use in our church for a period of years, and

Whereas its special weaknesses and strengths have been discovered through experience in its use, and

Whereas it appears to us from this experience that there is a need of a careful reworking of the said Form of Government,

Therefore the Presbytery of Philadelphia respectfully calls the attention of the Fifteenth General Assembly to this need.

Respectfully submitted,

HENRY D. PHILLIPS, Stated Clerk

(11)
Paper 13
2911 Old Welsh Rd., Willow Grove, Pa.
May 4, 1948

Because of my inability to attend the Foreign Missions Committee meetings with any regularity, I feel I should resign from the Committee, and I take this means to request the General Assembly to elect someone to fill my unexpired term.

Yours in His Service,
WALTER P. SMYTH

Paper 14

RESOLUTION TO THE FIFTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
BY THE PRESBYTERY OF OHIO

Because modernism is "another gospel which is not another" it is only to be expected that its leaders wage warfare against the historical Christian Faith, and

Because it is the considered opinion of many Christian leaders faithful to God's Word that the World Council of Churches constitutes a serious threat to Biblical missions,

Therefore, be it resolved, That we take note with gratification of the American Council's International Call for a convocation of Protestants who hold to an inerrant Bible and who oppose modernism to gather in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, August 12-19, 1948, genuinely Christian Churches, and

Be it further resolved: That the forthcoming General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church should take appropriate steps to see that a pastor represent our denomination at the August 12-19, sessions in Amsterdam.

The Presbytery of Ohio,
MARTIN J. BOHN, Stated Clerk

April 13, 1948

Paper 15

OVERTURE TO THE FIFTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
BY THE PRESBYTERY OF OHIO

IN VIEW OF the critical situation in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church,
IN VIEW OF our ordination vows to preserve the peace and unity of the church as well as its purity,
IN VIEW OF the scriptural admonitions for brethren not to speak evil of one another (James 4:11), and to rebuke not an elder, but to entreat him as a father (I Tim. 5:1),
IN VIEW OF the fact that the signers of the Complaint, a document employed in administrative rather than judicial procedure, accused a fellow-elder, senior to most of them, of doctrinal unsoundness, employing harshly unrestrained and rashly unqualified language, and circulated this document widely in this country and throughout the world, to the defaming of the reputation of Dr. Gordon H.
Clark by unproven allegations of rationalism, humanistic intellectualism, seeming to share the same vicious independence from God that obtains in voluntarism and emotionalism, a doctrine of the primacy of the intellect at serious variance with the Scriptures and our standards etc. as the product of a rationalistic dialectic, (10:2,3), exposure by his rationalism to the perils of antinomianism (12:2), departure from the historic Reformed doctrine of human responsibility (13:1) and doing decided violence to human responsibility in his attempt to reconcile it with divine sovereignty, refusal to subject his reason to the divine word and obscuring a significant truth of scripture—a truth which constitutes one of the most glorious aspects of the gospel of the grace of God (cf. similar allegations in 6:3; 12:2,3; 15:1,2,3),

IN VIEW OF the fact that the General Assembly has not found doctrinal error in the transcript of Dr. Clark's examination for licensure and has not sustained the allegations of the Complaint,

WE, THE PRESBYTERY OF OHIO, respectfully overture the Fifteenth General Assembly to request such signers of the Complaint as are still under the jurisdiction of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church that they present to the Sixteenth General Assembly a statement acknowledging their errors of judgment and reprehensible defect of charity in circulating the aforementioned allegations.

The Presbytery of Ohio,
MARTIN J. BOHN, Stated Clerk
April 13, 1948

Paper 16

OVERTURE TO THE FIFTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
BY THE PRESBYTERY OF OHIO

WHEREAS the Committees on Foreign Missions, on Home Missions, and on Christian Education do not enjoy the confidence of various sections of the Church—a fact for which the following evidence may be cited:

a) the resignations of several members of these Committees at the last election

b) the withdrawal of several sound ministers from the Church

c) the letter of the Rev. Clarence W. Duff, a missionary in Eritrea, complaining that money is being sent to him directly instead of being sent through the Committee, and

d) the suspicions of doctrinal unsoundness and of indifference to missions aroused by the refusal to send the Rev. Floyd E. Hamilton to Korea

THE PRESBYTERY OF OHIO respectfully overtures the Fifteenth General Assembly of THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH to terminate the services of all the present members of these Committees and to replace them by a general election.

The Presbytery of Ohio,
MARTIN J. BOHN, Stated Clerk
April 13, 1948
April 14, 1948

Rev. Wilson Albright, Clerk
General Assembly, Orthodox Presbyterian Church
416 Whitehorse Avenue
Trenton 10, New Jersey

Dear Brother,

Enclosed please find a statistical report of the Presbytery of New York and New England to the 15th General Assembly for the period April 1, 1947 to March 31, 1948.

In reply to the second item of your letter of October 28, 1947, Presbytery voted at the Stated Spring Meeting, March 25, 1948, to adopt the following recommendation presented by their Committee on Overtures and Papers, which I herewith present to you as clerk to be presented to the Fifteenth General Assembly:

"The Committee recommends that the Presbytery suggest to the General Assembly that necessary changes be made in The Form of Government to provide for the following:

"1. One who is desirous of entering the ministry of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church shall apply to a particular presbytery to be taken under its care, the choice of the presbytery to be as suggested in Chapter XIV, paragraph 2, of The Form of Government. If the presbytery is satisfied with the piety and purpose of the applicant after examining him in regard to his experimental knowledge of religion and the motives which influence him to desire the sacred office, it shall receive him under its care and thereafter lend him its counsel, supervision and help as he further prepares himself for the Christian ministry.

"2. After one has been under the care of the presbytery for at least 3/6 months, at his request he may be examined for licensure, provided he has received a bachelor of arts degree or its academic equivalent and completed at least 1 year/2 years of study in a theological seminary. The examinations shall be as set forth in paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 of Chapter XIV of The Form of Government. Howbeit, it shall be understood that the examinations are to be elementary as compared with the examinations given as a prerequisite for ordination. Licensure shall be construed as a probationary status, during which time the ministerial candidate is expected to make trial of his talents through the preaching or teaching of the Word.

"3. After one has been a licentiate for at least one year and has received an outward call to the work of pastor, teacher or evangelist, at his request the presbytery shall review his time of service as a licentiate and, if satisfied that he has demonstrated the proper qualifications for the ministry of Jesus Christ, shall proceed to examine him thoroughly in the things mentioned in paragraph 11 of Chapter XV of The Form of Government.

"4. If one is to be ordained as a teacher, he must have the outward call of a school to teach in the field of religion. If one is to be ordained as an evangelist, he must have the outward call of a responsible organization to serve in a capacity in which there would be special need for preaching or teaching the Word. In all cases, the invitation of the institution or organization to the licentiate to assume the specific functions of the office shall be construed as an outward call."

HERMAN T. PETERSEN, Stated Clerk
Paper 18

OVERTURE

Whereas the opportunities for missionary work in Korea in these critical days are as challenging today as they were a year ago,
The Presbytery of New Jersey respectfully overtures the Fifteenth General Assembly:
1. That the Clerk of General Assembly be directed to express the desire of the Assembly to Mr. Floyd E. Hamilton that he apply to the Foreign Missions Committee as a missionary candidate for work in Korea either as a teacher in a theological seminary or as an evangelist.
2. That the General Assembly urge the Foreign Missions Committee to do all in its power to enlist the services of Mr. Hamilton as a missionary candidate for Korea, and if he be willing to go, it seek to find a way to send him out as soon as possible.

JOHN P. RICHMOND, Stated Clerk

Paper 19

RESOLUTION

Because modernism is "another gospel which is not another," it is only to be expected that its leaders wage warfare against the historic Christian Faith, and Because it is the considered opinion of many Christian leaders faithful to God's Word that the World Council of Churches constitutes a serious threat to Biblical missions, Therefore, be it resolved: That we, the Presbytery of New Jersey, take note with gratification of the American Council's International Call for a convocation of Protestants who hold to an inerrant Bible and who oppose modernism to gather in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, August 12-19, 1948, to consider the establishment of an International Council of genuinely Christian Churches, and Be it further resolved: That the Fifteenth General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church be requested to consider the advisability of our denomination being represented at the August 12-19 sessions in Amsterdam.

JOHN P. RICHMOND, Stated Clerk

Paper 20

At the Stated Spring Meeting March 25, 1948 Presbytery voted to overture the 15th General Assembly in the following manner:
"In view of the critical situation in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church; in view of our ordination vows to preserve the peace and unity as well as the purity of the church; in view of the Scriptural admonitions for brethren not to speak evil one of another (James 4:11) and to rebuke not an elder, but to entreat him as a father (I Timothy 5:1),
"We the Presbytery of New York and New England do respectfully overture the 15th General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church to intreat every minister and elder who has signed any document which has been publicly or privately distributed with reference to the controversy in the church to search his heart to see if his statements and accusations have been accurate, have been necessary, and have been made in complete love for God, his fellow presbyter and the church as a whole, and to entreat all the brethren to refrain in the future from the employment and circulation of allegations tending to destroy confidence of the brethren in one another and to disrupt the peace and unity of the church."

Yours in Christ,
HERMAN T. PETERSEN, Stated Clerk
At this point Mr. Dunn introduced Mayor George K. Krogman of Wildwood, who spoke briefly, welcoming the members of the Assembly to Wildwood and presenting a souvenir key to the city to the Moderator. The Moderator responded briefly.

The Clerk read the docket.

The motion to adopt the docket as amended was carried.

It was moved that the Moderator appoint a committee of 5 to give preliminary consideration to the overtures and other communications to this General Assembly and to recommend to the Assembly the erection of appropriate committees to give further consideration to the various papers. Motion carried.

The Moderator appointed Messrs. Galbraith, Nicholas, Price, Olson, and Moses.

The Moderator appointed the following to the Committee on Examination of Presbyteral Records: Messrs. Bohn, Heerema, and Bryan.

The Moderator appointed the following to the Committee on Date and Place of the Next Assembly: Messrs. R. Brown and Atwell.

Mr. Dunn made a report for the Committee on Arrangements.

Mr. Clelland made a preliminary report for the Travel Fund Committee.

Mr. Kuschke read the first page of the report of the Committee to Study Certain Doctrines.

It was moved and carried to suspend rule No. 35 of the Standing Rules so as to permit the printing of the entire report of this Committee presented by Mr. Kuschke, even though all of it be not read. (See Appendix 1-72).

It was moved and carried that the doctrines studied in the report be considered separately, and that the minority reports on each doctrine be considered along with the report of the Committee on each doctrine.

It was moved and carried that the Assembly recess to reconvene at 6:45 p. m.

The Assembly recessed at 5 p. m. with prayer by Mr. Dyrness.

Thursday Evening

The Assembly reconvened at 6:50 p. m. with prayer by Mr. Gale.

Mr. Kuschke read from the report of the Committee beginning with II, Appendix 7 through 29.

Mr. Hamilton presented a minority report on the Incomprehensibility of God. (See Appendix 73 to end).

Mr. Galbraith gave the report of the Committee appointed to consider the overtures and communications, as follows:

- The Committee to Consider Disposal of Overtures and Communications recommends that the nineteen papers submitted to the Fifteenth General Assembly be disposed of in the following manner:
  1. Papers No. 2 and 6, invitations for the Sixteenth General Assembly, be submitted to the Assembly's Committee on Date and Place of Next Assembly.
  2. Paper No. 3, a resolution from the Presbytery of California relative to membership in the American Council of Christian Churches, be brought on the floor of the Assembly for consideration at the time of the report of the Fourteenth General Assembly's Committee on the American Council of Christian Churches.
  3. Papers No. 4, 9, 14, 19 relative to the sending of a representative to the International Council of Christian Churches in Amsterdam, and Paper No. 10 relative to the request of the Christian Reformed Church, be referred to a Committee on Inter-Church Cooperation, composed of five members.
  4. Papers No. 5, 11, 12, 17, relative to revisions to the Form of Government be referred to a Committee on Revisions to the Form of Government, composed of three members.
5. Paper No. 13, the resignation of Mr. Walter P. Smyth from the Committee on Foreign Missions, be considered by the Assembly at the time of elections to the Committee.

6. Paper No. 7, a letter from Mr. J. H. McClay relative to last year's reports of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension; Paper No. 8, a request from the Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons; Paper No. 16, an overture from the Presbytery of Ohio requesting replacement of all members of the three standing committees; and Paper No. 18, an overture from the Presbytery of New Jersey relative to the missionary candidacy of the Rev. Floyd E. Hamilton, be referred to a Committee on Overtures and Papers, composed of three members.

7. Paper No. 15, an overture from the Presbytery of Ohio relative to the complainants in the recent "Clark Case"; and Paper No. 20, an overture from the Presbytery of New York and New England relative to peace and unity of the church, be referred to a Committee on Harmony in the Church, composed of three members.

The attention of the Committee on Harmony in the Church is called to the fact that it must be ready to report at the conclusion of the consideration of the report of the Committee to Study Certain Doctrines; of the Committee on Overtures and Papers that it must report on Paper No. 16 before elections to the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extensions; and on Paper No. 18 at the time of the report of the Committee on Foreign Missions.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN P. GALBRAITH, Chairman

On motion, the report was adopted.

The Moderator appointed the following Committees:

Committee on Changes to the Form of Government: Messrs. Stonehouse, Willis, and Galbraith.

Committee on Overtures and Papers: Messrs. Olson, Skilton, and Verhage.

Committee on Harmony in the Church: Messrs. Nicholas, Price, and Busch.

The following amended motion carried: That the Assembly recess in one minute and that the times of recess and reconvening be made the order of the day for the remainder of the Assembly.

The Assembly recessed at 10:07 p.m. with prayer by Mr. Grotenhuis.

FRIDAY, MAY 14

Friday morning

After a devotional service conducted by Mr. E. L. Wade, the Assembly was called to order at 8:50 a.m., with prayer by the Moderator.

The Clerk read the minutes of the sessions of the previous day and the minutes were approved as corrected.

It was moved and carried that Standing Rule No. 35 be suspended to permit the inclusion in the minutes of the section of the minority report on the Incomprehensibility of God which was not read.

Mr. William Young requested that record be made in the minutes that he had not concurred in section IV of the Report of the Committee—Evaluation of Documents (Appendix 18). Mr. Clowney made the same request.

The Moderator ruled that when a report is presented to the assembly by a committee, the report must be printed in the minutes as given, and any changes must be appended at the close of the report.

Appeal was made from the ruling of the Moderator.

The previous question was moved and carried.
The Moderator was sustained.

The Moderator appointed Messrs. Hoeflinger and Betzold to the Committee on Overtures and Papers in places of Messrs. Olson and Skilton, who had asked to be excused, and Mr. Verhage was made convener.

The amended motion was carried that the "Formulation of the Doctrine of God's Incomprehensibility" (Appendix 16-17) be submitted to the presbyteries and sessions for earnest study in relation to the rest of the report on that doctrine and to the minority report on that doctrine.

It was moved and carried that this Assembly record the fact that the sections of minority reports prepared for the Fourteenth General Assembly over the names of E. P. Clowney and R. W. Gray and referred to by Mr. Hamilton in his minority report on the Incomprehensibility of God were not presented to this Assembly and are not printed in the minutes in the identical form which they had in these original minority reports.

The amended motion was carried that the report of the Committee, on the Effect of Regeneration on the Intellective Activities of the Soul and the minority reports on that doctrine be submitted to presbyteries and sessions for earnest study.

Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Clowney requested that their names be added to the report signed by Dr William Young (Appendix 65).

The Assembly proceeded to the consideration of the report of the Committee and the minority report on the "Free Offer of the Gospel."

The Assembly recessed at 12:00 noon with prayer by Mr. Vining.

Friday Afternoon

The Assembly reconvened at 1:35 p. m. with prayer by Mr. Maier.

It was moved that the report of the Committee and the minority report on the "Free Offer of the Gospel" be sent down to the presbyteries and sessions for earnest study.

It was moved and carried that the vote be taken by 3:15 p. m. or sooner.

It was moved and carried that the limit on debate be extended to allow Dr. William Young to reply to the allegations of logical error.

The motion carried that the report of the Committee and the minority report on the "Free Offer of the Gospel" be sent down to the presbyteries and sessions for earnest study.

Mr. Clowney requested that it be noted in the minutes that he had not supported the majority report on the "Free Offer of the Gospel." (Appendix 63).

Mr. Clelland made a report for the Travel Fund Committee.

The Clerk read Communication No. 15, an overture from the Presbytery of Ohio regarding the signers of the Complaint.

It was moved that the overture be adopted.

The Moderator asked Mr. Galbraith to take the chair.

The Moderator ruled that the motion to adopt the Overture from the Presbytery of Ohio was out of order because it contemplated judicial action which was not the prerogative of this Assembly.

Appeal was made to the ruling, and the Moderator was sustained.

The Moderator ruled that the overture from the Presbytery of Ohio was out of order.

The ruling was appealed and the Moderator was sustained.

The following requested that their negative votes be recorded: Gray, Dyrness, Hamilton, Strong, William Young, Tichenor, Shaw, R. Brown, W. Brown, Richmond, and Nilson.

The Assembly recessed at 5:00 p. m. with prayer by Mr. Gray.
Friday evening

The Assembly reconvened at 6:45 p.m. with prayer by Mr. Elliott. The Moderator resumed the chair. The Clerk read Communication No. 20, an overture from the Presbytery of New York and New England regarding peace and unity in the church.

The amended motion carried as follows:

In view of the critical situation in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church; in view of our ordination vows to preserve the peace and unity as well as the purity of the church; in view of the Scriptural admonitions for brethren not to speak evil one of another (James 4:11) and to rebuke not an elder, but to entreat him as a father (I Timothy 5:1),

This Assembly entreats every minister and elder who has signed any document which has been publicly or privately distributed with reference to the controversy in the church, to search his heart to see if his statements and accusations have been accurate, have been necessary, and have been made in complete love for God, his fellow-presbyters, and the church as a whole, to take all steps possible to make due restitution for any offenses which may have been made; and this Assembly also entreats all the brethren to refrain in the future from the employment and circulation of allegations tending to destroy confidence of the brethren in one another and to disrupt the peace and unity of the church.

It was moved and carried that the Clerk be instructed to send a copy of this action of the Assembly to all ministers and sessions of the church as soon after the close of this Assembly as physically possible.

It was moved and carried that Mr. Chun, Young Chang be granted the privilege of the floor.

Mr. Chun spoke briefly regarding the work of the Rev. Bruce F. Hunt in Korea, and of the needs of the Korea Theological Seminary.

It was moved and carried that the Clerk read the roll for the purpose of correction, and that while it is being read an offering be received for the Korea Theological Seminary.

The offering was taken and amounted to $133.62.

Mr. Galbraith presented the report of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension, and Mr. Atwell presented the Treasurer's Report for the Committee. The report is as follows:

REPORT OF
THE COMMITTEE ON HOME MISSIONS AND CHURCH EXTENSION
OF
THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
TO
THE FIFTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

As of March 31, 1948, aid was being granted to the following persons:

- Rev. H. Wilson Albright
- Rev. Martin J. Bohn
- Rev. Ralph Clough
- Rev. Edmund P. Clowney
- Rev. Bruce A. Coie
- Rev. Calvin K. Cummings
- Rev. John Davies
- Rev. Robert W. Eckardt
- Rev. Edwards E. Elliott
- Rev. Charles H. Ellis
- Rev. Lawrence R. Eyres
- Rev. Robert H. Graham
- Rev. John C. Hills
- Rev. Walter J. Magee
- Rev. George W. Marston
- Rev. Raymond M. Meiners
- Rev. Herman T. Petersen
- Rev. Russell D. Piper
- Rev. Charles G. Schaufele
- Rev. J. Lyle Shaw
- Rev. Robert L. Vining
- Rev. Reginald Voorhees

(19)
In addition to these, aid was granted to the following persons during a part of the year:

Rev. Samuel J. Allen
Rev. Calvin A. Busch
Rev. Richard B. Gaffin

Salary Scale

During the year a cost-of-living bonus of three per cent was granted the missionaries, aid-receiving pastors, and office secretary of the Committee. The Committee feels that this is not the most equitable way of meeting rising living costs, and consequently, it has again adjusted its salary scale in an attempt to meet the needs of those dependent upon the Committee for support. It does not anticipate granting a cost-of-living bonus during the fiscal year 1948-49. The new salary scale retains the percentage and other features outlined on pp. 16, 17 of the Minutes of the Thirteenth General Assembly. The present scale allows the following maximum salaries for married men:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$190 after 1st year's service</td>
<td>$170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>194 after 2nd year's service</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>198 after 3rd year's service</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>202 after 4th year's service</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206 after 5th year's service</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210 after 6th year's service</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>214 after 7th year's service</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>218 after 8th year's service</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>222 after 9th year's service</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>225 after 10th year's service</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>230 after 11th year's service</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>235 after 12th year's service</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240 after 13th year's service</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>245 after 14th year's service</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250 after 15th year's service</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dependency allowance of $15.00 a month per dependent for urban workers and $12.00 a month for rural workers, in addition to this, is retained.

A few temporary exceptions to the salary scale have been made, and it is not anticipated that exceptions will be made except under very unusual circumstances.

Many congregations whose ministers receive aid are making a real effort to become self-supporting in advance of the requirement of the salary scale.

General Assembly Funds

The Fourteenth General Assembly granted the Committee the right to lend the General Assembly Fund up to $1,000. The deficit in this fund as of March 31, 1948, was $524.55, with a number of bills for special committees authorized by the Fourteenth General Assembly not yet on hand. About two-thirds of the congregations contributed to this fund during the year, their contributions amounting to about $1,150.00. The Minutes of the Fifteenth General Assembly will be large, and the Assembly is cautioned lest it make commitments which will exceed its anticipated income.

The Committee is having bound 25 volumes of the Minutes of the first fourteen general assemblies, and these will be put on sale at $6.00 a volume. If these are sold it will be possible to make up a few more volumes.
Extension Activities

During the year a full-time missionary, the Rev. Robert W. Eckardt, was assigned to the work at Crescent Park, New Jersey. He is working as assistant pastor of the Immanuel Church of West Collingswood, and he is engaged full time in the work at Crescent Park. A separate congregation at that place is anticipated before the end of 1948.

During the year the mission work at National City, California, was organized and received as a congregation by the Presbytery of California, and the Rev. Charles G. Schaufele's status was changed from missionary to aid-receiving pastor.

Funds in the amount of about $15,000 for lots and to assist in building were secured for the Contingent Fund, and a new and more suitable lot was purchased for the work at Warren Point, New Jersey.

The Committee has agreed to aid two new fields during the fiscal year 1948-49 — Center Square, Pennsylvania, and Seattle, Washington. The work at Center Square is an outgrowth of work carried on for a number of years in Norristown, Pennsylvania, and the work at Seattle, Washington, is the result of the missionary activity of the Rev. James B. Brown, D. D., under the Presbytery of California.

Contributions

While the Committee has been able to secure large gifts for its general and for its contingent budget, normal contributions for the year decreased slightly—about $800. Gifts from individual donors were secured in slightly larger volume during the year, but contributions from the churches showed a marked decline.

It is to be anticipated that with the increasing activity of the Foreign Missions Committee, which received nearly $3,000 more from the churches during the past fiscal year than during the previous year, it will be increasingly difficult to maintain a lively interest in the home missions work. Denominations have consistently manifested more of a sacrificial spirit toward foreign missions than toward home missions and church extension. Yet with the large and essential church extension program our church has maintained throughout the years, the Committee would caution the church against following the usual trend of denominations to the serious crippling of its church extension program.

The Committee can see how its present scale of work can be maintained during the fiscal year 1948-49 if the churches increase their contributions only ten per cent above the 1946-47 level, but if all the work is to be maintained beyond this year the churches must show a very decided increase in gifts. The Committee cannot anticipate any very large gifts from individuals beyond the present fiscal year.

Budget of the Committee

The following budget has been adopted by the Committee:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salary and Aid of Missionaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion Expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Extension Expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office and Administrative Expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrying Charges and Investments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(21)
Contingent Budget

Property for Church Extension Projects in Chicago Area $10,000
Loan to Fort Lauderdale, Florida 3,000
Grant to First Church of Denver, Colorado 1,000
Additional Property for Warren Point, New Jersey 1,500 15,500

The Committee counts upon meeting these two budgets as follows:

- Contingent Fund on hand and committed as above $15,500
- Contributions from churches and regular donors $24,000
- Interest, dividends and return of investments 2,072
- Contribution in Rath Packing Company Stock 18,000 44,072

Elections to the Committee

The terms of the following members expire at this Assembly:
Ministers: Glenn R. Coie, Ned B. Stonehouse, Th.D., George J. Willis
Elders: J. Enoch Faw, Joseph H. McClay

Mr Faw resigned from the Committee early in the year and has taken no part in its activities.

REPORT ON EXAMINATION

THE COMMITTEE ON HOME MISSIONS AND CHURCH EXTENSION
OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, INC.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
March 31, 1948

The Committee on Home Missions
And Church Extension of
The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Inc.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Gentlemen:

In accordance with your authorization, we have examined the cash accounts of the treasurer of

THE COMMITTEE ON HOME MISSIONS AND CHURCH EXTENSION
OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, INC.

for the year ended March 31, 1948, and submit herewith a statement of cash receipts and disbursements for the year then ended.

We examined certain cancelled checks and warrants authorizing disbursements and made a test check of these items to recorded disbursements. Petty cash was checked by actual count during the period of our examination.

In the year under review, 600 shares of Rath Packing Company stock were sold for $17,256.14, thus realizing a net profit over book value of $16.14.

The real property lots owned by the Committee in Fairlawn, N. J. were sold for $1,200.00, a profit of $194.93 over cost, and another lot was purchased in Fairlawn, N. J. at a cost of $1,000.00. We were informed that the deed to this newly purchased property had not been received at the date of our examination.

It has been the desire of the Committee to accumulate an investment reserve which will be used for unexpected expenses, and will supplement income received from normal contributions. To meet this need, a "Contingent Fund" was created during the year under review with funds received from the estate of Mary E. Nichols and a contribution received of 500 shares of Rath Packing Company stock. The stock was sold for $14,822.00. Out of these funds, the Committee invested $10,043.75 in U. S. Treasury 2½% bonds of 72/67. Though

(22)
it is the present plan that this fund be expanded over the years, these funds are pledged for church extension projects and it is entirely within the power of the Committee to use any or all of the principal at any time.

The Committee is agent for loans to designated churches in the total amount of $9,000.00 and is responsible, to the principals annually, for the transmission of all interest and principal receipts collected on these loans by the Committee. The Committee does not guarantee repayment of loans.

The Committee is guarantor of notes of the Covenant Church of Pittsburgh in the amount of $1,000.00 and is also guarantor of a $6,000.00 installment note secured by a $14,000.00 mortgage on the lots and buildings of the Knox Presbyterian Church of Silver Spring, Maryland.

We have examined a fidelity bond covering the treasurer and other employees who handle funds of the Committee.

We express our appreciation for the courtesy extended our representative during the course of the examination.

Respectfully submitted,

MAIN AND COMPANY
Certified Public Accountants

STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 1948

The Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension
Of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Inc.

Balance, April 1, 1947
General Fund - - - - - - - $1,270.74
General Assembly - - - - - - (184.40)
Committee on Constitution of General Assembly - - 208.15
Intermediary - - - - - - - (232.90) (1) $1,062.10

Receipts
Contributions
General Fund - - - - - - - $20,758.93
Support of designated missionaries - - - - - 1,551.35
Jewish work - - - - - - - 25.00

$22,335.28

General Assembly - - - - - - $1,323.01
Committee on Constitution of General Assembly - .50

$1,323.51

Total contributions - - - - - - - $23,658.79
Proceeds from sales of securities - - - - - $17,256.14
Proceeds from sale of lots, Fairlawn, N. J. - - - - - 1,200.00

Amounts collected on loans:
Orthodox Presbyterian Church,
Franklin Square, N. Y. - - 600.00
Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church,
Westfield, N. J. - - 400.00
First Orthodox Presbyterian Church,
Denver, Colorado - - 600.00
George W. and Pauline R. Marston - - 52.31
E. P. Clowney - - - - - 1,500.00 $3,152.31

(23)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interest income</td>
<td>132.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dividend income</td>
<td>420.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental income</td>
<td>120.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th anniversary receipts</td>
<td>35.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer from contingent fund</td>
<td>2,263.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>191.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total receipts</strong></td>
<td><strong>$48,430.82</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>191.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total cash available</strong></td>
<td><strong>$49,492.22</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Disbursements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Missionaries' salaries and aid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid from General Fund</td>
<td>33,701.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid from designated contributions</td>
<td>1,551.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$35,253.12</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missionary travel</td>
<td>240.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New investments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan to E. P. Clowney</td>
<td>1,500.00 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of lot, Fairlawn, N. J.</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepayment on lot, Fairlawn, N. J.</td>
<td>610.00 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$3,110.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office and administrative expenses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary, general secretary</td>
<td>2,340.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary, office</td>
<td>1,298.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>342.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone and telegraph</td>
<td>76.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage and office supplies</td>
<td>286.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee meeting expense</td>
<td>152.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporation expense</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>321.47 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$4,916.99</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion expense</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel, general secretary</td>
<td>581.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Messenger&quot; expense</td>
<td>508.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$2,887.22</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less: Refund on taxes</td>
<td>118.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$2,769.02</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal payments reducing mortgage payable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Assembly expense</td>
<td>1,663.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$49,451.57</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediary receipts</td>
<td>3,206.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediary disbursements</td>
<td>2,988.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$218.23</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance, March 31, 1948</td>
<td>259.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contingent Fund**

**Receipts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estate of Mary E. Nichols</td>
<td>1,042.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proceeds, sale of donated stock</td>
<td>14,822.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>$15,864.15</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(24)
Disbursements

Transferred to General Fund - - - $2,263.48
Purchase of U. S. Treasury Bond 67/72 - 10,043.75
Accrued interest on purchase of bond - - 29.37 $12,336.60
Balance, March 31, 1948 - - - - $3,527.55

Designated Loans to Churches (Agency Account)

Receipts
Principal - - - - - - $715.00
Interest - - - - - - 216.67 $976.67

Disbursed to principal
Balance, March 31, 1948 - - - - - - $976.67

General Fund - - - - - - $259.58
Accounted for as follows:
General Fund - - - - - - $589.64
General Assembly - - - - (524.55)
Committee on Constitution - - - - 208.65
General Assembly - - - - - - (14.16) (1)
Intermediary - - - - - - $259.58

Contingent Fund - - - - - - $3,527.55
Total cash - - - - - - $3,787.13

Represented by:
Cash in bank - - - - - - $3,762.13
Petty cash - - - - - - 25.00 $3,787.13

NOTES:

(1) Represents balances due from Committee on Christian Education.
(2) Includes expenditures for prayer calendar of $108.19.
(3) These lots were sold in March, 1948.
(4) Loan made to purchase station wagon, repaid in full during year.
(5) Includes gift toward purchase of automobile for missionary and taxes and repairs on property owned.

Subject to accompanying comment.
ASSETS OF THE COMMITTEE
March 31, 1948

Cash on hand and in bank - - - - - - $3,787.13

Notes receivable
First Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Denver, Colorado - - - - $900.00
First Orthodox Presbyterian Church, San Francisco, California - - 1,100.00
Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Los Angeles, California - - 5,500.00
First Orthodox Presbyterian Church, New Haven, Connecticut - - 3,000.00
George W. and Pauline P. Marston - - 1,905.47 $12,405.47

Other Assets
House - Saddle River, New Jersey - - $8,667.05 (1)
House - La Grange, Illinois - - 7,838.61 (1)
Lot - Fairlawn, New Jersey - - 1,000.00 $17,505.66

Bond
10M U. S. Treasury 2½% 67/72 (In contingent fund) - - - - - $10,043.75

$43,742.01

NOTE: (1) Subject to mortgages in the total amount of $11,081.88.

Balance of “Loans to Designated Churches” (Agency Acct.)
First Church of Portland, Oregon - - $5,000.00
Covenant Church of Berkeley, California - - 2,775.00 $7,775.00

NOTE: Subject to accompanying comment.

The Clerk read Communication No. 16, an overture from the Presbytery of Ohio regarding membership of the Standing Committees.

Mr. Verhage reported for the Committee on Overtures and Communications recommending that the Assembly take no action because the Articles of Incorporation of the Committee on Foreign Missions make no provision for such an election, nor does Standing Rule No. 52 of the Assembly.

It was moved that the recommendation be adopted.

Mr. Hamilton requested permission from the Assembly to be excused for the remainder of the Assembly.

It was moved and carried that permission be granted.

The Assembly recessed at 10:00 p.m. with prayer by Mr. Hills.

SATURDAY, MAY 15

Saturday morning
Following a devotional service conducted by Dr. E. J. Young the Assembly was called to order at 8:50 a.m. with prayer by Mr. Richmond.

The Clerk read the minutes of the sessions of May 14th and they were approved as corrected.

(26)
The motion, made the previous evening, to adopt the recommendation of the Committee on Overtures and Communications, regarding the overture from the Presbytery of Ohio, carried.

Mr. Verhage reported for the Committee on Overtures and Communications regarding Communication No. 7—a letter from Elder McClay—recommendating that this Assembly take no action with regard to Mr. McClay's request concerning the Home Missions Committee report to the Fourteenth General Assembly, for the following reasons: 1. No motion was made concerning the sections of the report of which Mr. McClay speaks. 2. A report is accepted as read unless exception is taken to it.

It was moved and carried, that the Assembly adopt this recommendation of the Committee.

Mr. Verhage reported further for the Committee recommending that the Assembly take cognizance of Mr. McClay's desire that his name not be considered for election.

It was moved and carried that this recommendation be adopted.

The Moderator requested Mr. Clowney to take the chair.

The Assembly proceeded to the election of members to the class of 1951, of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension. The following were nominated: Ministers - Messrs. Busch, G. Coie, Stonehouse, Willis, Hoeflinger, R. Gray. Elders - Messrs. Arthur Armour, Samuel Pitt, Justice Bryan, William Brown.

On motion, Mr. Gray's request for permission to withdraw his name from nomination was granted.

The Assembly proceeded to vote.

Dr. Stonehouse presented his report as fraternal delegate to the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, which is as follows:

Dear Brethren:

Under appointment of the Fourteenth General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church as fraternal delegate to the 1947 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, I attended sessions of that body for approximately four days. Due to certain other appointments I was unable to remain for the entire period of its sessions. The Synod gave me a most cordial reception as a representative of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The occasion afforded me an enjoyable experience of Christian fellowship. I was given the opportunity of addressing the Synod and conveyed the fraternal greetings of our Church. I sought to use every opportunity to foster fellowship and cooperation between our Church and the Christian Reformed Church on the basis of our common Faith and by way of a careful consideration of common problems.

Respectfully submitted,

N. B. STONEHOUSE

The Clerk read a communication from Mr. Hamilton, as follows:

To the Assembly:

Gentlemen:

I request permission to withdraw a statement read in my minority report on Incomprehensibility. These sentences will be now read by the Clerk and I wish them deleted from my report.

Respectfully submitted,

FLOYD E. HAMILTON

(27)
The Clerk read the following words: "Likewise this notion is insisted upon in the Formulation of the Doctrine in the report signed 'The Committee,' Sect. VIII (last five sentences): 'The qualities of divinity inhere in His knowledge and understanding so that His knowledge is too high for us and we cannot attain unto it. By revelation and illumination we may truly know God and have communion with Him. Yet our knowledge is always from the human level, the level of creaturehood. God's knowledge is always on the divine level and possesses the divine qualities that can never attach to ours. God is perfect in knowledge and this perfection that covers the whole of His knowledge must be applied to His knowledge of every point, however infinitesimally small may be the point which we consider.'"

On motion, the request was granted.

It was moved and carried that the Committee on Texts and Proof Texts be continued.

The tellers reported the election of the following to the Class of 1951 of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension on the first ballot: Messrs. Busch, G. Coie, Hoeflinger, Pitt, and Bryan.

The Moderator resumed the chair.

Mr. Clelland read the report of the Committee on Foreign Missions, as follows:

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN MISSIONS of THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH to THE FIFTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Committee on Foreign Missions reports for the period May 2, 1947 to May 3, 1948, except concerning finances for which the report is for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1948.

Missionary Roll of the Committee

The Missionary Roll of the Committee is as follows: Rev. Egbert W. Andrews, Rev. and Mrs. Clarence W. Duff, Rev. Malcolm C. Frehn, Rev. and Mrs. Richard B. Gaffin, Miss Florence Handyside, Miss Frances Healy, Rev. and Mrs. Bruce F. Hunt, Rev. and Mrs. Francis E. Mahaffy, Rev. R. Heber McIlwaine, Rev. and Mrs. Charles E. Stanton.

Missionaries in Inactive Status

Miss Florence Handyside is now in Korea under Civil Service appointment for one year. At the end of the year she contemplates transferring to active missionary status. During the year under review she completed study at the Summer Institute of Linguistics, and engaged in study of the Korean language under Korean students in this country.

Miss Frances Healy has been appointed as a missionary nurse, subject to further medical examination, and she will be sent to Eritrea as soon as possible. A fund of at least $2,000 was judged necessary for her travel and equipment, and favorable response to an appeal for funds for this purpose is being received. She will be sent to the field as soon as such a fund is assured.

The Rev. M. C. Frehn continues as a captain in the U. S. Army. He is currently stationed in Japan, and hopes to be out of government service before the end of 1948.

The Rev. R. Heber McIlwaine continues to serve with the General Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, in Formosa. His term with this Board will end in the spring of 1949.

As will be seen, there is good hope that these missionaries will be able to undertake active service with the Committee during the current year.
Missionaries in Active Service

China

During the summer of 1947 the Rev. Richard B. Gaffin joined the Rev. Egbert W. Andrews in Shanghai, and together they have been laboring in that city. Their work has consisted largely of missionary endeavor among the many students in that city, and there have been some notable confessions of Faith among the students whom they have reached. As a direct result of the missionary endeavor in China at least one Chinese student for the ministry in studying at Westminster Theological Seminary.

When Mr. Andrews returned to active missionary status early in 1946, after being in government service in China, no time elapsed between his term with the government and his exceedingly arduous missionary activities. The Committee at that time, agreed to grant him a furlough during 1948. It seems essential that he not leave the field until some provision has been made for a substitute to take his place during his absence. The missionaries on the field indicated that perhaps irreparable harm may result from a disruption of this work for any protracted period. The Rev. Henry W. Coray has agreed to go to China as a substitute, and the Committee is assisting in providing an interim pastor for the First Church of Long Beach, California. This arrangement will entail considerable expense, and the Committee counts upon the church to provide the funds for this necessary trip.

No date has even tentatively been set for Mrs. Gaffin and their family to join Mr. Gaffin in China. The unsettled political conditions, inflated prices, difficulty in finding proper quarters, etc., lead the Committee to fear that it may not be possible for the family to be united before the spring of 1949.

Korea

The Rev. Bruce F. Hunt continues to labor in Korea. Besides teaching in the Korea Theological Seminary in Pusan, he has engaged widely in evangelistic work throughout the southern part of Korea. He has found ready openings in many churches, and great crowds have often attended his ministry. His work is of outstanding nature, and missionaries of other denominations have termed him the “leading missionary in the Orient today.”

The arduous nature of his labors has induced the Committee to agree that he must have a rest this summer. If it appears that Mrs. Hunt and the children cannot soon go to Korea (and there is now some indication that they can go during this summer) then Mr. Hunt will come home for a time for a rest, with the good hope that his family can return to Korea with him after a few months.

The Committee has authorized the expenditure of not more than $2,000 for a house in Korea for the Hunts, and there is good hope that a suitable house can be secured for this price. The problem of transferring the purchase money to the seller has not yet been solved because of the restrictions placed upon transferring American money to Koreans, but with an administrative change in Korea it is expected that some of these restrictions will be lifted.

Several Korean students have come to study at Westminster Theological Seminary as the result of Mr. Hunt’s ministry. The Committee has commended to the church the financial needs of these students and the Korea Seminary. Gifts of clothing and books and other material have been sent to the Seminary. Cash for the purchase of things in this country and for the needs of the students has been handled by the Committee as intermediary.

Eritrea

The missionaries continue in Eritrea in their several stations, as reported to the Fourteenth General Assembly. All are engaged actively in language
study, and all have been able to conduct some evangelistic work either in public meetings or in personal work. The difficulties attendant upon labors among Moslems have been evident in their work, yet, by the grace of God, they are being received more cordially and are being afforded a better hearing than they had any reason to expect. A number of their contacts are willing to listen to the gospel with some regularity, and numerous pieces of literature have been distributed. There is evidence that much of this has been read and has aroused an interest in the gospel.

A limited amount of medical work has been done by all the missionaries, but especially in Ghinda have opportunities of this nature been general. With the concurrence of the mission, the Committee has assigned Miss Frances Healy to engage in work as an evangelistic nurse in Ghinda, and there is good hope that she can go there during the current year.

Need for Expansion

It will be noted how few missionaries we have in any one area, and the great need for reinforcements. Adequately to staff the fields to which we are committed, there should be at least twice the number of missionaries in each field. The Committee is in contact with possible missionary candidates for several fields; and, when it becomes evident that there is reasonable possibility of supporting further missionaries, the Committee believes that more missionaries can be secured.

Realizing the need for more missionaries, the Committee at its first meeting following the Fourteenth General Assembly expressed to the Rev. Floyd E. Hamilton its readiness to continue its conversations with him concerning his possible service in Korea.

Finances

Contributions to the work of the Committee have again increased during the year under review. The increase was about $3,000, and the whole increase came in the form of contributions from the churches. Of the $21,000 in contributions which the Committee received during the fiscal year, $18,000 came from churches and church organizations.

Despite the increase in gifts, the expenditures of the Committee have again exceeded the income. Part of this deficit was made up by a gift of $2,000 from the late Miss Carrie E. Bigelow, but the net liquid assets of the Committee shrank by about $2,500, to about $6,500. In addition to the assets listed in the report of the Auditor, the Committee owns a house valued at about $2,000 in Irafalo, Eritrea; a new automobile in China, and three used automobiles in Eritrea. It is obvious that if the work of foreign missions in our church is to continue at the present level (not to mention extension of the work) there must be an increase in contributions. The churches are urged to increase their gifts above the present high level in confidence that when we honor the Lord by obeying His commands concerning missions He will pour out His blessing and increase our substance.

Budget of the Committee

The following budget has been adopted by the Committee for the fiscal year 1948-49. It sets forth the minimum which the Committee feels should be spent for our foreign mission work. The Committee is now studying the need
for increases in the salaries of the foreign missionaries, and these might well increase the budget.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Missionary Salaries, Child Allowance, Mission Expenses</td>
<td>$18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missionary Travel and Equipment</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missionary Medical Expense</td>
<td>$400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missionary Furlough Expense</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Missionary Expense</td>
<td>$600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office and Administrative Expense</td>
<td>$4,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion Expense including Missionary Itineration and Messenger</td>
<td>$1,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$30,320</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ELECTIONS TO THE COMMITTEE

The terms of the following members of the Committee expire with this Assembly: Ministers - John H. Skilton, William E. Welmers, Ph.D., James W. Price. Elders - Combs H. Francis, Murray Forst Thompson, Esquire.

Elder Theodore Stratton, Sr., of the Class of 1950, has resigned and has taken no part in the deliberations of the Committee during the past year, and the vacancy existing in that class should also be filled by this Assembly.

### REPORT ON EXAMINATION

**THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, INC.**

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

March 31, 1948

Committee on Foreign Missions
Of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Inc.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Gentlemen:
In accordance with your authorization we have examined the cash records of the Treasurer of

The Committee on Foreign Missions
Of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Inc.

for the year ended March 31, 1948, and submit herewith a statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements for the year then ended.

We have examined certain cancelled checks and warrants authorizing expenditures, and made a test check of these items to recorded disbursements.

We have examined stock certificates evidencing the ownership of thirty shares of United Carbon Company common stock and fifty shares of Rath Packing Company common stock.

During the year under review there was received fifteen shares of United Carbon Company common stock resulting from a two-for-one split of the fifteen shares previously held. The $5,000.00 U. S. Treasury bond formerly owned was sold during the year for $5,143.13, a decrease of $11.56 from book value.

The translation of the Italian deed to the property in Ghinda, Eritrea, indicates that the Committee owns only the buildings and not the land. The land is government owned, and the Committee has only purchased the right inherent in a concession given by the Eritrean government to the original concessionaire.

A fidelity bond covering the Treasurer and other employees who handle funds, was examined.

We express our appreciation for the courtesy extended our representative during the period of the audit.

Respectfully submitted,

MAIN AND COMPANY
Certified Public Accountants
STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 1948

The Committee on Foreign Missions of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Inc.

Balance, April 1, 1947

Funds:
- General: $311.56
- Expansion of Mission Work: 250.00
- Missionary New Car Fund: 650.28
- Intermediary: 1,061.65

$2,273.49

Receipts

Contributions
- General Fund: $15,420.62
- Missionary Travel: 52.00
- Support of Designated Missionaries: 5,321.64
- Missionary Car Fund: 122.70
- Bequest, Estate of Carrie E. Bigelow: 2,000.00
- Interest income: 78.40
- Dividend income: 97.50
- Miscellaneous income: 34.40
- Sale of securities: 5,143.13
- Intermediary: 3,335.60

$31,605.99

Total cash receipts: $31,605.99

Total cash available: $33,879.48

Disbursements

Missionary expenses
- Salaries: $15,102.75
- Travel and equipment: 3,746.43
- Medical expenses: 160.85
- Miscellaneous expenses: 460.00
- Child allowance: 667.56

$20,137.59

Paid from General Fund: $14,763.95

Paid from Contributions
- Support of designated missionaries: $5,321.64
- Missionary travel expense: 52.00

$20,137.59

Office and administrative expense

Salaries
- General secretary: $1,609.88
- Office: 833.47
- Rent: 238.00
- Telephone and telegraph: 92.41
- Postage and office supplies: 171.83
- Miscellaneous: 644.13 (1)

Audit: 75.00
- Corporation expense: 27.00
- Committee meeting expense: 72.24

3,813.96

(32)
Promotion expense  
Travel, general secretary  - - - - - - - $ 237.56  
"Messenger" expense  - - - - - - - 337.93  
Miscellaneous  - - - - - - - 322.12 (2) $ 897.61  
Intermediary  - - - - - - - $ 1,231.97  
Total disbursements  - - - - - - - $26,021.13  
Balance, March 31, 1948  - - - - - - - $ 7,858.35  

Accounted for as follows:  
Funds:  
General  - - - - - - - $ 3,992.80  
Stanton Child Allowance not disbursed  - - - - - - - 550.27  
Duff Child Allowance not disbursed  - - - - - - - 120.00  
Intermediary  - - - - - - - 3,195.28  

Represented by:  
Cash in Pennsylvania Company, Philadelphia  - - - - - - - $ 5,858.35  
Cash in Five Cent Savings Bank of Boston  - - - - - - - $ 2,000.00  

$ 7,858.35

NOTES:  
(1) Includes Prayer Calendar and tax on estate of Carrie B. Bigelow in amount of $246.92.  
(2) Includes posters expense of $262.19.  

ASSETS OF THE COMMITTEE  
Cash (as per above)  - - - - - - - $ 7,858.35  
50 shares of Rath Packing Company, common stock  - - - - - - - 1,506.25  
30 shares of United Carbon Company, common stock  - - - - - - - 945.00  
Property owned, Ghinda, Eritrea  - - - - - - - 4,332.15  

$14,641.75

NOTE: Subject to accompanying comment.  

The Clerk read Communication No. 13 from Mr. Walter P. Smyth of the Class of 1949, tendering his resignation from the Committee on Foreign Missions and requesting the General Assembly to elect another elder to fill his unexpired term.  

It was moved and carried that his request be granted.  

It was moved and carried that the Assembly take cognizance of the resignation of Elder Stratton of the Class of 1950 and elect someone to fill his unexpired term.  

Nominations were made for members of the Committee on Foreign Missions: Ministers - Messrs. Ellis, Skilton, Price, Meiners, Sloat, Marston, Rankin; Elders - Messrs. Edward Harting, Murray Forst Thompson, William Brown, William Campbell, Allen Hood, Arthur Armour, Thomas Kay.  

On motion, Mr. Hood's request that his name be removed from the list of nominees was granted.
It was moved and carried that of the four elders receiving the majority of votes, the two receiving the highest number of votes be elected to the class of 1951, the next highest to the class of 1950, and the fourth highest to the class of 1949.

Mr. Atwell made a preliminary report for the Committee on Date and Place of the Next Assembly.

It was moved that the Fifteenth General Assembly express its concurrence with the regulative principle of worship as developed in the report of the Committee on Song in Public Worship to the Thirteenth General Assembly.

The tellers reported the election of Ministers: Ellis, Skilton, and Price and Elders: Harting and William Brown to the class of 1951, Kay to the class of 1950, and Campbell, the class of 1949.

The amended motion was carried as follows: that the motion on the floor be laid on the table.

Mr. Verhage reported for the Committee on Overtures and Communications recommending that the Overture from the Presbytery of New Jersey be adopted by the Assembly because of the need in Korea and because of the qualifications of Mr. Hamilton.

The motion was made to adopt the recommendation of the Committee.

The Assembly recessed at 12:00 noon with prayer by Mr. Kline.

The Assembly reconvened at 1:30 p.m. with prayer by Mr. McCroddan.

It was moved as an amendment to delete the words “either as a teacher in a theological seminary or as an evangelist”.

It was moved as a substitute to the amendment that the following words be added to the first section of the overture: “assuring him that the formulations of neither side in the controversy studied by the Committee on Four Doctrines will be considered as tests of theological soundness.”

The Assembly voted that the substitute to the amendment was in order.

The Assembly recessed at 3:30 p.m. with prayer by Mr. Dyrness.

MONDAY, MAY 17

The Assembly was called to order at 1:00 p.m. with prayer by Mr. Marston.

The Clerk read the minutes of the sessions of May 15th and they were approved as corrected.

The Moderator ruled the amendment to the amendment to be out of order and that the amendment was before the house.

The amendment, deleting the words, “either as a teacher in a theological seminary or as an evangelist,” was carried.

It was moved as an amendment that after the word “Korea” these words be added, “assuring him that the formulations of neither side in the controversy studied by the Committee on Four Doctrines will be considered as tests of theological soundness.”

It was moved and carried that debate be limited to fifteen minutes by any one person on the Overture from New Jersey.
It was moved as an amendment to the amendment that the words “the opposing” be substituted for the word “neither” and the word “not” be inserted after the word “will.”

The amendment to the amendment carried.

It was moved and carried that the time given to Mr. Kuiper be extended two minutes.

The previous question was moved and carried.

The amendment was defeated. Messrs. Strong, R. Gray, and Dyrness requested that their affirmative votes be recorded.

The amended motion was carried:

That the Clerk of General Assembly be directed to express the desire of the Assembly to Mr. Floyd E. Hamilton that he apply to the Foreign Missions Committee as a missionary candidate for work in Korea.

By common consent Mr. Clelland was permitted to make a report for the Travel Fund Committee. The report is as follows:

**TRAVEL FUND COMMITTEE**

Your committee makes these recommendations for the disbursements of the travel fund.

1. Commissioners submitting mileage vouchers shall be paid on the basis of two cents a mile.
2. Where three or more commissioners submitting mileage vouchers are traveling together in one car, the driver of the car shall be paid on the basis of five cents a mile and his passengers shall receive no pay.
3. Commissioners traveling the most miles shall receive first consideration. The point at which compensation shall begin shall be the number of miles above which all commissioners may receive compensation as defined above.
4. No commissioner shall receive travel pay who shall withdraw from the Assembly before its adjournment, except he be excused by the Assembly.

JOHN P. CLELLAND

For the Committee

It was moved and carried that the recommendations of the Travel Fund Committee be adopted.

It was moved and carried that an offering for the Travel Fund be taken five minutes before the Assembly recess.

It was moved and carried that the hours for recess and reconvening that have prevailed heretofore continue to prevail through the remainder of the Assembly.

It was moved to adopt part two of the Overture from the Presbytery of New Jersey.

After amendment, part two was adopted. The motion as adopted is as follows: “Whereas the opportunities for missionary work in Korea in these critical days are as challenging today as they were a year ago, be it resolved that:

1. The Clerk of General Assembly be directed to express the desire of the Assembly to Mr. Floyd E. Hamilton that he apply to the Foreign Missions Committee as a missionary candidate for work in Korea.
2. The General Assembly urge the Foreign Missions Committee, if Mr. Hamilton reapplies for service in Korea, to give most earnest consideration to the possibility of sending him out to this field.”

An offering was received for the Travel Fund, amounting to $104.80.

Mr. R. Brown reported for the Committee on Date and Place of the next
Assembly, recommending that the Assembly meet in Los Angeles, at a date to be determined by this Assembly.

It was moved and carried that the recommendation be adopted.

Assembly recessed at 6:00 p.m. with prayer by Mr. Graf.

Monday Evening

The Assembly reconvened at 7:45 p.m. with prayer by Mr. Price.

The amended motion was carried that the date of the next Assembly be Thursday, July 21, 1949.

On motion the Assembly reconsidered its action adopting the report of the Committee on the Date and Place of the next Assembly.

The amended motion carried that the Assembly accept the invitation of the Presbytery of California to meet in Los Angeles unless the Presbytery deems it wise to have the meeting in some other place within the bounds of that Presbytery.

It was moved and carried that a committee of three be appointed by the Moderator to make whatever arrangements possible for transportation for commissioners to the Sixteenth General Assembly.

It was moved and carried that this committee have charge of travel funds also.

Mr. Dunn read the report of the Committee on Christian Education, and Mr. Elliott read the Treasurer's report and Auditor's report. The report is as follows:

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

April 1, 1947 to March 31, 1948

The Committee on Christian Education has met five times during the current fiscal year. The meetings were attended by approximately half the membership. The Rev. Floyd Hamilton served as General Secretary until July, 1947. Since that time there has been no officially appointed Secretary, but the Treasurer, the Rev. Edwards E. Elliott, has functioned as office manager in addition to serving as pastor of St. Andrew's Church, Baltimore. The Committee is highly pleased with the efficiency with which Mr. Elliott has managed the office. The two office workers have demonstrated a marked ability to carry on the business routine and plan their work.

New Equipment

Through a thorough investigation of the new equipment now available, on the market, the Committee became convinced that it could do more work, more efficiently and more economically if it possessed a Multilith machine. The Committee has purchased such equipment and it is now in use in our office. A conservative estimate is that with the saving in printing costs, the saving in paper costs and postage, and the fewer hours of labor necessary to turn out the volume of work, the new equipment will pay for itself in two years.

Publications

Thirty-five Sunday Schools now use our Beginner's lessons. The Committee is seeking to simplify the complicated matter of accessory pictures and attendance builders in this department, and a special study will be made as to how much of this we could publish ourselves instead of purchasing for resale.
The Primary lessons, written by Miss Harriet Z. Teal, are now used by eighteen Sunday Schools. This writing has been hard work, and Miss Teal has doubled her rate of output in 1948. The Primary cycle is now half completed.

For various reasons the Committee has indefinitely postponed the writing and publication of departmentalized lessons for juniors which had been begun by Mrs. Charles G. Schaufele. For the present, the Committee feels that the lessons provided by the KEY or the lessons made available by the Rev. Lewis J. Grotenhuis for juniors are adequate. Samples of Mr. Grotenhuis' lessons have been sent to the churches and Mrs. Vos' CHILD'S STORY BIBLE with which the lessons are correlated has been offered to Sunday Schools at a greatly reduced price.

Supplementary helps issued by our Committee for teachers and pupils using the KEY quarterly of the Christian Reformed Publishing House, have been discontinued. We would call the attention of the Sunday Schools using the KEY to the supplementary material found in the INSTRUCTOR.

The Rev. Calvin K. Cummings has edited for republication some of our Young People's Lessons. There is a goodly supply of these available. A new series on the missions work of our church is in the process of preparation. The Committee also has under consideration a Junior series.

SUMMER BIBLE SCHOOLS

Fifty-two churches last year used our Summer Bible School courses. Graded lessons covering nine years (Beginner-Primary, Junior, and Intermediate-Senior) have been revised and published, together with teachers' manuals for each of three groups. This year's supply will soon be ready for mailing, and the churches are urged to place their orders early.

TRACTS

Income from the sale of tracts during the fiscal year amounted to $946.46. This is an increase of $200 over the previous report. But if each member of the church received proper instruction on the regular use of tracts, this figure could readily be tripled. The following tracts were printed during the year: CHRIST OR THE LODGE?, THE DAY CHANGED AND THE SABBATH PRESERVED, BAAL-ZE'BUB'S STING, A GLANCE AT ETERNITY, CAESAR'S QUARTER, and A PLEINAR INDULGENCE.

Two tracts, THE SEPARATED LIFE, and WHY I BELIEVE IN GOD, have been sold out, and are to be reissued. Our inventory shows THE AUBURN BETRAYAL is almost exhausted, with only 300 copies left. Of the new printing of WHY THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (5000) only 2600 copies remain. A thousand copies of CHRIST OR THE LODGE? have been sold this year.

The Committee has observed a growing desire in the Christian world for longer tracts. The Committee has a good supply of the following exceptionally good tracts: THE SOVEREIGNITY OF GOD, OUR CHILDREN—HOW SHALL WE EDUCATE THEM?, and THE REFORMED FAITH IN THE MODERN WORLD.

There is also a good supply of the following shorter tracts: A TRAGIC MISTAKE, THE RICH YOUNG RULER, GOD AND THE WAR, THE AUBURN HERESY, ARE CHRISTIANS ANTI-SEMITIC?, WORTHY OF JEWISH THOUGHT, and ARE YOU SURE?. The Committee is able to supply certain of these free of charge; others can be obtained at a reduced rate.

We call attention to an action of the 1943 Assembly, requiring our Committee to supply free tracts to chaplains in the armed forces. We plan to continue to do this, even at the request of chaplains outside our denomination.

It will henceforth be possible to publish material far more cheaply than in the past, since the new equipment is available. Writers of tracts are urged...
to submit their manuscripts. During the coming year the Committee plans to make the greatest expansion in tract circulation in its history.

**The Tract-Bulletin**

Since unit costs have been high this year (.015) the Committee has not encouraged new orders for the Tract-Bulletin. But a new Bulletin series is being planned, costing only .0075 per unit. The new series will be designed to instruct the worshipper in the pew.

**Promotion**

The lack of a General Secretary has meant that there has been little promotional work done among the churches. By using the columns of the MESSENGER, the Committee is able to say something of importance. In an age when Communists and cultists are rushing into print in an attempt to reach the masses, it is sad and strange to see our own propaganda agencies hampered by a lack of trained personnel and funds. The fact that we are not able more adequately to tell our story probably accounts for some lethargy toward Christian Education. The Committee feels that the services of a General Secretary are desirable for the aggressive advance of every phase of Christian Education within the limits of our denomination. Meanwhile, members of the Committee stand ready to speak to any congregation or group on any phase of Christian Education.

**Books**

The Committee has a book agency with various publishing houses. We have certain tracts and pamphlets from the Concordia and Christian Reformed Publishing Houses, available in our office, and can order others. We are sorry to announce that there are no more copies of Mr. Hamilton's book, THE BASIS OF EVOLUTIONARY FAITH.

**Home Study**

The Prophecy Course prepared by Dr. E. J. Young was carefully typed, mimeographed and collated by the Rev. Lewis J. Grotenhuis. This spiral bound limited edition (200) sells for $2. It is not a correspondence course, but it is suggested for individual study, as well as for prayer meetings.

**Principles**

The Committee is planning to reissue the statement of principles set forth in its report to the 1945 Assembly, because it feels these principles are worth continued careful scrutiny by all pastors and teachers.

**Contributions**

At one time during the past year the Committee had an indebtedness of over $2000. This debt has been paid off completely due to the increased giving of a number of churches and individuals and the receiving of payments of certain outstanding bills. We are grateful for the prayerful and generous support of Christian Education on the part of the church. We cannot too strongly urge the adoption of 15% of each church's benevolences designated for the work of our Committee. We believe that the returns to the churches will amply justify the designation of this proportion of benevolences to our Committee.

**Elections to Committee**

The terms of office of the following members expire with this Assembly: E. J. Young, C. Van Til, Oscar Holkeboer, Thomas R. Birch, Charles A. Freytag.

(38)
### Suggested Budget

The Committee adopted the following proposed budget for the year 1948-1949:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditures</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publication supplies</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Rental, etc.</td>
<td>$800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>$75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payments on machines</td>
<td>$1200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Expenditures:** $9,725

### AUDIT REPORT

Concerning the Accounts of

**THE COMMITTEE ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

of

**THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

For the Period April 1, 1947 to March 31, 1948


April 13, 1948

The Committee on Christian Education of

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

728 Schaff Building, Philadelphia 2, Pa.

Gentlemen:

I have examined the books of account of

**THE COMMITTEE ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

of

**THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1948 and have prepared and submit herewith an Income and Expense Statement for said fiscal year.

Deposits per the books were reconciled with the bank statements. Properly prepared and approved vouchers were found for each disbursement and these vouchers, together with the cancelled checks, were checked against the Cash Disbursements Journal.

The Petty Cash Account was verified at the Committee Office.

The following adjustments to the book records were made in preparing the Income and Expense Statement:

**Miscellaneous Expense**

Per books $632.30. This amount reduced $33.75 to give effect to check cancelled in January 1948, but not cancelled in check books until April 1948.

**Sales - Miscellaneous**

Per books $1,029.33. This account reduced $771.90 to eliminate cash balance carried over April 1, 1947.

**Sales - Postage**

Per books $59.44. This figure eliminated and Postage Expense reduced by this amount in order to show net Postage Expense.

(39)
Expense of $251.90 incurred during the fiscal year ended March 31, 1948, not included in statement as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts Payable</td>
<td>$151.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Elliott's Salary, January 15 to March 31</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total $251.90

In my opinion the accounts and records examined give an accurate picture of the financial transactions of the Committee during the fiscal year ended March 31, 1948.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) HENRY P. ALLEN, Jr., Accountant

INCOME AND EXPENSE STATEMENT
April 1, 1947 - March 31, 1948

**OPERATING INCOME**

Sales:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tracts</td>
<td>$946.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covenant Children's Catechumen</td>
<td>6.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tract Bulletins</td>
<td>119.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Bible School</td>
<td>1,030.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young People's Lessons</td>
<td>239.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sunday School Lessons:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginners</td>
<td>$1,219.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>290.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total $1,509.86

Sunday School Supplementary

Miscellaneous

Total $257.43

**OPERATING EXPENSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>$4,381.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Expense</td>
<td>299.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage</td>
<td>128.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationery and Supplies</td>
<td>220.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>205.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing</td>
<td>1,553.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Supplies</td>
<td>644.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Rent and Expense</td>
<td>731.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>598.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginners Sunday School</td>
<td>480.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Bible School</td>
<td>318.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total $9,561.32

**OPERATING INCOME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deficit $5,262.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OTHER INCOME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gifts</td>
<td>$4,581.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NET INCOME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deficit $681.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(40)
TREASURER'S REPORT
THE COMMITTEE ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, INC.

Analysis of Cash
Balance on hand, April 1, 1947 - - - - - - $ 771.90

Receipts During the Year:
Collections on sales made on credit - - - $4,243.36
Loan - - - - - 250.00
Gifts - - - - - 5,132.83

Total Receipts - - - - - $ 9,626.19

Total Cash - - - - - $10,398.09

Disbursements During the Year:
Payment of indebtedness on Varityper - - $ 405.00
Payment of Current Expenses* - - 9,315.76

Total Disbursed - - - - - $ 9,720.76

$ 677.33

*Includes payment of some outstanding liabilities from fiscal year 1946-47, amount not determinable.

BALANCE SHEET

Assets
Current Assets
Cash in the bank - - - - - $ 677.43
Petty Cash Fund - - - - - 50.00
Accounts Receivable - - - - - 98.91 $ 826.24

Fixed Assets
Furniture and fixtures - - - - - $1,076.12
Less: Depreciation - - - - - 124.47 $ 951.65

$1,777.89

Liabilities and Net Worth
Current Liabilities
Accounts payable - - - - - $ 251.90
Loans payable - - - - - 250.00

$ 501.90 $ 1,275.99

Net Worth - - - - - - - - - - - $ 1,777.89

Other Assets: Large tracts, $1,519.43; small tracts, $725.21; Misc., $468.43; Stationery, $604.01. Total inventory, $3,317.08.

Statement of Revenue and Expenses, from April 1, 1947 to March 31, 1948

Income from sales
Tracts - - - - - - - - - - - $ 946.46
Covenant Child's Catech. - - - - - - - - - - - 6.05
Tract Bulletins - - - - - - - - - - - 119.27
Summer Bible School - - - - - - - - - - - 1,030.93
Young People's Lessons - - - - - - - - - - - 239.31
Beginner's Sunday School - - - - - - - - - - - 1,219.15

(41)
Primary Sunday School - - - - - - 290.71
Sunday School Supplies - - - - - - 189.13
Miscellaneous - - - - - - 257.43

Total income from sales - - - - - - $4,298.44

Expenses
Salaries - - - - - - $4,481.34
Travel Expense - - - - - - 299.74
Postage - - - - - - 128.38
Stationery and Office Expenses - - - - - - 226.28
Advertising - - - - - - 219.34
Printing - - - - - - 1,553.91
Production Supplies - - - - - - 454.90
Office Rent and Supplies - - - - - - 731.65
Miscellaneous - - - - - - 613.79
Beginner's Sunday School - - - - - - 480.81
Summer Bible School - - - - - - 318.08

Total Expenses - - - - - - $9,508.22

Operating Deficit - - - - - - $5,209.78
Other income - Gifts - - - - - - $5,132.83

Net Deficit - - - - - - $ 76.95

EDWARDS E. ELLIOTT, Treasurer

Nominations were made to the class of 1951 of the Committee on Christian Education. The following were nominated: Ministers - Messrs. Van Til, E. J. Young, Clowney, Oliver, Coray, Heerema, Meiners, Holkeboer; Elders - Messrs. Arthur Armour, Evan Runner, Bert Roeber, William A. De Jonge, Audley Holle.

On motion, Mr. Holkeboer's request to have his name withdrawn was granted.

It was moved and carried that if there be no complete election on the first ballot, the names of the two ministers receiving the lowest number of votes be dropped.

Mr. Bohn made the following report for the Committee on Examination of Presbyterial Records:

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PRESBYTERIAL RECORDS

The Committee on Presbyterial Records has examined the minutes of all the presbyteries. It has found those of the following presbyteries to be in order and recommends that they be approved without exception:
The Presbytery of Dakota.

The committee recommends:

That the minutes of the Presbytery of California be approved with the following exception:
1) That there are inaccuracies in typing on pages 55, 56, 57, as indicated.

That the minutes of the Presbytery of Ohio be approved with the following exceptions:
1) That the program for the ordination of Thomas M. Gregory is not included in the minutes, although it is appended in the form of a separate bulletin.
2) A lost motion on p. 23 need not be recorded.
That the minutes of the Presbytery of New Jersey be approved with the following exceptions:
1) There are no signatures of the clerk attached on pages 77, 78, 79, 88.
2) There are inaccuracies in spelling as indicated on pages 73, 86.
3) That the clerk be instructed to use wider inside margins.

That the minutes of the Presbytery of Philadelphia be approved with the following exceptions:
1) There are inaccuracies in typing on pages 323, 326, 329, 332, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, as indicated.
2) The signature of the clerk is not attached to the minutes on page 333.
3) The term “March, 1947” is incorrect. It should read “May, 1947.”
4) That the clerk be instructed to use wider inside margins.

That the minutes of the Presbytery of Wisconsin be approved with the following exceptions:
1) There are typographical errors as indicated on pages 109, 114, 124, 125.
2) There is no indication why Messrs. Mellema and Marston were to draw up a resolution of thanks.
3) There are frequent omissions of “Mr.” before surnames.
4) First Church on p. 109 is not identified.
5) Mr. Clowney on p. 109 and Mr. Murray on p. 111 are not properly designated as members of some other presbytery.
6) The place and time of meeting are not mentioned on page 113.
7) There is no mention of recessing and reconvening presbytery with prayer on pages 119, 120 respectively.

Respectfully submitted,
MARTIN J. BOHN, Chairman

It was moved and carried that the recommendations be adopted.

The Moderator appointed the following to the Travel Fund Committee: Messrs. Bordeaux, Clelland, and Joseph H. McClay.

It was moved and carried that Mr. Dyrness be requested to show the assembly the architect's drawing for the proposed new home for the aged in Quarryville.

Mr. Dyrness showed the drawing to the Assembly and spoke briefly about the plans for the proposed home.

The tellers reported the election of Messrs. Van Til, E. J. Young, Clowney, and Armour to the Committee on Christian Education.

A second ballot was taken for the election of one elder.

Mr. Churchill reported for the Committee on Inter-Church Cooperation as follows:

COMMITTEE ON COOPERATION

Regarding the papers and overtures requesting that our church be represented in the church councils meeting at Amsterdam, August 12-19 and August 22 to September 4, respectively, we make the following recommendations to the Fifteenth General Assembly:
1. That the General Assembly elect a minister or elder to attend both church councils providing the necessary funds can be raised.
2. That said minister or elder attend the International Council of Christian Churches meeting in Amsterdam August 12-19 as our representative, and that he also attend the World Council of Christian Churches meeting in Amsterdam, August 22 to September 4 as our observer and reporter.
3. That the raising of the necessary funds for travel expenses be in charge of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension.

It was moved to adopt the three recommendations of the Committee.
It was moved and carried that the recommendations be considered seriatim.
The tellers reported no election to the Committee on Christian Education on the second ballot.
The Moderator requested Mr. Gray to take the chair.
It was moved and carried as an amendment to the first recommendation to delete the reference to the World Council of Churches.
The tellers reported the election of Mr. DeJonge to the Class of 1951 of the Committee on Christian Education on the third ballot.
The Assembly recessed at 10 p.m. with prayer by Mr. Bird.

TUESDAY, MAY 18

Tuesday morning
Following a devotional service conducted by Mr. Phillips, the Assembly was reconvened at 8:50 a.m. with prayer by Mr. Roberts.
The Moderator resumed the chair.
The Clerk read the minutes of the sessions of May 17th, and they were approved as corrected.
By common consent, the motion to amend was construed as deleting the word "both" and inserting "the International Council of Christian Churches."
It was moved and carried as an amendment the deleting of the words "if necessary funds can be raised."
The motion as amended carried, That the General Assembly elect a minister or elder to attend the International Council of Christian Churches.
Recommendation No. 2 was amended and carried as follows: That the said minister or elder attend the International Council of Christian Churches meeting in Amsterdam August 12-19 as our representative, with the understanding that he not have power to commit The Orthodox Presbyterian Church to membership in the Council.
Recommendation No. 3 was carried, That the raising of the necessary funds for travel expenses be in charge of the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension.
It was moved that the Rev. John Murray be elected our representative at the International Council of Christian Churches.
It was moved as an amendment that Mr. Bordeaux be our alternate.
The Moderator ruled the motion out of order. Upon appeal, the Moderator was sustained.
The following were nominated as representative to the International Council of Christian Churches: Messrs. Stonehouse, Murray, Kuiper, Marsden, Clelland, Sloat, VanTil.
Upon motion, Dr. Van Til's request to withdraw his name was granted.
The Assembly proceeded to vote.
The Moderator ruled that if there be no election on the first ballot the names of the two nominees receiving the lowest number of votes be dropped.
The Moderator asked Mr. Moses to take the chair.
Mr. Runner continued the report of the Committee on Inter-Church Cooperation, as follows:

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON COOPERATION

(Part 2)

With respect to the communications received from the Christian Reformed Church, your committee recommends:
I. Acceptance of the proposal received from that body, and that in the following form:

Having taken cognizance of the letter from the Stated Clerk of the Christian Reformed Church dated October 23, 1947 inviting us, on behalf of the Synod of that Church, to enter upon fraternal ecclesiastical relations with that communion;

Being mindful of the holy injunction of our common Lord to the Church His Body that she be one, and at the same time keenly aware of our manifold sins and shortcomings in following our Saviour's command;

Recognizing the compelling reasons expressed in the above-mentioned letter of the Stated Clerk for our two communions' seeking a closer relationship, and feeling that the proposed relationship will allow a greater measure of obedience to the sovereign revealed will of the King of the Church, whereby our Covenant God would get greater glory to Himself, and a purer and clearer witness would be given to the world;

The General Assembly resolves:

1. To accept the proposal of the Christian Reformed Church that our two bodies enter upon fraternal ecclesiastical relations in accordance with the terms specified in the letter of the Stated Clerk.

2. To express its sincere regret that, although it recognizes responsibility in such matters as the so-called Rochester case when they are brought to its attention in ways prescribed by our constitution, it is unable to make a pronouncement, because proper and sufficient documentation is not at hand.

3. To declare its hope and conviction that our mutual high regard and the proposed ecclesiastical correspondence, especially as detailed under points three and five of the letter of the Stated Clerk, will be sufficient warrant that such misunderstandings as have become associated with the so-called Rochester case will not recur.


The tellers reported the election of Dr. Stonehouse as representative to the International Council of Christian Churches.

It was moved and carried that the Assembly elect a first and second alternate.

The following were nominated as first alternate: Messrs. Murray, Churchill, VanTil, Kuiper.

It was moved to adopt Resolution No. 1 of Recommendation No. 1 of the report of the Committee on Inter-Church Cooperation.

The tellers reported the election of Mr. Churchill.

The following were nominated as second alternate representative to the International Council of Christian Churches: Messrs. Bordeaux and Murray.

The motion to adopt Resolution No. 1 of Recommendation No. 1 of the report of the Committee on Inter-Church Cooperation carried.

The tellers reported the election of Mr. Murray.

It was moved that Resolution No. 2 of Recommendation No. 1 of the report of the Committee on Inter-Church Cooperation be adopted.

It was moved as an amendment that in place of the words “because proper and sufficient documentation is not at hand” the following words be inserted: “because this ‘case’ has never been brought before a General Assembly of our Church.”

(45)
Mr. Clelland made a report for the Travel Fund Committee.
The Assembly recessed at 12:00 noon with prayer by Mr. Elliott.

Tuesday Afternoon
The Assembly reconvened at 1:30 p. m. with prayer by Mr. Davies.
The Moderator resumed the chair.

Resolution No. 2 of Recommendation No. 1 was amended and carried in the following form: The General Assembly resolves to express its sincere regret that, although it recognizes responsibility in such matters as the so-called Rochester case when they are brought to its attention in ways prescribed by our constitution, it is unable to make a pronouncement, because this “case” has never been brought before a General Assembly of our Church.

Resolution No. 3 of Recommendation No. 1 of the report of the Committee on Inter-Church Cooperation was carried.

It was moved and carried that the entire Recommendation No. 1 be adopted as amended:

1. To accept the proposal received from the body, and that in the following form:

   Having taken cognizance of the letter from the Stated Clerk of the Christian Reformed Church dated October 23, 1947 inviting us, on behalf of the Synod of that Church, to enter upon fraternal ecclesiastical relations with that communion;

   Being mindful of the holy injunction of our common Lord to the Church His Body that she be one, and at the same time keenly aware of our manifold sins and shortcomings in following our Saviour's command;

   Recognizing the compelling reasons expressed in the above-mentioned letter of the Stated Clerk for our two communions' seeking a closer relationship, and feeling that the proposed relationship would allow a greater measure of obedience to the sovereign revealed will of the King of the Church, whereby our Covenant God would get greater glory to Himself, and a purer and clearer witness would be given to the world;

   The General Assembly resolves:

   1. To accept the proposal of the Christian Reformed Church that our two bodies enter upon fraternal ecclesiastical relations in accordance with the terms specified in the letter of the Stated Clerk.

2. To express its sincere regret that, although it recognizes responsibility in such matters as the so-called Rochester case when they are brought to its attention in ways prescribed by our constitution, it is unable to make a pronouncement, because this “case” has never been brought before a General Assembly of our Church.

3. To declare its hope and conviction that our mutual high regard and the proposed ecclesiastical correspondence, especially as detailed under points three and five of the letter of the Stated Clerk, will be sufficient warrant that such misunderstandings as have become associated with the so-called Rochester case will not recur.

It was moved and carried that Recommendation No. 2 be adopted.

Mr. Kuiper reported for the Committee on Secret Societies as follows:

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON SECRET SOCIETIES
TO THE FIFTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Esteemed Brethren:

The Presbytery of Wisconsin submitted the following overture to the Thirteenth General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church:
“WHEREAS, it is highly essential to the purity, peace, unity and testimony of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church that the particular churches follow similar and consistent practices concerning the terms of admission into membership and concerning the exercise of church discipline,

NOW THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Wisconsin at its regular meeting held at Waterloo, Iowa on April 9, 1946, respectfully overtures the Thirteenth General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church to recommend to all the presbyteries that they request their respective churches to adopt the following resolution; and that the Assembly require the presbyteries to report back to the Fourteenth General Assembly the specific action taken on this matter by each one of the churches under their jurisdiction:

WHEREAS, the Session of our Church approves in general the Report on Secret Societies as submitted to the Ninth General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and agrees with the conclusion of said report that ‘Masonry is a religious institution and as such is definitely anti-Christian,’ and

WHEREAS, it is therefore impossible to approve the teachings of Masonry and at the same time believe the doctrine of salvation taught in the Bible ‘to be the perfect and only true doctrine of salvation’ (The Directory for the Public Worship of God, Chapter V, section 5, question 1),

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that membership in the Masonic fraternity is a sin, and that we adopt the following procedure as the course of action which is consonant with the responsibility of the Session for maintaining the purity, peace, and unity of the Church:

A. As concerns all persons seeking admission into the Church:

1. Every applicant shall be asked whether or not he is a member of any oathbound secret society.
2. If the applicant is a member of the Masonic Lodge, he shall be informed of the Church’s attitude toward Masonry and the reasons for this attitude.
3. After being duly informed, applicant will be received into the Church only on the condition that he renounce his affiliation with Masonry.
4. If applicant is a member of any other oathbound secret society, decision upon his application shall be held in abeyance until the Session shall have taken sufficient time to determine the character of such society. If it be determined that membership therein is sinful, the above procedure shall be followed.

B. As concerns all members of the Church:

1. The Church shall be kept informed of the evils of the oathbound secret societies periodically through sermons or other appropriate means.
2. Any member of the Church who is a member of the Masonic Lodge shall be informed of the Church’s attitude toward Masonry and the reasons for this attitude.
3. After being duly informed, he shall either renounce his affiliation with Masonry or be subjected to the discipline of the Church.
4. If any member of the Church is a member of an oathbound secret society other than the Masonic Lodge, the Session shall take appropriate steps to determine the character of such society. If it be determined that membership therein is sinful,
the above procedure shall be followed" (Minutes of the Thirteenth General Assembly, pp. 4f.).

The Thirteenth General Assembly decided "that a committee of five be elected to study, from the viewpoint of Presbyterian policy (sic), the overture of the Presbytery of Wisconsin relative to membership in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church of members of the Masonic order or similar secret societies, and to report to the Fourteenth General Assembly." Messrs. Oscar Holkeboer, R. B. Kuiper, G. A. Andreas, C. K. Cummings and J. P. Galbraith were elected to this committee (Minutes of the Thirteenth General Assembly, pp. 108f.).

The committee reported to the Fourteenth General Assembly that it had undertaken the task assigned to it but had been unable to complete that task. Thereupon the committee was continued and instructed to report to the Fifteenth General Assembly. It was further instructed to send its report to commissioners at least six weeks before the convening of the Fifteenth General Assembly (Minutes of the Fourteenth General Assembly, p. 47).

The committee now reports that it has been able to complete its work only in part and that, because of the incompleteness of its report, the committee deemed it advisable not to send its report to the ministers and elders of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church prior to the convening of this Assembly.

The committee now reports that it has been able to complete its work only in part and that, because of the incompleteness of its report, the committee deemed it advisable not to send its report to the ministers and elders of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church prior to the convening of this Assembly.

It is contemplated that the complete report will consist of three parts. The first part will be historical in character and will tell in summary how other Presbyterian and Reformed churches in which the question how to deal with members of the Masonic Order and similar organizations has loomed as an important issue have disposed of this matter. The second part will stress principles and will attempt to state what are the demands of Presbyterian polity for dealing with persons affiliated with such orders who either are church members or seek membership in the church. The third part of our report will be practical and will aim to answer the question how the principles of Presbyterian polity that bear on the matter ought to be applied at this time and under present circumstances in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

The first part of this contemplated report is hereby being submitted.

I. HISTORY

In many Presbyterian and Reformed churches membership in the Masonic Order and similar orders has never been a burning issue, and consequently the ecclesiastical courts have hardly dealt with the matter, if indeed at all. However, some Presbyterian and Reformed communions have been compelled to give serious thought to this matter and have made significant deliverances on it. A number of such instances will be cited.

The United Presbyterian Church

Article XV of the Testimony of the United Presbyterian Church, which was adopted in 1858 and remained in force until 1925, says: "We declare, That all associations, whether formed for political or benevolent purposes, which impose upon their members an oath of secrecy, or an obligation to obey a code of unknown laws, are inconsistent with the genius and spirit of Christianity, and church members ought not to have fellowship with such associations."

From time to time decisions enforcing this article were made by General Assemblies. We shall quote only the decision of the General Assembly of 1869: "Resolved - 1) That this Assembly regard adherence to the society of Free Masons, or to that of Odd Fellows, as inconsistent with membership in good standing in the United Presbyterian Church. 2) That all our Sessions be and hereby are enjoined to carry out, by the faithful exercise of discipline, the principles set forth in the 15th Article as interpreted in the foregoing resolution. 3) That the Assembly do most earnestly and affectionately exhort all the members of the Church to abstain from connecting themselves with any secret asso-
and they do especially urge the ministers and elders of this Church to use their influence to keep our members from an incorporation with them" (Minutes of the United Presbyterian Church, vol. III, p. 25).

On June 2, 1925, the United Presbyterian Church adopted its present Confessional Statement. Article XXXV has the heading Of Church Fellowship and reads thus: "We believe that all who have accepted Christ as their Redeemer should unite themselves with some branch of the visible Church, in order to share in the privileges and responsibilities of its members and confess Christ before men; that under Christ they should yield the Church their supreme loyalty, honoring its ordinances and seeking its welfare in season and out of season; and that with this they should forsake all associations, whether secret or open, that they find prejudicial to their Church allegiance and a hindrance to the fulfillment of Christian duties."

It is evident that this article represents a significant departure from the position taken before 1925. Formerly the church condemned outright as inconsistent with Christianity membership in the Masonic Order and similar secret societies; now it is left to the judgment of the individual church member whether or not membership in such associations is prejudicial to his loyalty to the church and detrimental to his Christian life.

Small wonder that since 1925 no General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church has made any deliverance on the Masonic question and that today it seems beyond dispute that a Mason can be a member in good and regular standing of that denomination.

The Reformed Presbyterian Churches

The Reformed Presbyterian Church General Synod and the Reformed Presbyterian Synod differ in their attitude to Masonry and kindred organizations. The former of these communions evidently has Masons in its membership and does not attempt to discipline them. The latter takes a definite stand against secret oath-bound societies.

The Covenant Sworn and Subscribed by the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America at Pittsburgh, Pa., on May 21, 1871, says: "We reject all systems of false religion and will-worship, and with these all forms of secret oath-bound societies and orders, as ensnaring in their nature, pernicious in their tendency, and perilous to the liberties of both Church and State, and pledge ourselves to pray and labor according to our power, that whatever is contrary to godliness may be removed, and the Church beautified with universal conformity to the law and will of her Divine Head and Lord" (Reformed Presbyterian Testimony, p. 260). Elsewhere the same Testimony lists among errors which the church condemns: "That members of associations, either sworn or pledged to secrecy in regard to the nature and doings of such associations, may be admitted to ecclesiastical fellowship" (p. 214).

Since every member of the church is required to subscribe to the Reformed Presbyterian Testimony, it is safe to assert that the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, popularly known as the Covenanter Church, does not knowingly permit in its fellowship Masons or members of similar societies.

The Reformed Church in America

The judicatories of the Reformed Church in America have had to deal repeatedly with the Masonic question. Time and again overtures on this subject were presented to the General Synod. According to Corwin's Digest of Synodical Legislation of the Reformed Church in America, in the period from 1868 to 1889 as many as ten General Synods considered the matter. The references that follow are from Corwin's Digest, edition of 1906, pages 302 and following.

The Classes of Holland and Wisconsin presented to the Synod of 1868 extended testimonies against Free Masonry and asked Synod to disapprove of
that organization. Synod declined to express an opinion.

The same Classes repeated their overture in 1869. Synod now appointed a special committee to consider the overtures, and this committee reported to the 1870 Synod in substance as follows:

"Synod cannot interfere with Consistorial prerogatives of discipline; the path of prudence and safety lies outside of all oath-bound secret societies wherewith obligations may be exacted in conflict with the liberty of the individual Christian conscience; the Christian religion furnishes all needful moral culture, and its pledges of mutual love represent a higher capacity for practical benevolence than the moral lessons of any mere human organization."

In 1871 another overture on the same subject was presented to Synod, but it deemed no action necessary.

The storm on the Masonic issue broke again with increased violence in the Western part of the church in 1880. Communications on the subject were presented to Synod by the Western Classes and also by the Particular Synod of Chicago. After elaborate discussion the following action was taken:

1. Resolved, That this General Synod, after deliberate consideration of the memorials of the Classes of Holland, Wisconsin, Grand River and Illinois, do hereby recognize and appreciate with those bodies and the Churches they represent, the practical difficulties and perplexities which are set forth in their respective papers.

2. Resolved, That while, on the ex parte evidence of the memorials now before it, this Synod cannot properly give its official testimony for or against Free Masonry and other oath-bound secret societies; and while it holds as sacred the indefeasible rights of all its ministers and members to their individual conscientious convictions and liberty of speech and action, subject only to their prior loyalty to Christ and to His Church, yet it hereby declares that no communicant member, and no minister of the Reformed Church in America ought to unite with or to remain in any society or institution, whether secret or open, whose principles and practices are anti-Christian, or contrary to the Faith and practice of the Church to which he belongs.

3. Resolved, That this Synod solemnly believes and declares that any system of religion or morals whose tendency is to hide our Savior, or to supplant the religion of which He is the founder, should receive no countenance from His professed followers; and, furthermore, that no humane, benevolent or philanthropic, or reforming agency in this world can take the place of the Church of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whose principle is to ‘do good unto all men, but especially to them that are of the household of faith’, and, therefore, that all who belong to this Church are in duty bound to give it the pre-eminence over all orders or institutions, and to promote to the utmost of their powers its unity, peace and prosperity, and especially its great charities and philanthropies.

4. Resolved, That the Stated Clerk be directed to send a certified copy of this deliverance to each of the four Classes whose memorials are now before Synod."

Evidently this action did not suffice to still the storm. New overtures were presented in 1881. In reply Synod re-affirmed the actions of 1870 and 1880.

When additional overtures were presented in 1882, Synod exhorted to charity and forbearance and pleaded its inability to prescribe to Consistories the course of action they should take.

In reply to still further communications the Synod of 1883 reaffirmed the actions of previous Synods and exhorted church members, in view of the fact that connection with Masonry was giving offense to many, to refrain from connection with such societies in accordance with the law of Christian love. Synod
further expressed its regret that certain Hollanders in the West, because of dissatisfaction with the church’s attitude toward Masonry, had seceded, and it exhorted them to return. It must be remarked here that at this time many members, and even several congregations, of the Reformed Church in the West departed for the Christian Reformed Church.

To another communication on the same subject the Synod of 1884 replied that it could add nothing to previous deliverances.

The Synod of 1889 had before it a letter on the subject of Masonry from the Christian Reformed Church of the Netherlands. This communication expressed concern over the attitude of the Reformed Church in America to Masonry. In its answer Synod reviewed past Synodical actions.

From the foregoing summary it appears that the Synods of the Reformed Church in America, while not expressing approval of Masonry and in some instances even issuing warnings against it, have consistently refused to condemn membership in the Masonic Order as inconsistent with Christianity and have with equal consistency left it to the Consistories of the particular churches to decide whether or not to receive Masons into their communion and, in case Masons are found in the membership of the church, whether or not to discipline them. In consequence some particular churches in that denomination welcome Masons into their membership, while others bar Masons from membership. Another consequence is that there are ministers and elders in the Reformed Church in America who keep Masons from the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper in the particular churches in which they hold office and yet celebrate the Sacrament with Masons at the General Synod. It never seems to have occurred that a member disciplined by a Consistory for membership in the Masonic Order has appealed to the General Synod.

The Christian Reformed Church

From the time of its founding the Christian Reformed Church has been unqualifiedly and unalterably opposed to oath-bound secret societies and has refused to have members of such organizations in its fellowship. One of the reasons for its break in 1857 with the Reformed Church in America was the alleged presence of Masons in that communion. And in the early eighties many members and several congregations of the Reformed Church in America who objected vigorously to the presence of Masons in the church found refuge in the Christian Reformed Church.

The Synod of 1867 ruled that “in the examination by the Consistory the question shall always be put to those who desire to be received as members and admitted to the Lord’s Supper, whether they belong to any society bound by oath or solemn vow” (Church Order of the Christian Reformed Church by W. Stuart and G. Hoeksema, p. 62). The unmistakable implication is that no one belonging to such an organization may be received into communicant membership. This rule is observed to the present day.

Article 55 of the General Rules adopted by the Synod of 1881 states: “If it becomes manifest that a member belongs to a secret, oath-bound organization, and he refuses to leave such organization, he shall be disciplined.” This rule too continues to be observed.

It is customary in the Christian Reformed Church for the Classes at certain intervals to question the Consistories concerning matters relating to the welfare of the particular churches. One of the questions prescribed by the Church Order reads: “Is the Consistory aware of the presence in the congregation of members of secret societies, and if there are such, are they dealt with according to church discipline?” (Christian Reformed Church Order by J. L. Schaver, p. 150).

The Synod of 1908 ruled that the Grange is to be considered a secret society.
It is clear that Synods of the Christian Reformed Church have ruled that members of secret societies bound by oath or solemn vow are barred from membership in that communion, and these decisions are regarded binding upon the particular churches. It may be asserted without hesitation that there are no known members of such organizations in the Christian Reformed Church.

The Reformed Churches of the Netherlands

In 1923 the Session of the Church at Meppel, in the province of Drenthe, sought the advice of the General Synod of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands regarding members who had united with the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Article 143 of the minutes relates that a committee which had been appointed to study this matter recommended that Synod express as its judgment:

1) That the Session must continue most earnestly to admonish such communicant members and members by baptism to sever their fellowship with said order.

2) That the sessions should not resort to barring communicant members from the Holy Supper on the ground of membership in this order until it has obtained positive proof that such membership involves the church members themselves in maintaining unchristian doctrines or practices in the sense of the 85th answer of the Heidelberg Catechism.”

At this point a motion was made to consider the matter no further on the ground that it was not a proper concern of the General Synod. This motion was defeated.

The first recommendation of the committee was then adopted.

The second recommendation was amended to read: “That, in case the member concerned persists in this evil, the Session is to apply ecclesiastical censures”, and this amendment was adopted.

Among the documents appended to the minutes of the General Synod is one (XLIII) in which the aforementioned committee presented certain considerations that influenced it in making its recommendations. First the principles and practices of the Odd Fellows are weighed and in several respects found wanting. Then it is said: “Ecclesiastical discipline is not to be applied to an organization or association, but only to persons. The determining question, therefore, is to what extent membership implies that said persons themselves, in the words of our Catechism, ‘under the Christian name maintain unchristian doctrines or practices’.” It is said further: “In discipline it makes a great difference whether one is dealing with sins of commission or omission.” Finally the angle of corporate responsibility is discussed. It is held that the members of an organization are co-responsible for its principles and its propaganda. But the question is raised whether, in case these principles and this propaganda are reprehensible, this responsibility is of so direct a nature that it alone makes one subject to ecclesiastical discipline.

Article 188 of the same minutes tells us that Dr. H. H. Kuyper, Professor of Church Polity at the Free University of Amsterdam, who was unable to take part in Synod’s deliberations and decisions on this matter, protested against Synod’s decision, particularly against the second part. The grounds for this protest are recorded as follows:

1) Because the General Synod has de facto declared that an entire group of persons (i.e., all who are now members or will in the future become members of this organization (Odd Fellows)) are deserving of censure, which declaration is at variance with the principle of our polity, as it relates to discipline, that each case must be dealt with and judged separately.

2) That Synod departed from what has thus far, and rightly so, been accepted as a rule by our ecclesiastical assemblies, viz., that the mere fact
of one's membership in an association, even when the character of the as-
sociation is reprehensible, as for instance in the case of the Federation of
Christian Socialists, does not render one subject to censures, inasmuch as
one becomes subject to censures only by the transgression of a divine
commandment.

3) That membership in an organization can make one subject to cen-
sures only when it is unmistakable that such membership forces or compels
one to perform deeds which are contrary to God's commands or to accept
and propagate principles which are at variance with God's Word.

4) That, although it becomes sufficiently clear from the report of the
committee that questionable features lurk in the Order of Odd Fellows, for
which reason the Sessions are properly urged to warn their members
against that organization, nevertheless, conclusive proof has not been pre-
sent that every one who becomes a member of that association is comp-
pelled thereby to maintain unchristian practices or doctrines. Yet that
alone according to Lord's Day XXXI of our Catechism is justification for
excluding one from the kingdom of heaven."

Article 188 relates further that Emeritus Professor L. Lindeboom, of the
Theological School at Kampen, protested against the recording of Dr. H. H.
Kuyper's protest because Synod failed to specify the grounds for its decision
recorded in Article 143.

It is clear, on the one hand, that the 1923 General Synod of the Reformed
Churches of the Netherlands took a definite stand against membership in the
Independent Order of Odd Fellows and declared that persistence in this evil is
cause for judicial discipline. On the other hand, it is also clear that this de-
cision did not have the unanimous support of the entire church nor, in fact,
the unanimous support of those in the church who could justly be regarded
authorities on the subject of ecclesiastical polity.

The committee recommends that it be continued and that it be instructed
to report further to the Sixteenth General Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,
(Signed) R. B. KUIPER, Chairman

The recommendation was adopted in the following amended form: That
the Committee be continued and that if it complete its report it be instructed
to distribute it to all ministers and sessions at least six weeks prior to the
Sixteenth General Assembly.

Upon motion, Mr. Cummings' request for permission to resign from the
Committee on Secret Societies was granted.

The following amended motion carried: That the Committee be instructed
to conduct further investigation of the Masonic issue in the Presbyterian Church
in the U. S. A., and in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S.

The Moderator ruled that since there was objection to electing by motion,
voting should be an open election. Upon appeal, the Moderator was not
sustained.

It was moved and carried to elect a member to the Committee on Secret
Societies in place of Mr. Cummings.

The following were nominated: Messrs. Phillips, Sloat, L. Oliver, Clelland,
Hoeßinger, Kellogg.

It was moved and carried that Mr. Clelland's name be withdrawn at his
request.

The Assembly proceeded to vote.

Mr. Gray was granted the floor to read a protest as follows:

(53)
A PROTEST

We, the undersigned, respectfully protest the action of the Assembly in failing to pass an amendment that would have assured the Rev. Floyd E. Hamilton that the formulations of the side opposing his views in the controversy studied by the Committee on Four Doctrines would not be considered as tests of theological soundness.

We would point out that the following doctrines were reported on by this committee: The Incomprehensibility of God; The Effect of Sin and Regeneration on the Intellectual Activities of the Soul; The Free Offer of the Gospel. Mr. Hamilton, as a member of the committee, agreed with the formulation of the doctrine of the Incomprehensibility of God. On the other two doctrines, only three of the six committee members concurred with the committee report. The other three are on record as not concurring. We are fearful lest the conclusions offered by half of the committee in the report be used as with assembly approval as tests of theological soundness.

We protest also because the assembly's action disregarded the necessity of taking steps to halt the process of withdrawal of ministers from our church over the issue occasioning the amendment.

Again, we protest that the Assembly did not make a pronouncement against the imposition of what a great many in the church regard as extra-confessional tests for ordination and as service as a missionary of the church.

RICHARD W. GRAY
EDMUND P. CLOWNEY
ROBERT STRONG
C. M. MAYSON
HERBERT J. HOEFLINGER
RAYMOND M. MEINERS
HERBERT S. BIRD
MATTHEW McCRODDAN
ALAN TICHENOR
RALPH E. CLOUGH
WALTER T. OLIVER
ROBERT BEEKMAN BROWN
HENRY E. WADE
BRUCE A. COIE
GLENN R. COIE
GEORGE O. COTTON
F. S. DYRNESS
ROBERT L. VINING
MARTIN J. BOHN
ARTHUR O. OLSON
STELWIN F. BROWN

The Protest of the undersigned applies only to the first two paragraphs above:

JAMES W. PRICE

The tellers reported the election of Mr. Kellogg to the Committee on Secret Societies.

It was moved and carried that the Rev. David Freeman of the Classis Passaic of the Reformed Church in America be enrolled as a corresponding member of this Assembly.

Mr. Cummings read the report of the Committee on General Benevolence. The recommendations are as follows:

1. That the General Assembly continue the Committee and increase the number of members of the Committee to seven, three of whom shall be ministers.
2. That the General Assembly request the local diaconates to consider sending quarterly contributions to the Committee on General Benevolence.
3. That the General Assembly request the local diaconates to make an annual report of aid given to Christians beyond the purview of the local congregation to the Committee on General Benevolence.
4. That the General Assembly decide whether or not it desires the Committee on General Benevolence to study the relative merits of a ministerial pension fund within the denomination, and a ministerial endowment fund such as that provided by the Presbyterian Ministers' Fund.
Esteemed Brethren:

Your committee was charged by the Fourteenth General Assembly to seek a consultative relationship to the American Council of Christian Churches.

Recommendation No. 1 was adopted.
Recommendation No. 2 was adopted.
Recommendation No. 4 was adopted.

It was moved and carried that the Assembly instruct the Committee on General Benevolence not to study plans for ministers' pensions.

It was moved and carried that the report of the Committee on General Benevolence (not including recommendations) be recommitted to the Committee and that it not be printed in the minutes until it is presented to an assembly in a modified form.

It was moved and carried that the Moderator appoint a committee to audit the books of the Committee on General Benevolence.

Nominations to the Committee on General Benevolence were made as follows: Ministers - Messrs. Cummings, Phillips, Skilton, Hoeflinger; Non-Ministers - Messrs. Klaudius Kuiper, Ralph Clouser, W. Colsman, Bert Roeber. It was moved and carried that the Clerk be instructed to cast a white ballot for the election of the four non-ministerial nominees.

The Assembly proceeded to vote for three ministers to serve on the Committee on General Benevolence.

The Moderator appointed Messrs. H. Wade and Johnson a committee to audit the books of the Committee on General Benevolence.

The Moderator asked Mr. Price to take the chair.

Mr. Verhage reported for the Committee on Overtures and Communications, recommending that the following resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS, there are in camps in Germany, Italy and Austria nearly a million displaced persons of various denominations, composed of men, women and children, including 150,000 children below the age of 17, and

WHEREAS, these displaced persons are unable to return to their own homes because of persecution or fear of persecution by reason of their race, religion or political beliefs, and desire above all else to start a new life in a nation where there is freedom of speech, freedom of worship and freedom of movement, and have demonstrated their faith that this nation and others allied with it will do them justice, be it therefore

RESOLVED that the General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, meeting in Wildwood, N. J., May 13-18, 1948, go on record as favoring the admission by the United States of its fair share of these displaced people, such share amounting to 400,000 over the period of the next four years, and urge the Congress to provide emergency legislation to accomplish this result, and be it further

RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons.

The tellers reported the election of Messrs. Phillips, Hoeflinger, and Skilton to the Committee on General Benevolence.

The Moderator resumed the chair.

It was moved and carried that Messrs. Kuiper and Kuschke be appointed a committee to prepare an answer to the protest presented earlier by Mr. Gray.

Mr. Kuiper read the report of the Committee on the American Council of Christian Churches, as follows:

REPORT TO THE FIFTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE RELATIONSHIP
OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
TO THE AMERICAN COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

Esteemed Brethren:

Your committee was charged by the Fourteenth General Assembly to seek a consultative relationship to the American Council of Christian Churches.

(55)
After some correspondence with the General Secretary of the Council and a conference with him the Committee addressed a formal request to the Council that it make provision for such a relationship. We now report that the Council has informed us through its General Secretary that our request was considered by the Executive Council of the American Council and subsequently by all the denominational delegates gathered in convention and that it was the unanimous opinion of these bodies that it would be unwise to change the constitution of the Council so as to make provision for a consultative relationship.

At the same time the Council took this opportunity to invite The Orthodox Presbyterian Church into general constituent membership in the Council.

Respectfully submitted,

R. B. KUIPER, Chairman

It was moved that The Orthodox Presbyterian Church seek constituent membership in the American Council of Christian Churches.

The Clerk read Communication No. 3, an overture from the Presbytery of California regarding membership in the American Council of Christian Churches.

It was moved as a substitute that the Assembly adopt the resolution of the overture from the Presbytery of California.

Assembly recessed at 5:00 p. m. with prayer by Mr. Moses.

Tuesday evening

The Assembly reconvened at 6:45 p. m. with prayer by Mr. Churchill.

The motion to substitute carried.

The main motion carried as follows: That the General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church submit to the presbyteries for approval or disapproval an overture granting the General Assembly authority and direction to commit The Orthodox Presbyterian Church to membership in the American Council of Christian Churches.

It was moved and carried that the Moderator appoint a committee of two to draw up an overture regarding membership in the American Council of Christian Churches.

The Clerk read the report of the Committee on Amendments to the Form of Government, as follows:

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON AMENDMENTS TO THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT

The Fifteenth General Assembly,
The Orthodox Presbyterian Church,
Wildwood, New Jersey.
Fathers and Brethren:

The Committee on Amendments to the Form of Government of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church recommends to the Fifteenth General Assembly that it propose to the Presbyteries the following amendment to the Form of Government: namely, that suggested in Overture II from the Presbytery of Wisconsin to the Fourteenth General Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,

ROBERT H. GRAHAM
DWIGHT H. POUNDSTONE
ROBERT B. BROWN

April 27, 1948
The Clerk read Overture II from the Presbytery of Wisconsin to the Fourteenth General Assembly. (See Minutes of the Fourteenth General Assembly, pp. 5, 6).

The Moderator appointed a committee to prepare an overture regarding membership in the American Council of Christian Churches: Messrs. Marsden and Cotton.

Dr. Stonehouse gave the report for the Committee on Changes in Chapters XIV and XV in the Form of Government, as follows:

The Committee on Changes in Chapters XIV and XV in the Form of Government recommends:

1. That the Assembly take cognizance of the fact that the Presbytery of California appointed a committee to study these chapters and subsequently voted to take no action.

2. That with reference to the recommendation of the Presbytery of New York and New England, the Assembly
   a. In accordance with Recommendation 1, approve the substitution of the words "lend them its counsel, supervision, and help as they further prepare themselves" for the words "advise with them with regard to their preparation" in the last sentence of Section 3 of Chapter XIV, and that it be sent down to the presbyteries for their approval with a view to their adoption by the Sixteenth General Assembly as amendments to the Form of Government.
   b. Take no action at this time on Recommendations 2 and 3.
   c. Refer Recommendation 4 to the presbyteries for consideration, and that the presbyteries be requested to make recommendations concerning it to the Sixteenth General Assembly.

3. That the sections of the report from the Presbytery of Philadelphia, presenting recommendations for amendments, be considered seriatim and approved by this General Assembly and sent down to the presbyteries for their approval with a view to their adoption by the Sixteenth General Assembly as amendments to the Form of Government.

4. That in response to the memorial from the Presbytery of Philadelphia calling the attention of this General Assembly to the need of a reworking of the Form of Government, this General Assembly elect a committee of three to obtain, suggest, and present to the Sixteenth General Assembly proposals for the amendment of the Form of Government with a view to their final adoption as amendments.

Respectfully submitted, THE COMMITTEE

It was moved that the recommendations be adopted.

The amended motion carried that the recommendations be considered seriatim and that No. 4 be considered first.

Recommendation No. 4 was adopted.

Recommendation No. 1 was adopted.

The substitute motion carried, That the communication from the Presbytery of New York and New England together with the comments in Recommendation No. 2 be referred to a Committee on Revisions to the Form of Government to be elected.

The substitute motion carried, That the overture from the Presbytery of Philadelphia regarding changes to chapters XIV and XV of the Form of Government be referred to the Committee on Revisions to the Form of Government.

It was moved and carried that the report of the Committee on Amendments to the Form of Government be referred to the Committee on Revisions to the Form of Government.

(57)
The following were nominated to the Committee on Revisions to the Form of Government: Messrs. Everett C. DeVelde, Murray, Stonehouse, Galbraith, Marsden, Murray Forst Thompson, Kuiper.

The Moderator declared that if there be no election on the first ballot the names of the two nominees receiving the lowest number of votes be dropped and on succeeding ballots one be dropped.

The Clerk read the report of the Committee appointed to audit the books of the Committee on General Benevolence, as follows:

May 18, 1948

REPORT OF THE AUDITING COMMITTEE ON RECORDS OF THE GENERAL BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

January 26, 1947 to March 31, 1948 and April 1, 1948 to May 18, 1948

The Auditing Committee appointed by the Moderator of the Fifteenth General Assembly has examined the records of the Committee on General Benevolence. Total receipts and expenditures for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1948 are as follows:

Receipts - - - - - - $1,007.41
Expenditures - - - - - - 106.57
Balance on hand, April 1 - - - - - $ 900.84

Receipts since April 1 - - - - - $ 247.05
Expenditures - - - - - - 106.73
Cash on hand, present date - - - - - $1,041.16

Receipts attached for certain expenditures.

It was moved and carried that the recommendation be adopted.

Mr. Clelland presented the final report of the Travel Fund Committee, as follows:

The Travel Fund Committee reports that twenty-seven churches contributed $490.40, a balance of $30.65 was received from the 1947 Travel Fund and $104.80 was received in offerings at the Assembly making total receipts of $625.82.

In accordance with the provisions adopted by this Assembly $624.82 was paid to 15 commissioners. The number of miles traveled after which travel pay began was 1075.

$1.03 was spent for expenses. Present balance $.00.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN P. CLELLAND
For the Committee

Mr. Marsden reported for the Committee appointed to draw up an overture to be sent down to the presbyteries regarding membership in the American Council of Christian Churches, as follows:

(58)
OVERTURE

Resolved that the Sixteenth General Assembly be authorized and requested to seek admission as a general constituent member of the American Council of Christian Churches for The Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

It was moved and carried that the overture be sent down.

The tellers reported the election of Messrs. Galbraith and Stonehouse, on the first ballot, and Mr. Murray, on the second ballot, to the Committee on Revisions to the Form of Government.

Mr. Bradford reported for the Committee on General Assembly Representation, as follows:

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATION TO THE FIFTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Thirteenth General Assembly erected a committee "to study the question of general assembly representation" (Minutes, p. 91). That committee reported to the Fourteenth General Assembly that it had not been able to complete its task, and recommended that its work be continued. (Cf. Minutes, p. 68). The recommendation was adopted and the present committee was appointed to continue the study.

The committee did not feel that it was qualified to make the sweeping study that its broad commission called for. An adequate study of the question of general assembly representation calls for extensive exegetical and historical research. The observations made herein are not based on such extensive study, and the committee would by no means claim that it has fulfilled its commission. However, it would make certain pertinent observations which may be of some value to the church.

The question of general assembly representation was first raised in the Twelfth General Assembly when the Presbytery of California presented the following overture:

The Presbytery of California of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church respectfully overtures the 12th General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church to amend its constitution by deleting Paragraph 2, Chapter XI of the Form of Government, and substituting the following, in order to make the second paragraph consistent with the first.

"The General Assembly shall consist of an equal number of ministers and elders from each Presbytery in the proportion of one minister and one elder for every 300 communicant members or fraction thereof within the Presbytery, said commissioners to be elected by the respective Presbyteries." This overture contended that sections 1 and 2 of Chapter XI of the Form of Government, which are as follows, are inconsistent:

1. The general assembly is the largest judicatory of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. It shall represent, in one body, all the particular churches of this denomination; and shall bear the title of THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

2. The general assembly shall consist of every minister and of one elder from every particular church, and two or more elders from every collegiate church in proportion to the number of its pastors.

The question at issue appears to be whether or not the principles of Presbyterian church polity require strict adherence to the method of proportional representation in the constitution of the general assembly.

(59)
Three basic methods of general assembly representation, other than our own, have been employed in Presbyterian churches. They are as follows:

1. An equal number of ministers and elders elected from each presbytery in proportion to the number of its ministers. This system has been employed in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. since its inception when one minister and one elder were elected from each presbytery for every six ministers of the presbytery or fraction thereof.

2. An equal number of ministers and elders from each presbytery in proportion to the number of communicant members within the presbytery. This method is used in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Southern), and this is the system proposed in the overture referred to above.

3. A fixed number of ministers and elders from each presbytery regardless of the number of its ministers or of the number of communicant members within the presbytery. In this way the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church is constituted, two ministers and two elders being commissioned by each classis.

It is obvious that only the second of the above methods follows strictly the principle of proportional representation, and it must be acknowledged that the majority of larger Presbyterian bodies in this country,—and this is the case, we believe, in other countries as well,—has not made the principle of strict proportional representation the basis for constituting the highest judicatory.

The resolution of the question must not, however, be made to rest primarily on historical considerations, but rather upon the Scriptural principles of church government. The following biblical principles, basic to the Presbyterian form of polity, may be regarded as bearing upon the question of general assembly representation:

1. The office-bearers of the church are to be chosen by the people.
2. The offices of bishop and elder are identical.
3. In each church there is to be a plurality of elders or bishops which is known generically as the presbytery.
4. Ordination is the act of the assembly of elders, or presbytery, exclusively.
5. The church has the privilege of appeal to the presbytery, or assembly of elders, and the presbytery has the right of government.
6. Christ is the sole Head of the church and through the Holy Scriptures makes known His will for the government of the church.

In the opinion of the committee the Bible does not go beyond these basic principles with respect to the government of the church, and it ought to be recognized that the Scriptures allow a considerable degree of flexibility in the matter of church government. It should not be forgotten that "there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and the government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed" (Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter I, section VI). In the judgment of the committee no considerations beyond those enumerated above may be raised to the high plane of final authority in order to be made the basis for a particular method of constituting the general assembly. And if the principles delineated above are not violated, any system of general assembly representation is in harmony with the Scriptures.

We would conclude, therefore, that our own method of constituting the general assembly is agreeable to and founded upon the Scriptural principles of church government. At first glance it might appear that the ministers who do not hold pastoral charges have not been elected by the people and therefore cannot be said to represent the people. However, it should be observed that such ministers have been ordained by the presbytery in its corporate character and in the exercise of its inalienable right. And it must be remembered that all elders, or bishops, are equal in point of official power and have an equal right to sit in any assembly of elders which has jurisdiction over them.
The committee believes, nevertheless, that "the light of nature and Christian prudence" could very conceivably warrant a change in our system of constituting the general assembly. We would therefore urge this Assembly to give attention to certain considerations which might dictate such a change.

In the first place, any plan of reducing the size of the general assembly which would assure greater representation from the more remote parts of the church than is usually the case would likely reflect more accurately the mind of the church at large. There have been times when it legitimately could have been charged that the location of the meeting-place of the general assembly made it impossible, due to financial reasons, for the more remote sectors of the church to be adequately represented. It has been impossible with the limited funds usually available to pay the traveling expenses of all the persons who are constitutionally eligible to be seated as commissioners. A reduction in the size of the general assembly would clearly be a step in the direction of obviating this difficulty.

Another consideration to be observed is that if the commissioners to the general assembly were all elected as commissioners from particular lower judicialities, they would be more apt to have a greater sense of their responsibilities. As it is now, with every minister automatically a commissioner without appointment by a lower judicatory, commissioners arrive late, leave before the sessions of the assembly have been concluded and even take extended leaves without authorization by the assembly. The committee is mindful that such an argument has only a psychological basis, and would observe that each commissioner, whether he be an elder appointed by the session of a particular church or a minister automatically a commissioner, should realize that he can properly fulfill his duty as a commissioner only if he takes care to be present at all the sessions of the assembly.

In the third place, it can justly be assumed that in a smaller general assembly the leadership abilities of the ruling elders and the younger ministers would be given greater opportunity for development than is now possible, and thus ultimately the church at large would be greatly benefited.

Finally, it is possible that the general assembly would operate more efficiently if the number of its commissioners were decreased. It is well-known that there is much repetition in the course of the deliberations of the assembly,—repetition which is not in all cases edifying,—and presumably such repetition has some relationship to the size of the assembly.

Against these arguments in favor of changing our method of constituting the general assembly is the consideration that "our church is still young and small, and in her great task of laying the foundations it might be a serious mistake to deprive the church of the wisdom of any who are now entitled under the Form of Government to be commissioners to the highest judicatory. . . ." (Minutes of the Fourteenth General Assembly, p. 67). Having concluded that none of the principles of Presbyterianism is violated by the present method, and that considerations of expediency must in the final analysis determine the exact system of general assembly representation, the committee would give prominence to this very practical consideration. At present the general assembly has the benefit of the combined wisdom of all the ministers of the denomination and of at least one elder from every particular church. Until such time as our church is more firmly established any alteration of this arrangement might produce unfortunate results.

In conclusion the committee would urge this General Assembly to recognize that in order to assure the Western churches more adequate representation attempts should be made from time to time to hold the general assemblies in locations more convenient to them. This Assembly should further recognize the serious need of devising some method of raising sufficient funds to meet fully the traveling expenses of all who are constitutionally eligible to be seated as
commissioners in the successive general assemblies, and of devising the most equitable system of distributing such funds as may be available.

Respectfully submitted,

EDWARDS E. ELLIOTT
C. ALAN TICHENOR
EUGENE BRADFORD, Chairman

The Moderator asked Mr. Marsden to take the chair.

It was moved and carried that the report of the Committee on General Assembly Representation be referred to the Committee on Revisions to the Form of Government.

Mr. Cummings reported for the Committee on Local Evangelism, as follows:

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL EVANGELISM

During the past year the Committee was diligently engaged in the task of preparing a report on "The Subjects of Evangelism." We had sincerely hoped that it would be possible to report on this important subject to this Assembly. There were several reasons which made it inadvisable to submit our final report on this subject to this Assembly. An important part of the material submitted to the Committee on this subject was not received by the Committee until the end of April. Furthermore, the report will be some sixty pages in length and for reasons of economy, should be printed by the printer who publishes the minutes. This would have been a physical impossibility for this year's Assembly but will be altogether possible next year.

The Committee is in the process of preparing papers on GROUP EVANGELISM, CIRCUIT MISSION WORK, RADIO PREACHING, and PRESERVING THE RESULTS OF EVANGELISM. These four subjects constitute the total work that remains to be completed by the Committee. The Committee is exceedingly anxious to complete its work by the 1949 General Assembly. We earnestly covet the cooperation and prayers of the church to this end.

Requests have come from different quarters for the Committee to publish its work in book form upon the completion of its task. The Committee is seriously considering these requests.

The Committee recommends that it be continued.

Respectfully submitted,

CALVIN K. CUMMINGS, Chairman

It was moved and carried that the recommendation be adopted.

Mr. Galbraith presented the report of the Committee on Sickness and Hospital Benefits, as follows:

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON SICKNESS AND HOSPITAL BENEFITS

The Committee on Sickness and Hospital Benefits of the Fourteenth General Assembly has made a study of the question committed to it, and has sent to all the ministers of the church literature from one of the insurance companies in this field. The Committee reports to the Fifteenth General Assembly as follows:

General Information

1. Group insurance - insurance in which each member of the group pays the same premium and has the same coverage - is, in the case of most insurance plans, unavailable to a group such as ours because of the wide geographical area over which the ministers are spread. The Blue Cross (hospitalization) Plan, for example, is composed of many member organizations which cover limited geographical areas, and groups within a certain area must join the
organization covering that area. Since our ministers are not within any one area such group insurance would not be available to us. With the exception of the policies offered by the Ministers Life and Casualty Union, Minneapolis, Minnesota, individual policies in this field are in our judgment beyond the financial means of the vast majority of our ministers. The reason for the above-mentioned exception is that that company limits the issuance of its policies to those in full-time religious work and is therefore in reality a group insurance plan. Because of the high cost of other individually-obtained policies we are not reporting their details.

2. Accident and Sickness insurance - insurance which pays benefits on accident to, or sickness of, the wage earner himself only, not on members of his family - is invariably united in one policy.

3. Hospitalization insurance - insurance which pays all or part of costs incurred by hospitalization - is available not only for the wage earner himself but also for his family.

After its study of the field your Committee would place before you two alternative plans, offered by two different insurance companies.

Plan A

A group policy requiring a minimum of 25 participating ministers, with the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, Hartford, Connecticut.

1. Accident and Sickness Benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Annual Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$20 per week, 13 weeks (as often as needed)</td>
<td>$19.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20 per week, 26 weeks</td>
<td>$24.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,000 for death by accident</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Hospitalization

a. For self only
   $6.00 per day - - - - - - - - - - $8.40
   $60.00 hospital fees ($186 maximum for each confinement)

b. For self and wife
   $6.00 per day - - - - - - - - - - $25.86
   $60.00 hospital fees (Same maximum as above)

   Maternity:
   $6.00 per day, 10 days
   No hospital fees
   ($60.00 maximum each confinement)

c. For self and family
   $6.00 per day - - - - - - - - - - $37.08
   $60.00 hospital fees ($186 maximum each confinement)

3. Surgical fees

a. For self only
   $150.00 maximum for each operation. Amount varies for different operations. - - - - - - - - - - $4.66

b. For self and wife - Same as above - - - - - - $18.06

c. For self and family - Same as above - - - - - - $26.21

Plan B

Individual policies with the Ministers Life and Casualty Union, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
1. Accident and Sickness Benefits
   “Defender”
   Total disability, $14.00 per week, 104 weeks $12.00
   Partial disability, $7.00 per week, 26 weeks
   “Peerless”
   Total disability, $17.50 per week, 104 weeks $16.00
   Partial disability, $8.75 per week, 26 weeks
   “Special”
   Total disability, $25.00 per week, 60 weeks $20.00
   Partial disability, $10.00 per week, 26 weeks

   In addition there is compensation for death by accident ($2,315.00) and for loss of members of body, graduated with cost of policy.

2. Hospitalization (available only to those who hold an Accident and Sickness policy)
   a. For self only
      $4.50 per day, 10 weeks $8.00
      $2.00 per day, next 10 weeks (these apply to either hospital bed or nurse in home) Up to $75.00 for hospital service fees
   b. For self and family - Same as above $16.00
      (The 10 weeks is for entire family)

3. Surgical fees
   For self only - $50.00 for major operation - Incl. in “Special” at no extra cost.

Conclusions

It is the opinion of the Committee that in spite of the difference in total hospitalization benefits of the two plans, and in view of (1) the somewhat higher cost of Plan A over, say, the medium-cost policy of Plan B, (2) the smaller maternity benefits under Plan A, and (3) the fact that Plan B includes sickness-accident benefits, one of the policies of the Ministers Life and Casualty Union with “hospital rider” would probably prove to be more within the financial means of most of our ministers and at the same time provide fairly adequate aid in emergency.

Any one of the three types of insurance offered by the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company may be obtained separately, but it must be by a group of not less than 25 participants. To obtain hospitalization in the Ministers Casualty one must take also accident and sickness insurance, but need not enter with a group.

Recommendations

Your Committee recommends:

1. That this General Assembly discover if at least 25 ministers are desirous of entering one or all of the plans of the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, and, if the response be in the affirmative the Moderator appoint a committee of three to inaugurate and operate the plan;
2. That this General Assembly recommend to those ministers interested in hospitalization insurance, but not entering a group plan, the purchase of one of the Sickness and Accident policies, with Hospital Rider, of The Ministers Life and Casualty Union; and
3. That the Committee appointed by the Fourteenth General Assembly be discharged.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES W. PRICE
JOHN P. GALBRAITH

(64)
On motion, recommendation No. 1 was adopted.

No response was made to the request of the Moderator for those interested to rise.

Recommendation No. 2 was adopted.

Recommendation No. 3 was adopted.

Mr. Cummings reported for the Committee on Union with the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America (General Synod), as follows:

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON UNION WITH THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
(GENERAL SYNOD)
TO THE FIFTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

During the past year your committee took two steps in an effort to establish better relations with the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America, General Synod.

As authorized by the previous General Assembly, the committee sent a letter of fraternal greeting to the General Synod of said church. We regret that we were unable to send a fraternal delegate as authorized by the previous Assembly. The dates for the Assemblies of both churches coincided, making the sending of a fraternal delegate a physical impossibility.

The committee sent a letter to the Committee on Friendly Relations with The Orthodox Presbyterian Church in an effort to ascertain whether or not there is a vital interest in union with The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The communication requested that "the Committee on Friendly Relations with The Orthodox Presbyterian Church inquire from the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church (General Synod) whether they are interested in considering a union with The Orthodox Presbyterian Church upon the basis of the adoption of the name of the Reformed Presbyterian Church (General Synod) and the standards of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church as expressive of 'Reformation Principles'." It was made very clear that this was purely an inquiry. No commitment by either body was involved. We were simply asking, are you willing to consider seriously such a possibility. The committee felt that it must have this information if it was to be able to advise intelligently the Assembly as to whether or not the committee should be continued.

During the past year the Secretary of the Home Missions Committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Church (General Synod) wrote a most cordial letter to the chairman of the committee indicating the willingness of his denomination to cooperate with our denomination in the sponsoring of young people's conferences. Previous commitments made it impossible for cooperation to be realized during the past year, but it is altogether possible that in the near future cooperation in the young people's work of these two denominations might be realized.

The committee recommends:

1. That the committee be continued for one year.
2. That the committee be authorized to send a fraternal delegate to the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church (General Synod).

Respectfully submitted,
CALVIN K. CUMMINGS, Chairman

Recommendation No. 1 was adopted.

The amended substitute motion carried, that this General Assembly send a fraternal delegate appointed by this committee to the meeting of the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America in 1949.

The Moderator resumed the chair.
Mr. Sloat reported for the Committee to prepare a leaflet including amendments to the Form of Government, as follows:

REPORT OF COMMITTEE TO PREPARE A LEAFLET

The committee reports that arrangements have been made for the preparation of such a leaflet. In view of a strike of printers in Philadelphia, and in view of the fact that further amendments to the Form of Government are currently envisioned by the Assembly, it was decided to have the work done by Multilith reproduction, as the most reasonable and most feasible procedure. The leaflets were to have been delivered in Philadelphia on May 13, but the committee has no information at present as to whether delivery was actually made.

E. BRADFORD
L. W. SLOAT

It was moved and carried that this committee be instructed to turn over the leaflets already prepared to the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension for free distribution.

Mr. Kuiper reported for the committee appointed to prepare an answer to the protest presented by Mr. Gray, as follows:

The committee recommends that the General Assembly reply to the protest signed by Messrs. Gray, et al., as follows:

It should be noted that the statement of historical facts in the protest is not complete. The fact is not recorded that Mr. Hamilton presented to the Assembly a minority report on the divine incomprehensibility.

There is no evidence that the majority of the Assembly related the amendment under consideration to further withdrawals from our church. However much one may regret departures from the church, it must be said that the duty of the Assembly was to decide this amendment on its own merits.

As to the matter of extra-constitutional tests, the Assembly is convinced that there is perfect agreement in the Assembly that such tests should not be imposed. The Assembly further replies that in rejecting the amendment it did not declare either constitutional or extra-constitutional the formulations of certain doctrines in the reports which were adopted at regular meetings of the committee by a majority of those present. On the other hand the adoption of the amendment could readily have been interpreted as a declaration by the Assembly that the formulations of certain doctrines in those reports express teachings which go beyond our doctrinal standards. The adoption of the amendment would also have opposed the obvious right of the members of the Committee on Foreign Missions to vote on the question of the doctrinal soundness of a candidate according to their convictions as to what is a constitutional test.

The amendment carried that the last sentence read as follows: "The adoption of the amendment could be interpreted as opposing the . . ."

The amendment carried to add the following words to the end of the first sentence of the last paragraph: "although there has been disagreement as to what constitutes extra-constitutional tests."

(66)
The answer, as adopted, is as follows:

It should be noted that the statement of historical facts in the protest is not complete. The fact is not recorded that Mr. Hamilton presented to the Assembly a minority report on the divine incomprehensibility.

There is no evidence that the majority of the Assembly related the amendment under consideration to further withdrawals from our church. However much one may regret departures from the church, it must be said that the duty of the Assembly was to decide this amendment on its own merits.

As to the matter of extra-constitutional tests, the Assembly is convinced that there is perfect agreement in the Assembly that such tests should not be imposed, although there has been disagreement as to what constitutes extra-constitutional tests. The Assembly further replies that in rejecting the amendment it did not declare either constitutional or extra-constitutional the formulations of certain doctrines in the reports which were adopted at regular meetings of the committee by a majority of those present. On the other hand the adoption of the amendment could readily have been interpreted as a declaration by the Assembly that the formulations of certain doctrines in those reports express teachings which go beyond our doctrinal standards. The adoption of the amendment could be interpreted as opposing the obvious right of the members of the Committee on Foreign Missions to vote on the question of the doctrinal soundness of a candidate according to their convictions as to what is a constitutional test.

The following amended motion carried: That the General Assembly approve a budget of $2,000 for the coming year and that the churches be urged to contribute on the basis of 40c per communicant member.

It was moved and carried that the order of the day be extended until adjournment.

It was moved and carried that the following resolution be adopted and that the Clerk be instructed to send a copy to the Session of the Calvary Church of Wildwood:

Whereas the Fifteenth General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has enjoyed the cordial hospitality of Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Wildwood, New Jersey, during the period of the Assembly, not only in the use of the auditorium of the church, and in the provision of accommodations for the commissioners, but also in many other ways expressive of the Christian fellowship and regard of the officers and congregation, and

Whereas many other friends of Calvary Church and members of the community have also extended their hospitality, and

Whereas this cordial welcome was continued far beyond the docketed period of Assembly meeting,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Fifteenth General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church express its hearty thanks to the Session of Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church and request the Session to convey these thanks both to the local congregation, and to friends, and members of the community who have participated in the gracious reception of this Assembly.

The Clerk read the minutes of the sessions of May 18th.

The Moderator appointed a committee on Arrangements for the Sixteenth General Assembly: Messrs. R. Graham (convener), Poundstone, R. Brown, H. Wade.

The Moderator designated Dr. Stonehouse as convener of the Committee on Revisions to the Form of Government.
On motion, the minutes of the sessions of May 18th were approved as corrected.

On motion, the minutes as a whole were approved.

It was moved and carried that the Assembly be dissolved.

The Moderator made the following declaration:

"By virtue of the authority delegated to me by the church, let this general assembly be dissolved, and I do hereby dissolve it, and require another general assembly, chosen in the same manner, to meet at Los Angeles, California, or at a place within the bounds of the Presbytery of California and chosen by that Presbytery, on the 21st day of July A. D. 1949."

The Moderator pronounced the Apostolic Benediction.

The sessions of the Assembly were concluded at 10:40 p.m., May 18, 1948.

ROBERT W. ECKARDT, Clerk of Assembly

STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Class of 1951 - Ministers: Edmund P. Clowney, Cornelius VanTil, Ph.D., Edward J. Young, Ph.D.
Elders: Arthur Armour, William A. DeJonge

Elders: Glenn A. Andreas, Rene D. Grove

Class of 1949 - Ministers: Calvin K. Cummings, Lawrence B. Gilmore, Th.D., Burton L. Goddard, Th.D.
Elders: Leslie Gibson, Albert S. O'Brien, Ph.D.

FOREIGN MISSIONS

Class of 1951 - Ministers: Charles H. Ellis, James W. Price, John H. Skilton
Elders: Edward Harting, William Brown

Class of 1950 - Ministers: John P. Clelland, John Murray, Bruce A. Coie
Elders: Lewis W. Roberts, Thomas G. Kay

Class of 1949 - Ministers: Edward L. Kellogg, Paul Woolley, Henry D. Phillips (Treasurer)
Elders: William A. Campbell, Lenville Hawkes


HOME MISSIONS AND CHURCH EXTENSION

Class of 1951 - Ministers: Calvin A. Busch, Glenn R. Coie, Herbert J. Hoeflinger
Elders: Samuel Pitt, Justice Bryan

Class of 1950 - Ministers: John P. Galbraith, Lewis J. Grotenhuis, Robert L. Vining
Elders: Cyrus Ferguson, Wilfred Moses (Treasurer)

Class of 1949 - Ministers: Robert L. Atwell, R. B. Kuiper, Arthur O. Olson
Elders: Frank U. Remein, Bernardus Vos

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ELECTED BY THE FOURTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH TO STUDY THE INCOMPREHENSIBILITY OF GOD, ETC.

Dear Brethren:

The Thirteenth General Assembly adopted the following motion: "Whereas the purity and the peace of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church are of the deepest concern to the General Assembly, and "Whereas 'to the General Assembly . . . belongs the power of deciding in all controversies regarding doctrine . . .' (Form of Government, XI, 5), and "Whereas there has appeared to be a difference in our Church concerning the Scriptural teaching pertaining to the doctrines of the incomprehensibility of God, the position of the intellect in reference to other faculties, the relation of divine sovereignty and human responsibility, and the free offer of the gospel, "Be it resolved that Messrs. Murray, Clowney, R. Gray, W. Young and Stonehouse be appointed to study these doctrines in the light of Scripture and the Westminster Standards in relation to all expressions of views on the doctrines that have appeared or may appear in connection with the discussion of the Complaint against the Presbytery of Philadelphia in the matter of the licensure and ordination of Dr. Gordon H. Clark, for the purpose of clarifying these matters, and report to the Fourteenth General Assembly" (Minutes, p. 112).

This committee labored diligently and submitted to the Fourteenth Assembly a report on the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God. The Fourteenth General Assembly, however, chiefly because of lack of time to hear and discuss the report, did not receive the report. Instead the Fourteenth General Assembly provided by motion: "That the docket be amended to eliminate the Report of the Committee to Study Certain Doctrines . . . " "that a committee of six be elected to continue the study . . . " and "that the committee be requested to report to the Fifteenth General Assembly" (Minutes, p. 44). After the request of Mr. Gray that his name be withdrawn, the committee was reconstituted by ballot with the following members: W. Young, Clowney, Murray, Kuschke, Stonehouse, and Hamilton (pp. 44 and 46).

The reconstituted committee now presents to the Fifteenth General Assembly its reports on the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God, the doctrine of the effect of regeneration on intellective activities of the soul, and the doctrine of the free offer of the gospel. In the case of its report on the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God, the committee has availed itself of materials which were prepared by the committee appointed by the Thirteenth General Assembly, but has made certain alterations in those materials. The committee voted to include as an "Appendix" a study prepared by one member of the committee on "The Incomprehensibility of God according to Certain 19th and 20th Century Theologians."

The committee has not been able to enter upon studies of the primacy of the intellect, or of the relation of God's sovereignty to human responsibility. The committee voted to submit to the General Assembly as minority reports, the "Minority Report on the Effect of Regeneration on Intellectual Activities of the Soul", signed by Mr. Young; and the "Minority Report on the Effect of Sin and Regeneration on the Intellectual Activities of the Soul" signed by Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Young, and by Mr. Clowney with reservation; and the "Minority Report on the Free Offer of the Gospel", signed by Mr. Young and Mr. Hamilton.

Respectfully submitted,

ARTHUR W. KUSCHKE, Jr.
Chairman of the Committee

Appendix 1
THE INCOMPREHENSIBILITY OF GOD

I—The Doctrine of the Incomprehensibility of God in the Reformed Theology of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

That incomprehensibility was regarded as one of the attributes of God in the Reformed theology of the Reformation period appears in the fact that it is stated to be such in the creeds of the period. It is coordinated with other attributes such as simplicity, spirituality, eternity, immutability, infinity, ineffability (Belgic Confession, Art. I; French Confession, Art. 1; Scots Confession, Art. 1; Westminster Confession, Chapt. II, Sect. I; The Larger Catechism, Q. 7; Bohemian Confession, Arts. II and III).

The question arises as to the precise meaning of the word “incomprehensibility”. This question is somewhat perplexed by the consideration that there does not appear to be complete uniformity in the creeds themselves and by the fact that, in contemporary usage, at least two distinct, though closely related, meanings were attached to the word when viewed as designating an attribute of God.

An instance of the lack of uniformity appears in the Larger Catechism when compared with the Westminster Confession. The Westminster Confession distinguishes between “immensity” and “incomprehensibility.” The Larger Catechism does not mention immensity. But the proof text given in the Catechism in support of incomprehensibility is one of the two given in the Confession in support of immensity, namely, I Kings 8:27. It is most reasonable, therefore, to conclude that what the Catechism means by “incomprehensible” the Confession denoted by “immense” and that, when the Catechism says God is incomprehensible, it means God is immense.

These two distinct meanings of the word incomprehensible as applied to God appear to spring from two distinct meanings of the Latin word comprehendo. This word in Latin has of course various shades of meaning. But the two meanings that give rise to these two distinct meanings of the word “incomprehensible” are (1) “to contain” (2) “to understand.” Immensity is related to the former; incomprehensibility, in the sense of incomprehensibility to the created understanding, to the latter.

It is difficult to ascertain the precise sense in which the word “incomprehensible” is used in the Belgic and French Confessions. In the Scots Confession, however, “incomprehensible” is distinguished from “unmeasurable,” which in the Latin is rendered by immensus. The Scots Confession may, therefore, be taken to use the word “incomprehensible” in the second sense and as relating, therefore, to the created understanding. The same is also undoubtedly true in the case of the Westminster Confession, both because of the distinction drawn and because of the proof texts used. The Bohemian Confession also in both Art. II and Art. III distinguishes between immensus and incomprehensibilis.

In any case, the term “incomprehensibility,” viewed as an attribute of God, is embedded in the Reformed Confessions and in some, particularly in the Westminster Confession, it is used with reference to that perfection of God by which He is incomprehensible to the created understanding.

In John Calvin there appears to be a double use of the word “incomprehensible” (incomprehensibilis); sometimes it is apparently used in the sense of immense, at other times in the sense of incomprehensible to created understanding. In Inst. I, xiii, 1 the former seems to be the meaning. Two considerations in support of this conclusion may be mentioned: (1) In this paragraph Calvin is dealing with the immensity (immensitas) and spirituality (spiritualis natura) of God as the two attributes that should restrain our carnal speculation and keep us within the bounds of sobriety. It is in this context that he uses the word “incomprehensible” (incomprehensibilis). (2) In one sentence he appears
to define incomprehensibility in terms of God's filling the earth. At least the latter is a consequence of the former. And he proceeds forthwith to accuse the Manicheans of disrupting the unity and restraining the immensity of God.

In obvious contrast, however, with this use of the word "incomprehensible" is Calvin's use of the word elsewhere in the Institutes and in other works. Notable in this regard are his comments on Romans 11:33, 34. He is dealing with the relation of the unrevealed will of God to the human understanding and it is in that context he uses the word "incomprehensible" (incomprehensibilis). The notion of immensity (immensitas) found in Institutes I, xiii, I cannot be applied to the use of the word "incomprehensible" here.

The question arises, however, as to the sense in which Calvin is using the word "incomprehensible" when it has reference to the human understanding. There are two alternatives, namely, "incapable of being fully understood" or "inapprehensible." The Latin word comprehendere has again two distinct meanings—to comprehend in the sense of exhaustive and complete understanding and to apprehend in the sense of intelligent cognition and apprehension. If Calvin is using the word "incomprehensible" in terms of the former we might render it by "incomprehensible," if in terms of the latter it would mean "inapprehensible."

The question here is not whether Calvin taught that all of God's revelation is incomprehensible to man in the sense that it transcends full comprehension. In his comments on Romans 11:34 he indicates that all of God's mysteries far exceed the comprehension of our mind. The question at this point is simply the meaning he attaches to the word "incomprehensible."

A careful examination will show, we believe, that he is using the word, not in the sense of that which transcends comprehensive understanding on the part of man but rather in the sense that the object is shut off from our understanding because God has not revealed it to us. Dealing, as he is, with the secret counsel of God he means that we have now no access to it and it is therefore shut off not simply from comprehensive understanding, but also from human apprehension.

This use of the word "incomprehensible" is illustrated in his treatise, The Eternal Predestination of God, particularly at the end. And the same concept of the incomprehensible and the same use of the word "incomprehensible" appears also in the Institutes (cf., especially, I, xvi, 9 and I, xvii, 2).

Not only does this meaning of the word appear in connection with his exposition respecting the secret counsel of God but also when he deals with the incomprehensibility of the divine essence (see Institutes I, v, 1; I, v, 9; I, x, 2; I, xi, 3). It can hardly be claimed that in these sections he is using the word "incomprehensible" merely in the sense of "transcending comprehensive understanding." It is rather used in the sense of "beyond human apprehension." For his insistence is that the nature of the divine essence is in a different category from the mysteries revealed in the Word. We do not know God as He is in Himself (quic sit apud se). It is in this sense and for that reason that the divine essence is "incomprehensible"—it is shut off from our apprehension and is, therefore, in our language, inapprehensible.

In the light of Calvin's use of the word "incomprehensible" it is not defensible to appeal to these passages that deal with the incomprehensibility of the divine essence and of God's secret counsel to show that Calvin taught the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God in the sense in which God is said to be incomprehensible in the Westminster Confession. For, if Calvin's use of the word "incomprehensible" were applied thus, it would mean that God is inapprehensible, a doctrine which Calvin did not teach. Greater care must be exercised, therefore, in citing and quoting these passages from Calvin in which he says God's essence and secret counsel are incomprehensible.

There are, however, two reservations that require to be made in connection with this use of the word "incomprehensible" in Calvin's works. (1) It does not
not follow that, in Calvin’s esteem, the reason for the inapprehensibility of the divine essence is the same as the reason for the inapprehensibility of the secret counsel. We must remember that for Calvin the divine essence respects the immanent being of God: the secret counsel respects His works and the government of the world. The former is essentially intrinsic, the latter is extrinsic to Himself. (2) When Calvin affirms that the divine essence is inapprehensible, he does not mean that we can make no predications concerning it. He does not mean that God has given us no revelation whatsoever respecting His essence. He says that God speaks but rarely of His essence (I, xiii, 1). But this implies that God has given us some revelation respecting His essence. Spirituality and immensity he speaks of as attributes which remove gross imaginations and suppress the audacity of the human mind (idem). And he also says that the divine essence is simple and indivisible (I, xiii, 2 and 22). There are therefore certain attributes of the essence which we may and must affirm. And there are, also, certain predications which must be made respecting the secret counsel. For these reasons we must conclude that the “inapprehensibility” affirmed of both the divine essence and the secret counsel does not mean complete absence of predication. The inapprehensibility affirmed is rather that of drawing a sharp line of distinction between the divine essence and the secret counsel, on the one hand, and the mysteries which God has so clearly revealed to us in His Word, on the other. Even though the latter far transcend human comprehension and in that sense are incomprehensible, yet it is in connection with the former that the limitations placed upon the human understanding are particularly conspicuous.

It must be admitted, however, that considerable difficulty attaches to Calvin’s use of the word “incomprehensible” as applied to the divine essence and to the secret counsel, particularly to the former. On the one hand, the meaning he attaches to the word in these connections is to be carefully distinguished from the meaning we attach to the word, namely, “incapable of being fully understood.” On the other hand, his use of the word, particularly as applied to the divine essence, does not mean the complete absence of predication. Consequently, though our word “inapprehensible” is the closest synonym, we must not associate with this word in these connections total inapprehensibility or even total inapprehension.

Some very important observations must be made at this point. When Calvin uses the word “incomprehensible” in the sense defined above, namely “inapprehensible,” he does not say God is incomprehensible. He speaks rather of the divine essence or secret counsel as incomprehensible. In this same sense it would be quite non-Calvinian to speak of God (without qualification) as incomprehensible. Hence, when in the Reformed Confessions, God is said to be “incomprehensible,” when incomprehensibility is predicated of God as an attribute, this cannot be in the sense in which Calvin uses the word, namely, “inapprehensible,” but rather in the sense of “beyond comprehensive understanding.” To aver, therefore, that God is incomprehensible except as He reveals Himself to us is neither in accord with Calvin’s usage nor is it in accord with the usage of the Reformed confessions. When incomprehensibility is viewed as an attribute of God, the evidence dealt with above shows that one of two things can be meant, either the immensity of God (as in Larger Catechism, Q. 7) or the incomprehensibility of God in the sense that He is not capable of being comprehensively understood or known by the human understanding.

In other Reformed theologians we do find that incomprehensibility is conceived of in terms of immensity as in Calvin’s Institutes I, xiii, 1 and in the Larger Catechism. But this usage is relatively infrequent. This notion probably appears in Amesius: Medulla Theologica, Cap. IV, “Concerning God and His Essence,” Section 46, and is probably implied in Gomarus: Concerning the True God, Section XXXVII. The most frequent and rather uniform meaning ascribed to incomprehensibility is the relation of God’s being and glory to the human under-
standing. The immensity of God is frequently appealed to as a reason or even the reason for God's incomprehensibility, but the latter is not defined in terms of immensity.

Of the two meanings that could attach to this notion of incomprehensibility, namely, "beyond comprehensive understanding" and "inapprehensible" it is the former that rules rather than the latter.

One of the clearest statements appears in Leydeker: Medulla Theologica, "De Deo," Cap. III, Sections XXIX, XXX. Here he treats of incomprehensibility under the attribute of infinity as the fourth respect under which the infinity of God may be viewed. He proceeds: "Fourthly, the infinity of God may also be considered in respect of the created intellect and so it is said, God is incomprehensible. Psal. 145:3; Job 11:9; Rom. 11:33,34; I Tim. 6:16 . . . wherefore to no creature in whatsoever state does a comprehensive and adequate knowledge of God belong; but only apprehensive and inadequate: from the infinity of the object and the disproportion between it and the finite subject.

"It does not follow from this, however, that our knowledge concerning God is erroneous, as if we knew otherwise than the truth itself is in God; for we know in God those perfections, which truly and formally are in Him; and at the same time we know that these perfections are in God by a more perfect mode than we are able to comprehend" (cf. also Leydeker's Synopsis Theologiae Christianae, Cap. VI, Sections XXXV, XXXVI, where, instead of subsuming incomprehensibility under the infinity of God, he rather coordinates incomprehensibility with the attributes of spirituality, immutability, and adorability).

Another equally clear and even fuller statement of what is meant by the incomprehensibility of God appears in John Owen: A Declaration of the Mystery of the Person of Christ, Chapt. V, Sections 1, 2 and 3 (Works, London, 1826, Vol. XII, pp. 85ff.).

"God in his own essence, being, and existence, is absolutely incomprehensible. His nature being immense, and all his holy properties essentially infinite, no creature can directly or perfectly comprehend them, or any of them. He must be infinite that can perfectly comprehend that which is infinite; wherefore God is perfectly known unto himself only; but as for us how little a portion is heard of him! Hence he is called the 'invisible God,' and said to dwell in light inaccessible. . . . Therefore we can have no direct intuitive notions or apprehensions of the divine essence, or its properties. Such knowledge is too wonderful for us. Whatever is pleaded for an intellectual vision of the essence of God in the light of glory, yet none pretend unto a possibility of an immediate full comprehension of it. . . . All the rational conceptions of the minds of men are swallowed up, and lost, when they would exercise themselves directly on that which is absolutely immense, eternal, infinite. . . . We have no means, no corporeal, no intellectual instrument or power for the comprehension of him. . . . That God is in himself absolutely incomprehensible unto us, is a necessary effect of our infinite distance from him. . . . But as to the being of God, and his subsistence in the Trinity of persons, we have no direct intuition unto them, much less comprehension of them. . . . Yet must it be granted that no mere creature, not the angels above, not the heaven of heavens, are meet or able to receive upon them such character of the divine excellencies as to be a complete satisfactory representation of the being and properties of God, unto us. They are all finite and limited and so cannot properly represent that which is infinite and immense. . . . Yet there are such effects of God's glory in them, such impressions of divine excellencies upon them, as we cannot comprehend nor search out unto perfection. How little do we conceive of the nature, glory, and power of angels? So remote are we from an immediate comprehension of the uncreated glory of God, as that we cannot fully apprehend, nor conceive aright, the reflection of it on creatures in themselves finite and limited."

Appendix 5
The following observations regarding Owen's statement may be made:

(a) Owen gives great prominence if not the primary place to the immensity of God as the reason for His incomprehensibility. But he does not equate the two. The latter is rather the relation of God's infinity and immensity to our apprehension or understanding.

(b) It is not simply the divine essence that is incomprehensible but also the sum-total of God's glory.

(c) Even the representations of the divine glory in and upon finite things are incomprehensible.

See also the following in elucidation and confirmation of this concept of incomprehensibility:


Richard Baxter: *Of the Knowledge of God*, Chap. IV, Sections 2 and 3; Chap. V, Section 1.


B. DeMoor: *Commentarius*, Cap. IV, Sections XI, XVIII.

J. Maccovius: *Loci Communes Theologici*, Cap. XVI.


Summary. The following summation of conclusions respecting the Reformed theology of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries may be presented.

(1) There is not complete uniformity in the use of the word "incomprehensible." Sometimes it means "immense" and at other times "incomprehensible to the created understanding."

(2) These two uses of the word are closely related. The latter springs from the former.

(3) The latter sense is, however, the more prevalent and uniform use. In this sense incomprehensibility has relevance and meaning only in reference to the finite intelligence.

(4) In this second sense there are also two distinct meanings, one of which may be rendered by our word "inapprehensible," the other by "incomprehensible." In the sense of "inapprehensible" the word is not applied to God without qualification. In Calvin's works this meaning occurs, and it is applied by him to the secret counsel of God and to the divine essence. The meaning "incomprehensible," as distinguished from "inapprehensible," is predicated of God without any qualification.

(5) This meaning "incomprehensible," as applied to God without qualification, is the prevailing usage. Its import is that we cannot have a complete or "adequate" or exhaustive knowledge of God.

(6) This incapacity resides in our finitude and creaturehood.

(7) It is not simply the divine essence that is "incomprehensible" but also the glory of God as revealed. The mysteries revealed in the Word far transcend the comprehension of our minds.

(8) When incomprehensibility is predicated of God as an attribute one of two things is intended, either "immensity" or "incomprehensibility" (as distinguished from "inapprehensibility"). In either of these senses God is absolutely incomprehensible.

(9) The Larger Catechism predicates incomprehensibility of God apparently in the former sense. the Westminster Confession in the latter. In both there is no qualification, and this attribute is coordinated with other attributes such as omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence.

Appendix 6
II—Scriptural Doctrine

1. Broad Foundation

The doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God is taught in Scripture both by implication and by direct statement. Were there no express formulations of this truth, the revelation of the lofty transcendence and metaphysical holiness of the God of Scripture would require us to understand this aspect of the glory of the Creator in relation to His creatures. But in addition to being everywhere presupposed and implied, this truth does find explicit expression in both the Old and New Testaments.

No adequate analysis of the revelation of the nature of God, which demands this doctrine, can be attempted in this report, but all the aspects of the divine transcendence have bearing on the incomprehensibility of God. God as God, in all His attributes, surpasses the comprehension of created intellects. The doctrine of incomprehensibility describes the relation of God's being and attributes to the grasp of created knowledge. It is not an essential attribute of God in itself, for apart from created intelligence it would have no application, but it indicates an essential condition of the knowledge of the creature necessarily flowing from the absolute glory of God.

The transcendence of God as the absolute Creator is the theme of the first verse of Scripture, and the development of the proposition of Gen. 1:1 in the first two chapters of the Bible lays the foundation upon which all of revelation stands (cf. Isa. 29:14-16). As revelation unfolds, the exaltation of God above nature, man, and the false idols of man's manufacture is presented in gathering power and distinctness.

That God's dwelling is exalted above the created universe is a presupposition of the earliest revelation, and His power over nature, manifested in the catastrophe of the flood, is implied in the very names God, and Lord (Adonai) by which He is designated. In the patriarchal period the name El Elyon (Gen. 14:18) indicates His transcendence above creation, and He reveals Himself as El Shaddai (Gen. 17:1;35:11) the God who overcomes nature to bring about His purposes of grace, the God of the miracle. This absolute sovereignty over nature remains throughout Scripture as characteristic of the true God, the God of marvelous works and wonders, Whose path is in the storm, Who laid the foundations of the earth, stretched out the heavens, marked the boundaries of the seas and weighed the mountains in His balance. At His rebuke the earth dissolves and the heavens are rolled up as a scroll, but He remains, eternal, for Him, and through Him, and unto Him are all things. Christ manifests this Sovereignty over creation in His miracles, and His deity is affirmed in terms of His Creatorhood as the One Who made all things, and in Whom all things consist.

The glorious Being of God is also exalted above the imaginations of the idol-worshipers. He is the only God, and the living God (Dt. 4:39; 82:39; Josh. 1:11; 3:11; I Sam. 2:2; II Sam. 7:22,26; I Kings 8:23-27). This strand of revelation reaches sublime heights in the major prophets where the materiality, limitation, and powerlessness of the idols become a foil for the triumphant proclamation of the transcendent spirituality, infinitude, and omnipotence of the Sovereign God (Cf. espec. Isaiah, chapters 40-46).

Of closer pertinence to our subject is the transcendence of God over men. This appears most characteristically in the presentation of the holiness and glory of God. These closely connected (1) attributes of God are both characterized by an intensity of meaning which far more than saturates the human understanding, and their significance is conveyed by figure and symbol rather

(1) Glory may be conceived as the out-going, the operation, of holiness, whether in the intra-Trinitarian sphere or in relation to the creatures.

Appendix 7
than by direct statement. Fallen man's consciousness of sin cannot but empha-
size, when quickened by grace, that aspect of holiness which contrasts most
sharply with the guilt and pollution of his condition. It is both fitting and
necessary that the Scriptural representation of the holiness of God lays primary
emphasis on God's moral holiness as the Righteous One. This limited signifi-
cance is derived, however, from a wider meaning of holiness which comprehends
not only the moral excellence of God, but the transcendence of all His Being.
Isaiah beholds a vision of the Lord high and lifted up, and is immediately over-
come with the consciousness of the pollution of his sin before the holy God, but
the seraphim, who have no need for the cleansing coal from the altar, also
cover their faces with their wings and cry, Holy, Holy, Holy!

The awe invariably produced by the manifestations of the holiness of the
glory of God in the history of redemption cannot be isolated from a perception
of the metaphysical holiness of God which appears even in those revelations
which primarily confronted man as a sinner with the Righteous One, such as
those connected with the giving and administration of the ceremonial law (see
Ex. 3:11-15; 15:11; 40:34-38; Dt. 4:24; I Sam. 2:2; 6:19; Lev. 10:3, etc.).

The physical manifestations of the presence and glory of God, in whatever
form, have the effect of stunning the human senses. The fierce glory of Sinai
reflected from the face of Moses is more than the people can bear; the prophets
Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel are smitten down in their visions; Paul falls down
blinded on the road to Damascus; and John falls at the feet of the glorified
Christ as one dead. It is significant, in this connection, that God's presence at
Sinai is in the thick darkness (Ex. 20:21, cf. 24:2; 24:16; I Kings 8:12), and that
in the appearance to Elijah God is not in the rock-rending wind, the earthquake,
or in the fire, but in the "sound of gentle stillness." The ineffability of God in
sensible representations is of course directly taught in these manifestations, and
that lesson is applied in the matter of graven images: Israel saw no form at
Sinai, and is therefore to make no image (Dt. 4:12,15). But the symbolism of
such manifestations is also important. When Moses, after requesting to be
shown God's glory, is granted a vision of God's back, after His glory has
passed by, and told that no man can see His face and live, the symbolism of
the act clearly declares that Moses cannot possibly bear to receive a revelation
of the full essential glory of God. Cf. also Dt. 5:25; I Sam. 6:19; Judges 6:11-24;
13:22-23; I John 4:12; John 1:18. This lesson again appears in symbolic lan-
guage in I Tim. 6:15: "dwelling in light unapproachable, whom no man hath
seen, nor can see."

The manifestation of the fearful glory and holiness of God so characterizes
the revelation of the Old Testament that the "fear of Jehovah" becomes the
typical phrase to express piety (e.g. I Kings 18:3). This fear is not paralyzed
terror, however, but a religious perception of the nature of Jehovah, leading to
a life of obedience to His commands, and worship of His glory.

The transcendence of God over man appears not only when man is confronted
with the holiness and glory of God, but is affirmed in many contrasts between
the attributes of God and the characteristics of men. "God is not a man" that
he should repent (Num. 23:19; I Sam. 15:29; Ezek. 24:14), "I am God, and not
man" (Hos. 11:9), the perfection (Ex. 15:11), self-existence (Ps. 33:11; 115:3,
Is. 40:1-31; Dan. 4:35; John 5:26; Acts 17:25; Rev. 4:11), immutability (Num.
23:19; Ps. 102:27; Mal. 3:6; Heb. 6:17; Jas. 1:17), eternity (Dt. 33:27; Ps. 90:2;
102:27; Ex. 3:14; John 8:58; Rev. 1:4) and immensity (I Kings 8:27; Ps. 139:
7-10; Isa. 66:1; Jer. 23:23; Acts 17:27,28) of God all reveal Him as transcendent.
He is sovereign, omnipotent, omniscient, holy, true, and merciful in absolute and
original fashion far surpassing any approach to any of these qualities as they
are found among men.

When the fullness of Being of such a God is compared with the span of
finite intelligence, the disproportion between so transcendent an Object and so

Appendix 8
limited an instrument demands the doctrine of incomprehensibility. The history of redemption bears out this doctrine wherever the finite creature is confronted by his Creator and the course of revelation brings this doctrine to express formulation.

2. Grouping of Various Elements

The following passages are the chief explicit formulations of Scripture of the doctrine of Incomprehensibility Gen. 32:29; Judges 13:2-23; Neh. 9:5; Job 5:9; 9:10; 11:7-12; 26:14; 37:23; cf. 42:3; Psalms 36:6; 40:5; 92:5; 139:6; 145:3; 147:5; cf. 131:1; Is. 9:6; 40:12-28; 55:8-11; Rom. 11:33; I Cor. 2:10. Cf. also Rom. 9:19; John 6:44; Matt. 11:25-27.

For convenience in studying these passages we group them according to leading words and ideas:


These passages are grouped about the word "wonderful," the Hebrew root pil'. The adjective, pil' occurs only twice in the Old Testament, in the two first references given above. The noun, pele' is used in Is. 9:6. The verb, pala' occurs frequently, and lexicographers think it probable that it is derived from a root meaning to separate, with the sense of separating from the ordinary. The verb has, in its various voices, the following meanings: Niphal: be surpassing, extraordinary; Hiphil: do a hard thing, do wonderfully, marvelously; Hithpael: show oneself marvelous—i.e. act inexplicably (Job 10:6). The noun means wonder, and is used for God's miracles and marvelous providences. (Cf. Ex. 15: 11; Is. 29:14). In Is. 9:6 Christ is promised as a "Wonder of a Counsellor," or a "Wonder, and a Counsellor." Brown, Driver, & Briggs, the standard Hebrew-English lexicon, gives the meaning of the adjective used in Ps. 139:6 as wonderful, incomprehensible. Hebrew is not a technical language, but the use of this root and of the adjective appears to warrant this translation. "Such knowledge is too wonderful (incomprehensible), I cannot attain unto it." The Psalmist has been marveling at God's omniscience, and here declares that he can only wonder at it, that it passes his comprehension. However, the adjective cannot very well be pushed to mean inapprehensible, in view of the usage of other forms of the root. Ps. 119:129 declares, "thy testimonies are wonderful, therefore doth my soul keep them. The opening of thy words giveth light: it giveth understanding to the simple." The noun is used here, and translated by the English adjective "wonderful." "Inapprehensible" would here be out of the question: obviously the Psalmist cannot be saying, "Thy testimonies are completely un-understandable; therefore doth my soul keep them," etc. And the broader term "wonderful" does fit the thought better than the word "incomprehensible" here. A similar situation is found in verse 18 of Psalm 119: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderful things out of thy law."

In Judges 13:18 the Angel of Jehovah replies to Manoah, "Wherefore askest thou after my name, seeing it is wonderful?" The RV margin translates the adjective here "secret." Manoah asks the question under the mistaken impression that the Angel is only a man of God, a prophet, and the reply of the angel points him to His supernatural character. The answer may also imply that Manoah could not receive the revelation of the Name of God, which in Scripture represents the very nature of God, either because of his personal lack of discernment, or because of the essential glory of that Name. If the latter is the sense, this passage would still agree in teaching with the account of the theophany before Moses in Ex. 34, where, although God does proclaim His Name, rather than withhold it as here, yet the symbolism indicates that Moses could not hear a full revelation of the glory of God's nature and Name.

Just as the works of God in the world of nature surpass human comprehension and are wonderful—His mighty deliverances, His miraculous working—
so the attributes of God, of which the miraculous works are but earthly sensible manifestations are wonderful, and excite marvelling worship in the redeemed.


Psalm 145:3—"His greatness is unsearchable." Lit. "To his greatness there is nothing of searching." The noun used here for searching haqar is from the same root as the verb haqar to search. The verb is used in a literal sense of searching through the land for the scattered bones of the dead, of the exploring search of a city, of mining; and in a figurative sense of searching a subject, or a man's heart. Ps. 139:1 uses it of the Lord's all-penetrating search of the human heart; Lam. 3:40 of the searching of self-examination. The noun has a similar use: in Judges 5:16 it refers to the great searchings of heart of Reuben at the watercourses. In Job 38:16: "Hast thou entered into the springs of the Sea? Or hast thou walked in the recesses of the deep?"—the same noun is translated by "recesses." Here the searchings, i.e., the thing to be searched, implies not only the ranges of the deep, but the inmost, most profound parts in particular, being parallel in idea to the "springs of the sea." The searching here indicated by the noun is of the most intensive and exhaustive kind, "deep-searching," an all-penetrating examination. The noun is also used in Proverbs 25:3, in the same phrase as occurs in Ps. 145:3. In the Proverbs passage, the heart of kings is said to be unsearchable. This could not very well mean that it is impossible to gain any knowledge whatsoever about the heart of kings, but must mean that the range of the heart of kings, "as the heavens for height, and the earth for depth" cannot be searched out. It is the exhaustive searching which is impossible. Ps. 145:3, like Ps. 139:6 teaches the incomprehensibility, but not the inapprehensibility of God. The same force of "searching" appears in Job 11:7, where Zophar declares, "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? (Lit. "unto the end of Shaddai wilt thou reach?" i.e. so as to know him fully. The root meaning of the noun for end, completeness here comes from the idea of enclosure). The parallelism of this verse again indicates that the searching spoken of is a deep-searching of an exhaustive character. The RV margin gives as an alternate translation of this first clause "Canst thou find out the deep things of God?"

The verb to find out, which appears here is used also in Job 37:23, "Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out." Brown, Driver & Briggs give the meaning as used in these passages as find out thoroughly, explore. In Ecclesiastes 3:11; 8:17 (cf. 7:24) this word is used of finding out all the works of God under the sun, in the sense of attaining to a comprehensive, adequate understanding of them. Matza' is a very common verb in Scripture and may be used of finding, finding out or attaining to in a wide range of meanings.

This truth of the unsearchability of the Almighty is taught in the other Job passages, and in Isaiah 40:28. It is also emphatically asserted by Paul in Romans 11:33. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!" Paul looks with awe upon the inexhaustible abundance—the depth of the riches of the knowledge of God. (Cf. I Cor. 2:10). The judgments of God are unsearchable—aneksereunetos. His ways past tracing out—aneksixniasi. Paul has just been revealing, according to the wisdom given him of God, many things hard to be understood, as Peter says. The judgments of God with respect to Israel have been the particular subject of this revelation. He surely does not mean that we can have no knowledge of the judgments he has just been discussing. On the other hand it is plain throughout these chapters, how much there is that surpasses our understanding, and Paul here is emphatically asserting that the full depth and significance of these judgments of God must forever escape us. The parallel term—"past tracing out"—is used in the Septuagint in
Job 5:9; 9:10 and 34:24. Paul's worshiping statement here is drawn from the heart of the O. T. revelation of the incomprehensibility of God. It is an absolute incomprehensibility. The formulations of unsearchability do not allow us to suppose that God's greatness is merely temporarily beyond our grasp, or that our sin has clouded what would otherwise be an adequate knowledge of His nature. It is the greatness, the sovereignty, the deity of God which is unsearchable, and that unsearchability must remain for all creatures so long as He is the Great Jehovah, the Sovereign El Shaddai, the Lord God.

Psalm 36:6, "Thy judgments are a great deep," and Psalm 92:5, "Thy thoughts are very deep," are two additional passages which teach the doctrine of unsearchability, by implication, if not by direct statement.


4. God's name is exalted above all blessing and praise. Neh. 9:5.

This statement occurs in one of the most eloquent passages of the Bible, where the history of the Old Testament is summed up, and God's glory and praise is seen manifested in it, despite the repeated sin and failure of His people. His name is glorified and praised in the passage, but no blessing or praise can adequately extol His High and Holy Name.

5. God's thoughts and ways are exalted above man's. Is. 55:8, 9.

The wicked and the unrighteous is invited to forsake his ways and thoughts and return unto the Lord, who will have mercy and abundantly pardon. The first contrast is that of the righteousness of the thoughts and ways of Jehovah as over against the people's sin. A second exaltation of the thoughts and ways of the Lord lies in their unimagined mercy and grace. Still a third contrast may be implied by the succeeding verses in that the thoughts and ways of Jehovah have a sovereign efficacy unknown to man: the Word of the Lord is unfailingly productive of God's good pleasure. Here again the extreme of exaltation, the heights of heaven) is ascribed to the thoughts and ways of the Lord.

From the evidence of Scripture the absolute character of God's incomprehensibility emerges clearly. Transcendent above the universe He framed; transcendent above man whom He formed in His image; transcendent in living reality and truth above the loftiest imaginations of men and the mightiest angelic beings of His creation, God in all His attributes surpasses infinitely the comprehension of finite intelligence. No fullness of revelation given to man can possibly diminish the reality of this truth. God is not more or less incomprehensible as He is more or less known, for no matter how much a creature may know of Him, it is still absolutely true that he cannot comprehend Him. This remains the essential limitation of human thought, not in an arbitrary or mechanical sense, that man's knowledge is brought to a certain line beyond which an advance is not permitted (although God's sovereignty may impose such a barrier in His own good pleasure), but in the sense of the essential disproportion between the infinite fullness, the depth and height and breadth of the riches of the being and knowledge of God and the capacity of the intelligence of a finite and temporal creature.

The doctrine of incomprehensibility is never expressed in Scripture in such a way as to deny the knowability of God. It never becomes a doctrine of inapprehensibility. There is no support in Scripture for a dialectical position that would polarize a Deus Absconditus (Hidden God) and a Deus Revelatus (Revealed God). This doctrine does not negate or cancel in advance the revelation of positive knowledge concerning God found in the Bible. The atmosphere of Scripture is not the atmosphere of negative theology, and the doctrine of incomprehensibility found in Scripture is not expressed in the reckless, meaningless and self-contradictory language of those who pervert transcendence into an abstract, boundless, Otherness. (2)

Appendix 11
On the other hand, Scripture plainly indicates that human knowledge of God from the very outset is a knowledge bounded by incomprehensibility and that the more we know of Him, the more we are confronted with the measureless vastness of His glory, the infinite perfection of His being, and the transcendence of His counsels (cf. Job 26:14).


The revelation of the New Testament presupposes fully the revelation of the Old Testament, and thus also the doctrine of God set forth in the Old Testament. Neither in the teaching of Jesus nor in that of the apostles is there a new doctrine of God. The God whom Jesus proclaims is the Lord of heaven and earth (Mt. 11:25) and the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Mt. 22:32). The distinctiveness of the New Testament revelation is, therefore, only relative; it is the distinctiveness which is involved in the recognition that the God of creation and of the covenant revealed himself afresh in word and deed in the establishment of the new covenant. This revelation of the new covenant, as the fulfillment of the prophetic revelation of the old covenant, possesses an eschatological character. It heralds the arrival and expounds the significance of the coming of a new order through the manifestation of the power of God. Thus that new revelation may be subsumed under the doctrine of the coming of the kingdom of God. It is a revelation through signs and wonders which, in association with the revelation through words spoken with divine authority, bespeak the presence of God and his action in the accomplishment of his redemptive purposes. Though the revelation of the new covenant may be characterized in terms of the message of the kingdom and the miracles which disclosed the presence of the kingdom, it may more pointedly still be described as the revelation "in a Son" (Heb. 1:2). The revelation of the old covenant was concerning the son of God, Jesus Christ, but that of the new was a revelation which possessed finality and absoluteness because of the very presence of the Son of God. The incarnation of Jesus Christ is then the great fact and act of revelation with which the New Testament has to do.

That the manifestation of the Son of God among men constituted a glorious fact of divine revelation does not require special emphasis here. "The people that sat in darkness saw a great light" (Mt. 4:16). "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. . . . Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son (or, God only begotten), who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (Jn. 1:14-18). See also Mt. 11:25-27; 13:13-17; 16:17. These passages show that Jesus Christ, his words and works, constituted an objective revelation of God. But they also teach that there was an adequate apprehension of the revelation on the part of some only, namely on the part of the babes who were given eyes to see according to the good-pleasure of God.

Matthew 11:25-27

This passage, and the parallel passage in Luke 10:21,22, bears significantly upon the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God. It emphatically teaches indeed the possibility and the reality of true knowledge of God and of His Son Jesus Christ, a knowledge based upon revelation, an apprehension granted by the Father and the Son in their good-pleasure. The things hid from the wise and understanding are revealed unto babes. The Son knows the Father but also men may know Him.

In spite of the accent which is placed upon the fact of revelation and the possibility and reality of human knowledge of God, however, there is another (2) It need hardly be said that the God of Scripture is not incomprehensible to Himself: the knowledge which man can never attain to, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have eternally. Cf. Mt. 11:25-27; I Cor. 2:9-16.

Appendix 12
aspect of the passage that gives it pertinence to the present subject. For it clearly is concerned with the transcendence of the Son of God in the sphere of knowledge. What the passage states concerning the Son, in connection with what it states about the Father, constitutes it a completely unambiguous evidence of the ontological sonship, or deity, of Christ. It has been thus acknowledged because of the exact correspondence and reciprocity of the Father and the Son which is set forth.

This correspondence finds partial expression in what is said concerning the revelational activity of the Father and the Son. The Son reveals as well as the Father. And both do so in the exercise of their sovereignty. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou . . . didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight" (Mt. 11:25). "Neither doth any know the Father save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him" (11:27). The Son as well as the Father is described as sovereign revealer, and this description is a significant evidence of the deity of Christ.

What is said concerning the sovereignty of the Son's action, and what is affirmed concerning the Son's revealing activity, however, are far from exhausting the significance of the passage in this connection. The very heart and center of the passage is reached only when one considers what is said concerning the Son's knowledge in relation to the Father's knowledge. The revealing activity in the case of the Son, and evidently also in the case of the Father, is based upon the knowledge which is predicated. The terms in which the Son's knowledge of the Father and the Father's knowledge of the Son are described correspond so exactly, and are so extraordinary, that subordination of the Son to the Father is ruled out. "No one knoweth the Son save the Father; neither doth any know the Father save the Son" (v. 27). With an eye upon the whole of the Biblical revelation it is perhaps not extraordinary that the Father should be said to possess an absolutely exclusive knowledge of the Son. It has depths and heights which place it beyond human reach. Since it is divine knowledge there is no knowledge that is comparable with it. Surely all this is involved in the statement that "No one knoweth the Son save the Father."

In the context of the history of revelation, the more extraordinary feature of this passage is that Jesus immediately adds the stupendous claim that "neither doth any know the Father save the Son." The very terms that are used to set forth the absolutely exclusive knowledge of the Father concerning the Son are now employed to describe the Son's knowledge of the Father. The Son's exclusive knowledge of the Father, then, like the Father's exclusive knowledge of the Son, is a divine knowledge to which no human knowledge of God can be compared.

When now, on the background and alongside of such affirmations of exclusive knowledge, the passage speaks of human knowledge of the Father, it is clear that a most significant distinction is in view. It is crucial to gauge this distinction accurately. (1) The difference does not concern the object of knowledge. The Father is known by the Son and He may be known by men. Since the distinction does not concern the object known, it must relate to the difference in the apprehension of the object. (2) It is clear that the difference in apprehension goes beyond the fact that human apprehension is based upon revelation. The Son indeed is the revealer and men know only as the Son willeth to reveal. But the apprehension of the Son is described as an exclusive knowledge, and hence the difference in relation to revelation does not describe it fully. The knowledge of the Son is itself an incomparable knowledge which he possesses as Son just as the knowledge of the Father is an incomparable knowledge which he possesses as Father. This goes far beyond saying that the knowledge of the Son and of the Father is not an acquired knowledge. (3) The distinction between the Son's knowledge and human knowledge which is drawn

Appendix 13
here is not viewed in terms of the extent of knowledge. The Son's knowledge is not described as complete in contrast to the partial knowledge which men possess. It does not take the form that the Son knows all about the Father whereas men may know only certain propositions about the Father. (4) The Son's apprehension as an absolutely exclusive apprehension is a divine knowledge; the apprehension on the part of men necessarily does not possess that exclusive, divine character which has been shown to be the mark of the Son's knowledge. The contrast in view involves the contrast between the divine subject (the Son) and human subjects, for the exclusiveness of the knowledge of the Son is bound up with his being the Son, that is, a divine person. The very evidence, therefore, which establishes the ontological sonship, or absolute deity, of Jesus demands the conclusion that a distinction in ontology between God and men is basic to the affirmations concerning the Son's knowledge of the Father and human knowledge of the Father. The Son knows the Father on the divine level of understanding: men may know the Father from the human level, the level of their creaturehood.

The teaching of Mt. 11:25-27 finds significant parallels in the Gospel according to John. There, too, the fact of the revelation of God through Jesus Christ is a conspicuous theme. The possibility and actuality of knowledge of God on the part of men is also emphatically set forth. “The Word became flesh . . . and we beheld his glory . . . he hath declared him” (John 1:14-18). “If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also; from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him . . . He that hath seen me hath seen the Father also” (14:7,9). “And this is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ” (17:3; cf. 17:25f; 1:10; 16:3).

But a further significant point of contact between the Matthean passage and the teaching in John is found in the place given to the affirmation of the deity of Christ in connection with the subject of the knowledge of God. Jesus identifies knowledge of himself with knowledge of the Father: “if ye knew me, ye would know my Father also” (8:19; cf. 10:15; 14:7,9). With the same intent, Jesus uses the verb “see” when he says, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (14:9). Thus he makes himself one with the Father.

Jesus teaches, moreover, that the Son has an exclusive knowledge of the Father: “Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he that is from God; he hath seen the Father” (6:46). “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son (or, “God only begotten”), who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” (1:18). In denying, then, that God hath been seen, the concern is not with the spirituality and invisibility of God. If the passages just quoted had to do with the invisibility of God, they would not state that the Son had seen God (cf. 14:7,9). These passages teach, accordingly, that the Son has an exclusive knowledge of God. The Son as the Son, as God only begotten, being in the bosom of the Father, being from the Father—in short, because of his absolutely unique relation to God as the eternal Son—alone hath seen and known God. It is on the background of this teaching concerning the deity of Christ, expressed in terms of the Son's original, essential and exclusive knowledge of God, that the Gospel sets forth the fact of revelation.

Alongside these truths the Gospel nevertheless teaches that men may see God (14:9; 11:40). The problem presented by the juxtaposition of the exclusiveness of the Son's knowledge of God and the affirmation of knowledge on the part of men is identical with that presented in connection with Mt. 11:25-27. And the answer must be found in the same terms. The ontological Son knows God as the Son, and therefore his knowledge is exclusive. As the knowledge of a divine person the knowledge itself is divine. When men nevertheless are said to know God, the distinctiveness of their apprehension can be explained only in terms of the distinctiveness of their nature as human beings.

Appendix 14
Paul's ascription of praise to God in Romans 11:33f. is a crucial passage. In the translation of the ARV, it reads: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? . . ."
The passage has as its immediate background a consideration of certain judgments and ways of God which centers attention upon the marvelous disclosures of the mercy of God already realized and yet to be manifested. Although the ascription of praise is not isolated from the consideration of the divine revelation, it should be recognized that it does not consist of praise or thanksgiving for revelation. Basically the passage is an acknowledgment of the transcendence of God, and has largely to do with the transcendence of God in the sphere of knowledge. Turning from the consideration of specific manifestations of the justice and mercy of God, the apostle ascends here to a general contemplation of the transcendent knowledge and judgments of God. In spite of his own lack of comprehension, the devout child of God may rest in confidence in God whose knowledge is unfathomable and whose judgments are unsearchable.

In our judgment the apostle is not concerned here with the distinction between the secret counsel of God and his revealed will in the Scriptures. He is not affirming that, because God has not chosen to reveal it, the secret counsel is unsearchable. The contrast between the secret and revealed will is not drawn here. But certain affirmations are made concerning the wisdom, knowledge, judgments and ways of God in absolute terms. The wisdom and knowledge of God, without reservation or qualification, are said to possess inexhaustible wealth, or, in other words, to be unfathomable. His judgments are said to be such that they cannot be searched out; they are unfathomable. His ways cannot be traced out; they are inexorably. As Hodge comments in this connection, "It is because God is infinite in his being, and incomprehensible in his judgments and in his ways, that he is an exhaustible source of knowledge and blessedness."

It is further to be observed that the transcendence of the divine knowledge in view in this passage is not that of the divine omniscience as contrasted with the partial character of human knowledge. The judgments and ways of God, even when the subject of revelation, and even when considered individually, are regarded as unfathomable and inexorable. There inheres in them a quality of divinity, as judgments and ways of the infinite and transcendent God, which makes human comprehension impossible.

This interpretation of Rom. 11:33 receives support from the opening words of v. 34, which depends on Isaiah 40:13. The rhetorical question, "Who hath known the mind of the Lord?", emphatically implies that no one hath known the mind of the Lord. This is said without qualification; it is not qualified, for example, by making knowledge depend on revelation. The connotation of the verb "known" is therefore, a crucial matter. If it means "apprehended," the question would amount to a declaration of the inapprehensibility or unknowability of God. Since, however, such a view would contradict the entire thrust of the Scriptures, it must be understood in the sense of "comprehended." The question is equivalent, then, to a declaration that the mind of God is incomprehensible. When the language of v. 34 is applied to v. 33, it carries the implication that no one hath known (i.e., comprehended) the wisdom, knowledge, judgments and ways of God.

I Corinthians 2:6-16

I Cor. 2:6-16 may appropriately be considered in this connection, especially since a point of contact is found in the fact that v. 16 also employs the language of Isa. 40:13. It must be acknowledged that the main emphasis of the Corinthian passage differs sharply from that of Romans 11:33f. For I Cor. 2 is largely occupied with the glorious wisdom and knowledge communicated to the children of God rather than with the transcendence of the divine knowledge and
with incomprehensibility. The wisdom that hath been hidden, which none of the rulers of the world hath known, the things which entered not into the heart of man, that which the natural man doth not receive and cannot know—these God hath revealed through the Spirit. And those who are spiritual, possessing the mind of Christ, know the things freely given of God.

But even in this context, however much the wisdom and knowledge possessed by the regenerate may be emphasized, the wisdom and knowledge in view stand in an entirely different relation to men than to God. To receive the Spirit is not to qualify men to know as the Spirit knows; to have the mind of Christ is not to know in the exclusive and exhaustive way in which Christ knows. The Spirit, who reveals the things of God to men, has an exclusive knowledge of the things of God in virtue of His being the Spirit (v. 11). The Spirit alone enjoys the intimacy of communion with God which makes it possible for Him “to search all things, yea, the deep things of God” (v. 10). Hence, when in v. 16, Paul says, “For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct him,” he is not interpreting the language of Isa. 40:13 differently from the force which it has been observed to have in Romans 11:34. In quoting this passage Paul’s point is not, in effect, that the natural man does not know the mind of the Lord. Nor is he saying that men who have not come into contact with the divine revelation do not know the mind of the Lord. But he must be understood as setting forth the astounding truth that God is so transcendent in knowledge that he is incomprehensible. Nevertheless, he adds, they have the mind of Christ. The children of God, being in union with Christ and having received the Spirit, have a true apprehension of God. It is this apprehension of the incomprehensible God which gives the spiritual man the advantage over the unregenerate (v. 15).

I Corinthians 13:12

In another passage in I Corinthians, Paul apparently goes even beyond the teaching of I Cor. 2 in emphasizing the privileges of the children of God in the sphere of knowledge. When in I Cor. 13:12, he says, “For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known,” he might appear to teach that in heaven the knowledge of men will be indistinguishable from the divine knowledge. If taken literally, the passage would teach that man’s knowledge will be as complete and exhaustive as God’s. But such an interpretation would bring the verse into sharp conflict with Scripture as a whole. Paul is indeed stressing the glorious privileges of the people of God in the age to come. Their knowledge will correspond to the time “when that which is perfect is come” (v. 10). But, on the analogy of Scripture, a distinction must be drawn between the perfection of God and the perfection of man in heaven, and this distinction must be regarded as implicitly qualifying the assertion in v. 12. As Charles Hodge says, “As we are required to be perfect (Mt. 5:48) as our Father in heaven is perfect, we may be said to know even as we are known. We may be perfect in our narrow sphere as God is perfect in his and yet the distance between him and us remains infinite.” Hodge, accordingly, interprets this passage in the context of the Biblical doctrines of God and man. As there are two levels of being, there are two levels of perfection. Even in heaven man remains a creature. His understanding will always remain that of a creature. In the perfection of his creaturely knowledge in heaven, he will realize as never before the transcendence of God.

III—Formulation of the Doctrine of God’s Incomprehensibility

I. Incomprehensibility is not an attribute essential to the being and knowledge of God; His being and perfection are not incomprehensible to Himself. This at-
tribute has respect only to the relation of God’s being and perfection to created reality. In this sense it is a relative attribute.

II. Incomprehensibility expresses the relation of the being and perfection of God to created rational intelligence and has relevance or meaning only as we contemplate the finite understanding.

III. Though incomprehensibility is, in the sense defined, a relative attribute and though it is only within the sphere of finite intelligence that it has meaning, nevertheless incomprehensibility springs from and rests upon the transcendent uniqueness and distinctness that belong to God in virtue of His own essential being and perfection.

IV. Incomprehensibility does not mean that God is inapprehensible or unknowable. It presupposes, rather, knowledge of God on the part of rational creatures. And this knowledge presupposes creation in the divine image and divine revelation. It is, therefore, only within the sphere of rational intelligence confronted with divine revelation that the incomprehensibility of God has relevance or meaning.

V. Incomprehensibility means that within that sphere of revelation and of rational intelligence finite creatures cannot have a complete, or exhaustive, or comprehensive or “adequate” knowledge of God. We cannot search or find out God to perfection. All-penetrating examination or understanding always completely escapes human capacity.

VI. In this sense God is absolutely incomprehensible. He is not more or less incomprehensible as He is more or less known. There is always an essential disproportion between the infinite transcendence of the being and perfection of God on the one hand, and the capacity of finite intelligence, on the other. And this transcendence is not simply temporarily beyond the finite grasp; God’s greatness is essentially and eternally unsearchable.

VII. God is incomprehensible not only in His essential being and intradivine relations; He is also incomprehensible in all His perfections, counsels, judgments, ways and works. God is incomprehensible even in His self-revelation. Yet no created thing is incomprehensible. All creaturely knowledge, whether of the creature or of the Creator, is limited. But it is a specific limitation of creaturely knowledge of God which is referred to by the term “incomprehensible.”

VIII. Like all His other perfections, God’s knowledge and understanding are incomprehensible. He knows Himself and all things in a way that is unique and exclusive and with all-penetrating fullness and exhaustiveness that are never predicable of finite knowledge or understanding. The qualities of divinity inherent in His knowledge and understanding so that His knowledge is too high for us and we cannot attain unto it. By revelation and illumination we may truly know God and have communion with Him. Yet our knowledge is always from the human level, the level of creaturehood. God’s knowledge is always on the divine level and possesses the divine qualities that can never attach to ours. God is perfect in knowledge and this perfection that covers the whole of His knowledge must be applied to His knowledge of every point, however infinitesimally small may be the point which we consider.

IX. The infinite transcendence of God and His consequent incomprehensibility should always constrain in us the profound sense of mystery, awe and reverence. It is at the highest reaches of our apprehension, understanding and contemplation that we are most deeply, gratefully and adoringly aware of the transcendent and incomprehensible glory of God. It is then that we are most truly conscious that God dwells in light unapproachable and full of glory, and we are constrained to exclaim: “Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised: and his greatness is unsearchable” (Ps. 145:3); “Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite” (Ps. 147:5).
IV—Evaluation of Documents

In the perspective of these findings certain documents which bear most closely upon the discussion of this question in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church may be evaluated, particularly the documents known as The Text of a Complaint and The Answer.

The Complaint does appear to have conceived of the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God in accordance with Reformed tradition when at the outset it intimates that the question is concerned with our knowledge of God. For although there is not complete uniformity in the Reformed theology in the use of the words “incomprehensible” and “incomprehensibility” as predicated of God, yet the most characteristic and pervasive meaning is that which applies to the relation of the being, perfections, glory and works of God to our created understanding. The predicate or attribute of incomprehensibility has meaning only in reference to the finite intelligence and arises from God’s very nature as infinite and absolute (cf. p. 2, col. 3; p. 3, col. 1). In accordance with the most representative Reformed usage, the Complaint also appears to have conceived of the inability implied in the word, “incomprehensible” as our inability to know God comprehensively and exhaustively rather than as our inability to know God or as our inability to know God apart from revelation. The quotation given from Charles Hodge to the effect that “to comprehend is to have a complete and exhaustive knowledge of an object” (p. 3, col. 3) is a good indication of the sense of the words, “comprehend” and “incomprehensible” in the language of the Complaint. Numerous other passages demonstrate this to be the meaning. It should have been clear from the preponderant usage of the Complaint that it was not using the word in the sense of “unknowable” or “inapprehensible” but rather in the sense of “incapable of being comprehensively known.”

Again the Complaint is correct in conceiving of incomprehensibility as something inherent in the nature of God as infinitely transcendent in relation to the limitations inherent in our creaturehood and finitude, and rightly distinguishes between the doctrine that God can be known “only if he makes himself known and insofar as he makes himself known” (p. 2, col. 3), on the one hand, and the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God, on the other.

In this context, however, the Complaint appears to lapse into an unfortunate and unwarranted delimitation of that which is being contemplated as incomprehensible in God. The Complaint says, “Because of his very nature as infinite and absolute the knowledge which God possesses of himself and of all things must remain a mystery which the mind of man cannot penetrate. The divine knowledge as divine transcends human knowledge as human, even when that human knowledge is a knowledge communicated by God” (p. 3, col. 1). It is perfectly true that the knowledge of God is incomprehensible along with all his other perfections. And it is, no doubt, true that it is on this particular phase of God’s incomprehensibility that the Complaint feels called upon to focus the burden of its attention. But since the Complaint does not intimate such delimitation of the question being discussed and does not advise the reader of express transition to a more restricted phase of the doctrine of God’s incomprehensibility, faulty orientation is given to the formulation at this point and some confusion is thereby created. The doctrine involved would have been set in clearer focus if the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God had been formulated in those broader terms necessary to the conception and then intimation given that attention was to be concentrated on the particular question of the incomprehensibility of the divine knowledge.

Apparently the Complaint in thus delimiting the question made one further step in this direction without giving any clear indication that this was being done. It not only focused attention upon the incomprehensibility of the divine knowledge but, in doing so, restricted the word, “knowledge” to what it calls
the "contents of the divine knowledge" in distinction from the mode of the divine knowledge. This appears to be the only reasonable explanation of the statement, "the doctrine of the mode of the divine knowledge is not a part of the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of his knowledge. The latter is concerned only with the contents of the divine knowledge" (p. 6, col. 2). It would have been proper for the Complaint to define the question in debate as concerned simply with the knowledge of God and then to limit the question still further to "the contents" of the divine knowledge. But it was faulty formulation to state the doctrine of God's incomprehensibility in terms simply of the incomprehensibility of his knowledge and then again to limit that phase of God's incomprehensibility to "the contents" of his knowledge without conscious and express intimation that the question in debate was being circumscribed in this way. Even here the debate is being focused not solely on the incomprehensibility of the "contents" of the divine knowledge, but on the correlative question, namely, the qualitative distinction between the "contents" of the divine and human knowledge.

In dealing with Calvin's teaching respecting the incomprehensibility of the divine essence the Complaint appears to take it for granted that Calvin, in the places cited (p. 3, col. 1), is using the word "incomprehensible" in the same sense as it is used elsewhere in the Complaint. This has been shown not to be the case. Calvin indeed says that it would be "presumptuous curiosity to attempt to examine" into the divine essence. But this cannot properly be said with reference to those respects in which God is incomprehensible in the meaning attached to the word in the usage of the Complaint. Whatever may be the relation of Calvin's teaching to the doctrine formulated in the Complaint, Calvin's teaching in the places cited must be distinguished from the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God as formulated, for example, in the Westminster Confession.

When the Complaint claims for the word "incomprehensible" "uniform significance in the history of Christian thought which constitutes the background of the formulation" of the Westminster Standards (p. 4, col. 2), it does not take sufficient cognizance of the lack of uniformity in Reformed usage. Its analysis of the meaning of the word as used in the Westminster Confession, however, is undoubtedly correct.

It is now necessary to turn attention to the Answer and to relate further discussion of the Complaint to the treatment accorded to this question of the incomprehensibility of God in the Answer. On page 9 the Answer states four points which it claims are included in "the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God as set forth in Scripture and in the Confession of Faith." The first proposition in this statement is that "the essence of God's being is incomprehensible to man except as God reveals truths concerning his own nature." Since this claims to be a statement of what is included in the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God as set forth in the Confession of Faith, we should expect that the word, "incomprehensible" is used in the same sense as in the Confession. It is hard to believe, however, that this is the case. For, if so, the statement does not make good sense. How could it be said that God's essence is incapable of being comprehensively known except as God reveals truths respecting his own nature? The revelation of truths does not provide us with comprehensive understanding of God's essence. Hence we conclude that the word "incomprehensible" is being used, in the statement quoted, in the sense of "inapprehensible" or "unknowable," a sense which the Answer apparently considered to be attached to the word in the Complaint. When understood thus the statement as a whole becomes intelligible; as also true. The divine essence is inapprehensible except as God reveals truths respecting his own nature.

But if this is the meaning, the divine essence does not occupy any distinctiveness in this regard; it is not only the divine essence that is inapprehensible except as God gives revelation concerning it but also all of God's perfections,
counsel and will, and the same proposition may be affirmed of everything that concerns God and his will.

Furthermore, it hardly seems feasible for the Answer to use the word, "incomprehensible" here in the sense of "inapprehensible" without any intimation that this meaning was intended. In the introductory sentence the Answer speaks of "the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God as set forth in Scripture and in the Confession of Faith." The word "incomprehensibility" is surely not being used here in the sense of "inapprehensibility." That is certainly not the meaning in the Confession of Faith. Reformed theology asserts the incomprehensibility of God without qualification. So does the Confession. But we may not speak of the inapprehensibility of God without qualification. It appears to us therefore, that basic confusion in the use of the term, "incomprehensible" characterizes the Answer at this point.

That the Answer uses the word "incomprehensible" in the sense of "inapprehensible" appears from other instances of the use of the word. "Until it is revealed, man cannot discover it; it is indeed incomprehensible because it is unrevealed" (p. 11). "What God does not reveal remains incomprehensible" (p. 12). "The manner of God's knowing would of course be different, and would eternally remain incomprehensible to man" (pp. 12f.) "That is not to claim that man can sometime in eternity become omniscient by the comprehension of one truth after another as God reveals them to him" (p. 13). Yet at the end of this part of the Answer a quotation from Charles Hodge is given with apparent approval: "To comprehend . . . is to have a complete and exhaustive knowledge of an object" (p. 24). It cannot be said, however, that this meaning of the word "comprehend" or of its derivative "incomprehensible" rules in the cases quoted above. It appears therefore that there is no uniform meaning attached to the use of the word in the Answer. This is distinctly unfortunate and leads to no little confusion.

The second and third propositions in the statement of points included in the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God do not call for comment at this point. But the fourth proposition introduces a question that is of paramount importance in the discussion and may be dealt with now. It runs: "4. But, Dr. Clark maintains, the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God does not mean that a proposition, e.g., two times two are four, has one meaning for man and a qualitatively different meaning for God" (p. 9). It is with this question that a very large part of the Answer is concerned. The Answer is most consistent that a true proposition has the same meaning for God and for man.

It is understood that the word "meaning" in this statement and in the subsequent argument of the Answer bears the sense of objective "import" or "significance." In this sense of the word "meaning" we contend that it is undoubtedly correct to maintain that a proposition has the same meaning for God and for man, when man truly apprehends it.

The lengthy argument of the Answer to establish and defend this point was evidently provoked by certain statements that appear in the Complaint. Some of these, at least, call for comment and are herewith quoted.

(1) "If knowledge is a matter of propositions divorced from the knowing subject . . . a proposition would have to have the same meaning for God as for man" (p. 5, col. 2).

(2) "We dare not maintain that his (God's) knowledge and our knowledge coincide at any single point" (p. 5, col. 3).

(3) "And since Dr. Clark maintains that no limitation may be placed upon God's power to reveal propositions one at a time to men, there is no single item of knowledge in God's mind which may not be shared by the human mind" (p. 5, col. 2).

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(4) "As true knowledge, that knowledge (man's) must be analogical to the knowledge which God possesses, but it can never be identified with the knowledge which the infinite and absolute Creator possesses of the same proposition" (p. 5, col. 3).

(5) "The knowledge which God possesses of himself and of all things must remain a mystery which the finite mind of man cannot penetrate" (p. 3, col. 1).

(6) Again the position of Dr. Clark, quoted from the stenographic record, to the effect: "If we don't know the object that God knows, then we are in absolute ignorance" (p. 5, col. 3) is offered in support of the contention that Dr. Clark is in error and the assumption is that this position of Dr. Clark is being controverted and opposed.

We consider that the first of these statements is regrettably infelicitous and misleading. We hold that the sense of the word "meaning" that is liable to be conveyed by a statement of this kind and in a discussion of this sort is that of "import" or "signification." The denial, therefore, that a proposition has in any respect the same meaning for God as for man would be incorrect and would be fraught with skeptical implications.

The second statement is also misleading, particularly because of the words, "single point." The whole clause, taken by itself, is liable to create the impression that our knowledge does not come into contact with the objects of the divine knowledge at any point. This would, of course, be incorrect and would also be skeptical in character.

The third statement might create the impression that there are items of knowledge, in the sense of objects of knowledge, in the divine mind that cannot come within the compass of human knowledge or apprehension. To take such a position would be indefensible and presumptuous.

The sixth statement is particularly misleading because it distinctly creates the impression that there are items of knowledge, in the sense of objects of knowledge, in the divine mind that cannot come within the compass of human knowledge or apprehension. To take such a position would be indefensible and presumptuous.

While making full allowance for the infelicity and misleading character of these statements—(1), (2), (3) and (6)—, we cannot, however, be persuaded that the intent of the Complaint was skeptical, as the Answer interpreted the intent of these statements to be. The Answer was quite justifiably aroused to refute with vigor what was interpreted to be the intent, and language used by the Complaint gave some plausible ground—in some cases more than in others—for the interpretation placed upon such language. But, when the main thrust of the Complaint is taken into account, it does not appear that the intent was as interpreted.

The second statement, we are convinced, was pressed by the Answer to bear a meaning that careful consideration of the immediate context should have prevented. It should have appeared that the Complaint in the use of the word "knowledge" in every case in the whole of the sentence concerned was employing the word not in the objective but in the subjective sense. The first reference to knowledge in the sentence is in the words, "the divine knowledge of his thoughts." Obviously "knowledge" here refers to the divine understanding or comprehension and not to the objects with which his comprehension or understanding is engaged. And this meaning of the word knowledge must be carried through to the end of the sentence. The immediately succeeding sentence confirms this use of the word knowledge, for it proceeds to speak of "our knowledge of any proposition." Obviously "knowledge" in this construction cannot refer to the object of knowledge but rather to our apprehension or understanding or cognition. And this same meaning of the word knowledge carries through to the end of the paragraph concerned.

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We consider, therefore, that fair examination should have shown that what was being affirmed was that our subjective knowledge of any truth must never be identified with God’s knowledge of that same truth and that the distinctiveness of the divine understanding or cognition or knowledge obtains at every point, however infinitesimally small may be the point which we consider.

With respect to the third statement quoted above, it is fully admitted that the phrase “item of knowledge” should be regarded as referring to object of knowledge. But the Complaint does not here deny that within the compass of revelation the object of divine knowledge is identical with the object of human knowledge. Its observation appears to be that on the assumption which it attributes to Dr. Clark, that the knowledge situation should be analyzed as a mere aggregation of propositions, it would be erroneous to conclude that “there is no single item of knowledge in God’s mind which may not be shared by the human mind.”

The first statement quoted above has been responsible for creating a great deal of misunderstanding. The paragraph in which the statement occurs appears to us distinctly obscure because of the way in which the word, “knowledge” is used. In the preceding sentence the word rather obviously has the sense of understanding or cognition but in the sentence that follows “knowledge” seems rather to refer to the objects of knowledge and in the sentence concerned, also, “knowledge” may have this latter sense. It cannot be claimed that the meaning would have been perfectly clear to readers.

There are, however, two considerations that lead us to the conclusion that the statement in question was not intended in the sense understood by the Answer.

1. In the immediately preceding sentences the Complaint speaks of “man’s knowledge of any proposition” and “God’s knowledge of the same proposition.” “Knowledge” in both cases clearly refers to the understanding and not to the object of knowledge. This should be taken as intimating the tense attached to the word and should, at least, have suggested that the word “meaning” was being applied to the “understanding” on the part of God and man respectively and not to the truth itself.

2. In this section of the Complaint the great burden of emphasis rests upon the contention that the “content” of the divine knowledge differs from the “content” of human knowledge at every point. It is not with the objects of knowledge the Complaint is concerned but with the difference between the character of God’s understanding and man’s understanding even when the same object is contemplated. In terms of the discussion, the Complaint is not concerned so much with the proposition as with the knowledge of the proposition. It is the qualitative distinction between the divine and human knowledge that is being stressed and the implied denial that a proposition has the “same meaning for God as for man” should be understood as denying the identity of the knowledge in its subjective aspect rather than the identity of the truth involved.

However much misunderstanding of the intent of the Complaint might understandably have been created by the language used, it does not appear to us that the contention of the Answer respecting the skepticism inherent in the Complaint can be established.

The Answer alleges that “according to the Complaint man can never know even one item of truth God knows; man can only know an ‘analogical’ truth, and this analogical truth is not the same truth that God knows, for the truth that God knows is ‘qualitatively’ different, and God cannot reveal it to man because man is a creature. To repeat: the truth that God knows and the truth that man knows are never the same truth, for they do not ‘coincide at any single point’” (p. 10). The Answer alleges that the Complaint advances a theory of a “two-fold truth” (idem), that propositions do not have the same meaning for God and for man and that the truths known by God are different.
from those known by man (cf. pp. 9,10,13,14,16,22). This charge is repeatedly made and is stated in various ways. If this were the position of the Complaint, such a position would have to be condemned as without warrant from the Word of God and our subordinate Standards.

It is true that the Complaint uses the word "analogical." It says, "Our knowledge of any proposition must remain the knowledge of the creature. As true knowledge, that knowledge must be analogical to the knowledge which God possesses, but it can never be identified with the knowledge which the infinite and absolute Creator possesses of the same proposition" (p. 5, col. 3). Apart from instances of the word in quotations from Reformed writers this is the only occurrence of the word "analogical" in the section of the Complaint that deals with the matter of God's incomprehensibility. Several things should be noted respecting this quotation from the Complaint.

1. It speaks of the knowledge of God and of man as concerned with the same proposition. This should intimate that it is not correct to aver that the Complaint holds that man cannot know "even one item of truth God knows" (Answer, p. 10).

2. The Complaint does not say that it is the truth that is analogical but rather the knowledge which man possesses of the truth. It appears that the identity denied by the Complaint was not the identity of the truth expressed in the proposition but the identity of the knowledge on the part of God and man respectively.

3. In developing the allegation that according to the Complaint man knows only an analogy of the truth the Answer continues to appeal to the statement in the Complaint that God's knowledge and ours do not "coincide at any single point." But unfortunate as this expression is, the more discriminating interpretation presented above should have precluded such an application of the statement and, in any case, it is too slim a basis upon which to base such a far-reaching allegation as that man, according to the Complaint, knows only an analogy of the truth.

4. In the other instances in which the word, "analogy" or "analogical" appears in the Complaint in quotations from Reformed writers, it would appear that what is referred to as an analogy or as analogical is our knowledge and not the truth concerned. This is likely even in the quotation from J. H. Thornwell. "'Again the difference betwixt Divine and human knowledge is not simply of degree. God's knowledge is not like ours, and therefore we are utterly unable to think it as it is in Him. We can only think it under the analogy of ours in the sense of a similarity of relations'" (p. 3, col. 2, italics ours). In the other two instances in quotations from Shedd and Bavinck (p. 3, col. 3; p. 4, col. 1) it is apparent that what is qualified by the word "analogical" is our knowledge of the truth and not the truth itself. The element of the unknowability of God's essence in Bavinck's view of analogy (Complaint, 4:2) however, is not an element which all Reformed theologians have employed in their formulation of the doctrine of God's incomprehensibility. It would have been well if the Complaint had taken this fact into consideration.

It might indeed appear that this element in Bavinck's conception of analogy is incorporated in the Complaint, but this is not necessarily the case, and more careful examination of the Complaint will evince that the concept of analogy used in the Complaint was not applied to the truth known but to our knowledge of the truth and that the sustained allegation of the Answer that, according to the Complaint, man knows only an analogy of the truth is mistaken.

In this connection it is necessary to point out another misinterpretation on the part of the Answer. The latter insinuates that the Complaint maintains "the strange doctrine that there are mysterious areas of knowledge which God has, incapable of being revealed by God to man or of being understood by man

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even if God revealed them" (p. 14). First of all, there does not appear to be the least basis for the allegation that there are certain revelations God might give that man could not understand. Secondly, it is difficult to understand what the Answer means by "mysterious areas of knowledge." It is not clear in what sense "knowledge" is being used, whether in the sense of "understanding" or in the sense of "the objects known." The presumption is that the latter is intended and might, therefore, be rendered, "mysterious areas of truth." Thirdly, we do not find in the Complaint evidence to support the notion that it conceives of any area of truth and reality with respect to which God cannot give us any revelation. The Complaint does contend that God cannot give us an exhaustive or comprehensive knowledge respecting any area or any item and, also, that there are "mysteries set forth in the divine revelation that are quite beyond the powers of the finite mind to comprehend" (p. 4, col. 2). But this is an entirely different matter. The word "comprehend" was used in the Complaint in one uniform and consistent sense, namely, that of "comprehensive knowledge."

A great deal of misunderstanding has been created by the use of the word "contents" in the Complaint in its discussion of divine and human knowledge. The word appears repeatedly (p. 5, col. 1; p. 6, col. 1; p. 6, col. 2(2)). And the contention of the Complaint is that the content or contents of the divine knowledge differs qualitatively from the content or contents of human knowledge. Apparently the Answer understood this designation to refer to the objects of knowledge rather than to the understanding or apprehension with reference to these objects. Consequently the argument of the Complaint to the effect that there is a qualitative distinction between the contents of the divine knowledge and the contents of human knowledge was interpreted to mean that the objects of knowledge were qualitatively different in the respective cases (cf. Answer, pp. 21f.). This interpretation lent additional support to the view that, according to the Complaint, man could only know an analogy of the truth and is entirely in line with such a conception. If this were the meaning and intent of the Complaint the rejection of such a position would be demanded.

It is to be admitted that the words, "content" and, particularly, "contents" are not free from ambiguity and it is easy to see how these words could be misunderstood in the discussion of a subject that requires careful use of terms. Furthermore, it is regrettable that the Complaint did not more carefully distinguish between what it meant by content as distinguished from object, especially since the word "object" had been used by Dr. Clark in the course of his examination. Again, since the Complaint does not use the word, "object" in reference to the question debated it is still more easily understood how the Answer could have interpreted the Complaint in this way and have regarded the word "contents" as referring to that which Dr. Clark denoted by the word "objects," especially since at one point in the Complaint Dr. Clark's insistence that the object of knowledge is the same for God and man is, by implication, being controverted (p. 5, col. 3).

We are convinced, however, that the word, "contents" was not intended to be understood in the same sense as the word, "objects." It is most probable, however, that in the judgment of the Complaint Dr. Clark failed to distinguish between content and object and that the identicalness he claimed for the object applied also to what the Complaint denoted by the word, "contents." Otherwise the contention of the Complaint that Dr. Clark did not maintain the qualitative distinction between the contents of the divine knowledge and of human knowledge could not have been so insistently maintained. The stenographic record of the examination of Dr. Clark on July 7, 1944 makes abundantly plain that he contended for the identity of the object (see for further expansion of this subject the Minority Report submitted to the Thirteenth General Assembly, Minutes pp. 72ff.). And it would appear that this is one of the reasons, if not the main reason, why the Complaint concluded that Dr. Clark denied the qualitative distinction between the contents of divine and human knowledge. That the Com-

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plaint was justified in identifying its own use of the word “contents” with Dr. Clark’s use of the word “object” is another question. But whatever may be true respecting this question it is clear that very considerable confusion had been injected into the debate by failure to understand or define the use of these terms.

We conclude, however, that the word “contents” was not intended by the Complaint to denote what in the present phase of the discussion, at least, may be designated as the object of knowledge. It may be difficult to demonstrate this from the immediate contexts where the word “contents” occurs. But a careful examination of this part of the Complaint will demonstrate, we believe, that when the Complaint contends for the qualitative distinction between the divine knowledge and human knowledge the word “knowledge” is not being used in the sense of “the objects of knowledge,” but rather in the sense of the “understanding,” “cognition,” “grasp,” “condition or state of cognitive consciousness” with reference to these objects. This appears, as has been shown above, in the very paragraphs where the phrases, “coincide at any single point” and “same meaning for God as for man” occur—expressions so frequently alluded to by the Answer in support of its allegations respecting the skepticism inherent in the Complaint. While it may not be contended that the Complaint never uses the word “knowledge” in the objective sense, yet if the Complaint is read carefully it will appear that in its fundamental contention and argument the sense attached to the word “knowledge” is the subjective. When the subjective sense of the word “knowledge” is applied, the usage of the Complaint is found to be in harmony with its positive development of the doctrine in the earlier part of the discussion, and so it is reasonable to conclude that the word “knowledge” was used, in the fundamental contention of the Complaint, to designate the “understanding” of the truth known, apprehension in the case of man and comprehension in the case of God. Consequently it is the distinctiveness of the divine “understanding,” “grasp,” or “knowing” that is being insisted upon and not at all the difference of the truth known. It would be far too tedious and repetitious an undertaking to adduce the evidence in support of this conclusion.

Since it is the distinctiveness of the divine knowledge in this sense of the word “knowledge” that is the great burden of the argument in this part of the Complaint, it is necessary to conclude that when the word, “contents” or “content” appears on four occasions and the same distinctiveness is claimed for the contents of the divine knowledge as is claimed elsewhere so pervasively for the divine knowledge, the same meaning is intended when at a few points the qualitative distinction is affirmed of the “contents” and at many other points the same distinction is affirmed of the knowledge.

While the Complaint, then, was at fault in not making clear by more defined statement its use of the word “contents,” yet fair and careful examination should have shown that the Complaint was not contending for any qualitative distinction between the “objects” of knowledge known to God and man, nor that a true proposition in its “narrowest and minimal significance, is qualitatively different for God” (Answer, p. 21), nor that a true proposition has one import or significance for God and another for man, nor that man can have no cognitive contact with the objects of divine knowledge, but rather was contending for a qualitative distinction in some other respect, namely, what the Complaint denotes as “content,” distinguished from “mode,” on the one hand, and from the “truth known” on the other. Hence we conclude that, though the Complaint failed in the matter of clear definition and lucidity, it is not defensible to charge it with error in the direction of skepticism.

In the same connection it is necessary to examine the allegation of the Answer to the effect that the Complaint is “advancing a theory of a two-fold truth” (p. 10). What the Answer adduces in support of this interpretation is the contention of the Complaint that God’s knowledge is qualitatively different...
from that of man and that God's knowledge and man's do not "coincide at any single point." These contentions of the Complaint have been examined already and it has been shown, we believe, that what the Complaint had in mind was the qualitative difference in respect of knowledge and not of the truth known. The Complaint does insist upon two levels but it is made plain that the two levels are not two levels of truth but two levels of knowledge, indicated by the distinction between "apprehension" on our part and "comprehension" on the part of God. The Complaint says: "Only the Son has a knowledge of the Father that is on a level with the Father's knowledge of the Son; only the Son's knowledge of the Father is accordingly exhaustive knowledge; the knowledge which men may come to possess of the Father and of the Son is knowledge on a lower level, apprehension but not comprehension, for otherwise mere men would have to be accorded a place alongside of Christ who alone "knows the Father" (Mt. 11:27; Lk. 10:22. Cf. also Romans 11:33; Deut. 29:29)" (p. 4, col. 3). It should be obvious that it is the Father and the Son who are contemplated as the "objects" of human knowledge in this case and that the lower level applicable to man is not a lower level of truth but a lower level of knowledge. Consequently any such notion as a two-level theory of truth finds no support whatsoever in this passage. We believe that a two-level view of knowledge must be maintained and cannot therefore endorse the statement of the Answer in its discussion of Isaiah 55:8,9, namely, "There are two levels, to be sure, but not two levels of knowledge" (p. 12). There is doubt, however, as to the sense in which the word "knowledge" is used in this connection.

Conclusions

We conclude that the doctrine of God's incomprehensibility set forth in the Complaint is basically and substantially the doctrine set forth in the Word of God and in the Reformed theology. While there is in the Complaint a narrowing down of the question in debate to the incomprehensibility of the knowledge of God as the aspect of God's incomprehensibility on which attention is being focused, and while this delimitation has caused some confusion and misunderstanding, yet the quotations given from Reformed writers, as well as the underlying conception of incomprehensibility that is being applied in the sphere of God's knowledge, evince that the doctrine had been conceived correctly in terms of the transcendent mystery of God's being, perfections, counsel and will. The word, "incomprehensible" was used in the Complaint, in accordance with the most characteristic usage of Reformed theology, not in the sense of "unknowable" or "inapprehensible" but in the sense of "not able to be comprehensively understood." This epithet is conceived of as applied to God without any qualification. It is not simply God's essence that is incomprehensible in this sense but also all of his attributes. And this incomprehensibility inheres in the very nature of God as infinite, eternal, and unchangeable.

We are not assured that the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God set forth in the Answer can be evaluated as basically and substantially that of the Word of God and of Reformed theology. The discussion of the question in the Answer is to a large extent vitiated by the use of the word "incomprehensible" in the sense of "inapprehensible" and by lack of uniformity in the use of the word "comprehend" and, by implication, of its derivative, "incomprehensible." The statement of points included in the doctrine on page 9 does not enunciate, as it appears to us, with any clear-cut decisiveness the doctrine as set forth "in Scripture and in the Confession of Faith."

The first point has been dealt with above. It has been shown that if the word "incomprehensible" is used in one sense the statement does not make sense; if used in another sense it states a truth which is not only true of God's essence but of all that concerns God and does not really express the doctrine of God's incomprehensibility.

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The second point, namely, that "the manner of God's knowing, an eternal intuition, is impossible for man" is quite true, but it is not clearly stated in what sense "the manner of God's knowing" is incomprehensible, even though it is insisted upon that the manner of God's knowledge "would eternally remain incomprehensible to man" (p. 13; cf. p. 24).

The third point: "Man can never know exhaustively and completely God's knowledge of any truth in all its relationships and implications; because every truth has an infinite number of relationships and implications and since each of these implications in turn has other infinite implications, these must ever, even in heaven, remain inexhaustible for man." This statement is the closest approximation to the phase of God's incomprehensibility on which the Complaint lays its main emphasis. That the statement expresses an incontrovertible truth goes without saying. But we are not satisfied that this statement adequately safeguards the contention of the Complaint, for it is upon the inexhaustibility of the relationships and implications that the stress falls. Unless the phrase, "knowledge of any truth in all its relationships and implications" is taken to mean not merely "a knowledge of a truth and its relationships and implications" but a "knowledge of a truth embracing relationships and implications in what is nevertheless, properly speaking, knowledge of one truth," it would still be possible to maintain that man's knowledge of a particular truth is identical with God's knowledge of that same truth, even though, admittedly, a vast difference would obtain in the knowledge of the relationships and implications. But on either construction of this point in the Answer, the crucial statement, as to the essential qualitative difference between the subjective aspect of human knowledge and the divine knowledge with respect to any truth would not find expression. This difference, if expressed in the Answer, must be included under its category of mode.

The fourth point, namely, that "the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God does not mean that a proposition . . . has one meaning for man and a qualitatively different meaning for God" we recognize as quite correct, understanding the word, "meaning" in the sense of "import" or "signification." In dealing with the question of the incomprehensibility of God's knowledge, we also regard this insistence as necessary in order to guard against skepticism. While it is a necessary emphasis, it does not, however, provide any positive addition in the exposition of what is involved in the incomprehensibility of God.

On these grounds we conclude that in these four points there is not an adequate formulation of that in which the doctrine of God's incomprehensibility consists and that the subsequent discussion in the Answer has not rectified that deficiency.

Respecting the central argument of the Complaint, namely, that there is a qualitative distinction between the knowledge of God and the knowledge possible for man, we find ourselves in agreement with the contention of the Complaint. The Complaint does not consider that the question at issue is the qualitative distinction between the mode of divine knowledge and the mode of human knowledge. It recognizes that Dr. Clark fully maintains that distinction and does not argue the question. Neither does the Complaint maintain a qualitative distinction between the truth known by God and that known by man through revelation. This has been argued sufficiently above and need not be repeated. The distinctiveness which the Complaint regards as the question at issue is the distinctiveness of what it occasionally calls the "contents" or "content" of the divine knowledge but which it usually designates simply as the knowledge of God. However infelicitous may be the word, "contents" or "content," it is quite clear that what is meant is the "understanding," the "cognition," perhaps the "knowing," as distinguished from mode. Apparently the Complaint is using the word "mode" in a restricted sense to denote the way by which man comes to know as distinguished from the way by which God knows.

We recognize that when the word "mode" is understood in this restricted
sense, it is necessary to regard another element as comprised within our knowledge as well as within the knowledge of God. This other element the Complaint generally designated by knowledge and occasionally by contents. But whatever the word may be, used to designate it, the element exists and the distinction between divine and human knowledge must be preserved in connection with this element as well as in connection with mode.

It is here that difficulty arises in evaluating the Answer. The latter vigorously protests that “Dr. Clark does not deny the qualitative distinction between God’s knowledge and man’s knowledge” (p. 15). And later on, after quoting from the stenographic record of Dr. Clark’s examination, it continues: “Dr. Clark in the transcript says God’s knowledge of a given object is not the same as man’s knowledge of the same object. And the complainants after reading these passages say that ‘Dr. Clark holds that man’s knowledge of a proposition . . . is identical with God’s knowledge of the same proposition.’ The Complaint therefore has attempted to put into Dr. Clark’s mouth the very position he explicitly denied” (p. 20). These are emphatic statements and would leave no room for doubt if the question were not perplexed in differing terminology. This difference of terminology concerns particularly the scope of the word “mode” in this discussion.

It is clear that the Answer does not go beyond the stenographic record in regarding the elements in knowledge as consisting simply of mode and object. As was shown in both reports submitted to the Thirteenth General Assembly this is a defensible schematism and no issue is involved in a twofold or threefold division as such. The question reduces itself simply to this: what is the scope of the word “mode” as used by Dr. Clark and by the Answer? If it is broad enough to include what the Complaint means by contents or by the simple use of the word “knowledge” as generally used by the Complaint, or, in other words, if the word “knowledge” as used by the Answer in the two quotations given above is conceived of as including what the Complaint means by knowledge, then the distinctiveness of the divine knowledge for which the Complaint contends is emphatically asserted by the Answer and the issue disappears. Both Complaint and Answer would agree on the central question debated in the Complaint.

In our esteem it would not, however, be doing full justice to the Answer or to the Complaint or to the truth to aver that the question may be thus concluded. While both the Majority and Minority Reports to the 13th General Assembly held that there was some doubt as to the scope of the word “mode” as used by Dr. Clark in his examination, and allowed for the possibility that it might be used broadly enough to include what the Complaint means by “content,” it must be acknowledged that the Answer does not give assurance that the term “mode” is being used in the more inclusive sense. When the Answer on p. 20 denies that Dr. Clark holds that “man’s knowledge of a proposition . . . is identical with God’s knowledge of the same proposition,” it appeals to passages in the Transcript where Dr. Clark stated that “the method of knowing” is entirely different and where, evidently in explanation of what is meant by “method of knowing,” the distinction between intuitive and discursive knowing is in view.

It is to be regretted that a paper circulated by Dr. Clark in the fall of 1946 does not yet clear up the question whether “mode” is understood broadly enough to include what the Complaint had in view in speaking of “content” as distinguished from “object.” For example, on p. 8, Dr. Clark states: “God’s mode of knowing is intuitive while man’s is always temporal and discursive. This distinction, the Complaint claims, is insufficient; a further distinction is needed. It is obvious therefore that the complainants hold to a two-fold theory of something in addition to a two-fold theory of the act of knowing.” Dr. Clark may have intended by these words to indicate the inclusiveness of his conception of

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mode. However in our estimation further clarification along this line is necessary.

We are jealous for the maintenance of the distinctiveness of the divine knowledge for which the Complaint contends. We believe that this is a necessary element in the doctrine of the transcendence of the divine knowledge. The terms that may be used to designate this aspect of the divine knowledge is a matter of relative indifference. But if the word, "mode" is used in the restricted sense in which the Complaint uses it, the distinctiveness of the divine knowledge for which the Complaint contends must be found to apply to another aspect of the divine knowledge as well as to the mode of knowledge. The cause of truth and peace in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is bound up with this question. In our judgment this issue has not been settled and it is highly necessary that those who have signed the Answer assure the Church that the qualitative distinction between God's knowledge and man's applies to the "understanding," "grasp," "cognition," "knowing" at every point where God's knowledge and man's respect the same truth.

Furthermore, since certain expressions used in the Complaint have been understood as skeptical in character and since the Complaint cannot disavow all responsibility for creating such misunderstanding of its intent, in our judgment, it is incumbent upon those who have signed the Complaint to express regret for such expressions. They should express regret that the Complaint appeared to deny that there is any sense in which a proposition may be said to have the same meaning for God as for man. They should also affirm that, when the objects of knowledge are contemplated, human knowledge does have contact with the objects of divine knowledge within the compass of the divine revelation and that within the sphere of revelation the objects of knowledge are the same for God and for man.

Unequivocal declarations along these lines by those who have signed the Answer and the Complaint respectively will, we are persuaded, go a long way to the vindication of the truth, the removal of misunderstanding, and the healing of breaches that have tended to disrupt the unity and disturb the peace of our denomination.

We are keenly aware of the difficulties inherent in the subject being discussed in this study. We are not satisfied that we have been able to reach any fixed formulation on several of the details dealt with. And we are far from supposing that the schematism in some instances would not require modification and revision on more thorough and mature reflection. For example, in the use of such words as "meaning," "import," "object," "content" and "mode," especially as applied to the divine knowledge, there is great need for a more thorough analysis on the basis of Scripture teaching. We fear that in the discussion of this subject in recent years there has sometimes been manifest an over-simplification of the problems involved, with the consequence that the transcendence of the divine knowledge has not been sufficiently appreciated and guarded.

Nevertheless we are convinced that an element of the transcendence of God's knowledge of most fundamental importance to the Biblical doctrine of God and His incomprehensibility is involved in the question debated. We are convinced that it was this element that the Complaint brought to the forefront and made central in its contention. This element has been stated repeatedly as consisting in the qualitative distinction between God's knowledge and man's knowledge in respect of those very truths known to man. Whatever revision might have to be made in the formulation of this great truth or in the schematism in terms of which it would be set forth, yet we are deeply persuaded that no such modification will alter in the least the necessity for maintaining this qualitative distinction. We are persuaded that any proper subsequent development will only lead to a clearer exposition of this distinction and a more deeply-grounded vindication of its validity and paramount importance.

Respectfully submitted,

THE COMMITTEE

Appendix 29
Appendix

The Incomprehensibility of God

According to Certain 19th and 20th Century Theologians

Observations concerning the position of Charles Hodge

1. Under the incomprehensibility of God, Hodge is considering the infinity of God in relation to the created intellect, and not the doctrine of the immensity of God (cf. Systematic Theology, I, pp. 337f.; pp. 383f.).

2. Comprehension denied to man is defined as "a complete and exhaustive knowledge of an object" and thus is distinguished from the knowledge or understanding possible to man (337).

3. It is man's creaturehood or finiteness which is viewed as the ground of his incapacity to comprehend God. "Such knowledge is clearly impossible in a creature, whether of itself or of anything out of itself" (p 337). Accordingly, this incapacity for comprehensive knowledge, inhering in man as a creature, was present before the fall; it will also be present in the state of glory. It is not subject to modification by anything outside of the creature, such as the fact of revelation. None but the Infinite can comprehend the Infinite (cf. pp. 345f.).

4. Human knowledge as finite knowledge is partial (337, 338). "There is infinitely more in God than we have any idea of" (337). We cannot know all about God.

5. But human knowledge as finite knowledge is also imperfect. "What we do know we know imperfectly" (337, 338). We not only cannot know all about God, but whatever knowledge we possess, being creaturely, finite knowledge, is imperfect.

6. Nevertheless, knowledge is possible and actual for man. "Our knowledge as far as it goes, is true knowledge" (338). The possibility of knowledge is grounded in the fact of creation in the divine image (339).

7. In discussing knowledge as an attribute of God, Hodge states that "this knowledge of God is not only all-comprehending, but it is intuitive and immutable" (337).

Observations concerning the position of A. A. Hodge

Dr. A. A. Hodge's position is most fully set forth in his Outlines of Theology, 2nd Edition, London, 1879. Discussing the subject of the Attributes of God, he asks: "How far can we have assurance that the objective reality corresponds with our subjective conceptions of the divine nature?" His answer is as follows:

"There are upon this subject two opposite extreme positions which it is necessary to avoid. 1st. The extreme of supposing that our conceptions of God either in kind or degree are adequate to represent the objective reality of his perfections. God is incomprehensible to us in the sense (a) that there remains an immeasurably greater part of his being and excellence of which we have and can have no knowledge, and (b) in the sense that even what we know of him we know imperfectly, and at best conceive of very inadequately. . . . 2d. The second extreme to be avoided is that of supposing that our knowledge of God is purely illusory, that our conception of the divine perfections cannot correspond in any degree to the objective reality. . . ." (pp. 129f.).

A. A. Hodge, like Charles Hodge, grounds the reality of human knowledge in the fact of creation in the divine image. "The fundamental fact upon which

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all science, all theology, and all religion rests is that God made man a living soul in his own image. Otherwise man could have no understanding of God's works any more than of his nature, and all relations of thought or feeling between them would be impossible" (132; cf. p. 129; pp. 130f.).

Of further interest is the manner in which this author associates incomprehensibility with the divine revelation, when he says: "Concerning the nature and operation of God, we can know only what he has vouchsafed to reveal to us, and with every conception, either of his being or his acts, there must always attend an element of incomprehensibility, which is inseparable from infinitude. His knowledge and power are as truly beyond all understanding as his eternity or immensity.—Job xi. 7-9; xxvi. 14; Ps. cxxxix. 5, 6; Isa. xl. 28" (135f.).

The application of this approach to the subject of eternity is also significant. In answer to the question, What is eternity?, he says: "Eternity is infinite duration; duration discharged from all limits, without beginning, without succession, and without end. . . . We, however, can positively conceive of eternity only as duration indefinitely extended from the present moment in two directions, as to the past and as to the future. . . . The eternity of God, however, is one and indivisible" (P. 142). And in reply to the question, "What relation does time bear to eternity?", he says, "Eternity, the unchanging present, without beginning or end, comprehends all time, and co-exists, as an undivided moment with all the successions of time as they appear and pass in their order. Thought is possible to us, however, only under the limitations of time and space. We can conceive of God only under the finite fashion of first purposing and then acting, of first promising or threatening and then fulfilling his word, etc. He that inhabiteth eternity infinitely transcends our understanding. Isa. lvii.15" (p. 142).

His discussion of "The Infinite Intelligence of God" is also pertinent. In reply to the question, "How does God's mode of knowing differ from ours?", he says, "God's knowledge is, 1st, his essence knowing; 2d, it is one eternal, all-comprehensive indivisible act. (1) It is not discursive, i.e. proceeding logically from the known to the unknown; but intuitive, i.e., discerning all things directly in its own light. (2) It is independent, i.e., it does in no way depend upon his creatures. . . . (3) It is total and simultaneous, not successive. It is one single, indivisible act of intuition, beholding all things in themselves, their relations and successions as ever present. (4) It is perfect and essential, not relative, i.e., he knows all things directly in their hidden essences, while we know them only by their properties, as they stand related to our senses. (5) We know the present imperfectly, the past we remember dimly, the future we know not at all. But God knows all things, past, present, and future, by one total unsuccesive all-comprehensive vision" (pp. 144f.). Cf. also Commentary on the Confession of Faith, 1869, p. 75. Certain formulations in the Popular Lectures on Theological Themes, Philadelphia 1887, are rather distinctive. He speaks of God as "unknowable, the infinite Abyss of darkness" (pp. 18f.) "In all our knowledge, God is always beyond us, hid in the light which is impeneetrable" (p. 32). "We have been convinced that the finite can never measure the Infinite" (p. 42).

It is not necessary to show in detail the evidence that the position set forth in these passages agrees with that of Charles Hodge. A few observations concerning certain of the formulations may be useful.

1. The manner in which he associates incomprehensibility with the divine revelation is noteworthy. The revelation of God as a revelation of the infinite One must necessarily be attended by an element of incomprehensibility. The revelation of God is necessarily a revelation of the infinite or it would not be a revelation of God. And since it is a revelation of the infinite, the revelation given cannot be comprehended by finite man. Hence revelation, though given to be apprehended and though actually apprehended, is not comprehended. Man

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may apprehend the eternity of God but he can conceive of it only in finite fashion.

2. It is clear that in discussing the "mode" of the divine knowing, A. A. Hodge embraces under this term more than the fact that God knows by an eternal intuition whereas man knows discursively. In particular, the characterization of the divine knowledge as perfect and essential goes beyond the above.

3. In saying that God is the unknowable, the infinite Abyss of darkness, Hodge adopts, as a partial statement of the truth, language which is not well guarded. Evidently it is understood much like statements to the effect that the essence of God is unknowable. Though such formulations are not completely felicitous it should be recognized that they are based upon a concern to acknowledge the transcendence of God, his infinite separateness from our finiteness. They go far beyond expressing the idea that God has secrets which he has not chosen to reveal.

J. H. Thornwell, (Collected Writings, I, Richmond, 1871).

PP. 123f.: "The result of this inquiry into the nature and extent of our knowledge of God may be summed up in the following propositions. As we know only in and through our own faculties, our knowledge must be determined by the nature of our faculties. The conditions of consciousness are such that we can never directly apprehend aught but the phenomenal and relative; and yet in the apprehension of that we are constrained to admit a real and an absolute as the necessary explanation of appearances. The infinite is never apprehended in itself; it is only known in the manifestations of it contained in the finite. As existing, it is known—it is a positive affirmation of intelligence; but it cannot be translated into the forms of understanding—it cannot be conceived, except as the annihilation of those limitations and conditions which are essential to the possibility of human thought. We know that it is, but we know not what it is. In our actual concept of God, while we are constrained to recognize him as an infinite and absolutely perfect being, yet we are unable to realize absolute and infinite perfection in thought. We only know that it must be; but our utmost efforts to grasp it amount to nothing more than the transmutation of a series of negations into delusive affirmations. The matter of our thought, in representing the Divine perfections, is taken from the phenomena of human consciousness. The perfections which we experience in ourselves are reduced to their utmost abstraction and purity, and then applied to God in the way of analogy. We do not know His perfections, consequently, as they are in themselves or in Him, but as they appear to us under finite forms and symbols. This analogical conception, however, is accompanied with the belief that the relative necessarily implies the absolute; and therefore in the very act of imperfect thought our nature protests against the imperfect as an adequate or complete representation. We feel that we see through a glass darkly—that is only a glimpse of truth that we obtain; but the little, though partial and defective—a mere point compared to the immense reality—is inexpressibly precious, for its object is God. If it is only the hem of His garment that we are permitted to behold, it impresses us with a sense of His glory."

"This relative, partial, analogical knowledge of God is the Catholic doctrine of theologians. . . . 'His essence,' says Calvin, 'is incomprehensible, utterly transcending all human thought; but on each of His works His glory is engraven in characters so bright . . . that none . . . can plead ignorance as their excuse' (Instit. I.V.1; cf. V. 9)." He also appeals to Cocceius, Charnock, Macrobius, and Augustine (124f.).

He next considers the objection that, if our knowledge of God is only relative and analogical, it cannot be accepted as any just or true representation
of the Divine Being, but of something essentially different. He says that “if nothing more were meant than that we do not know God as He is in Himself, and as, consequently, He knows Himself, the objection would certainly have to be admitted. No such knowledge is competent to the creature. The finite can never hope to comprehend the Infinite as the Infinite comprehends itself. But if it is meant . . . that our knowledge of God does not apprehend the appearances which such a being must make to minds constituted like ours, that the things which we think are not real manifestations of the Infinite, adapted to our faculties of intelligence, the objection is assuredly without reason. Either our whole nature is a lie, or the Being whom we thus know under finite symbols is the supreme and everlasting Jehovah” (125f). “We are obliged to trust in the veracity of consciousness. We know because we believe” (127). “. . . our relative analogical knowledge of God is not only true and trustworthy, but amply adequate for all the purposes of religion” (129). “Those finite symbols under which God is represented to us, and thought by us, furnish just the intimations of His character which are suited to be the basis of reverence and love” “. . . to complete the notion of religious worship we must introduce the other element of our knowledge, in which God is negatively presented as transcending the capacity of thought. . . . The very darkness which shrouds this infinitude reacts upon our worship, and expands our emotions into rapture and adoration” (135).

H. Bavinck: Gereformeerde Dogmatiek, (Kampen, 1918) Chapter IV Concerning God, Par. 23, The Incomprehensibility of God. (Vol. II, pp. 1ff.).

“Mystery is the element in which dogmatic theology lives . . . the knowledge which God has revealed concerning himself in nature and Scripture far transcends the conception and understanding of man. To this extent dogmatic theology is wholly concerned with mystery. It is constantly concerned, not with finite creatures, but from the beginning to the end . . . with the Eternal and Infinite. At the very beginning of its labor it stands before the Incomprehensible. . . . But also in the other loci, as it descends to the creatures, it does not view them otherwise than in their relation to God. . . . So all doctrines are but explications of the one dogma of the cognitio Dei. . . .”

But how can we speak concerning God? “We are men and he is the Lord our God. There does not appear to be any affinity or community between Him and us that we should be able to denominate Him in truth. There is, a distance between Him and us as between the infinite and the finite, between eternity and time. . . . He is a being infinitely exalted above all creation. . . . Yet Scripture also teaches emphatically the knowability of God. Scripture never attempts to prove the existence of God; it rather presupposes it; and it always presupposes that man has an ineradicable consciousness of that existence and a certain knowledge of the being of God. Man does not owe this to his own investigation . . . but to the fact that God has revealed himself . . . to man.” (2f.).

In undertaking an historical survey of the subject, Bavinck speaks of the doctrine of “the incomprehensibility of God and of the unknowability of his essence” as the point of departure and foundational thought of Christian theology. “God is not exhausted in his revelation, whether in creation or in recreation. He cannot fully communicate himself to his creatures, because they themselves would have to be God. Therefore there is no ‘adequate’ knowledge of God” (p. 10). Coming specifically to the view of the Reformed theologians, he says that their strong repudiation of the all-creature deification made them distinguish sharply between what was of God and what was of the creature; they took more seriously than any other theology the proposition that finitum non est capax infiniti (p. 15). After speaking of Zwingli and Calvin, he says that later theologians even more strongly asserted that the essence of God is unknowable. Because the finite cannot comprehend the infinite, the...
names of God do not serve to give knowledge of his essence but to intimate, to a degree according to our understanding, what of God we need to know. The propositions: Deus definiri nequit, Deo nomen non est, finitum non est capax infiniti return in all the theologians. They all teach that God is infinitely exalted above our understanding, our conception, our language. (p. 15).

Bavinck states that this doctrine was lost sight of largely as the result of the development of rationalism, but came to the fore again through Kantian influences. Like Hodge he finds a point of contact between the position of Hamilton and Mansel and that of orthodoxy: Scripture and the church affirm with emphasis the unsearchable majesty and the sovereign transcendence of God. There is no knowledge of God as he is in himself. ... He can be apprehended, not comprehended. There is a gnosis, but not a katalepsis of God. ... And when a superficial rationalism considered an adequate knowledge of God possible, Christian theology has always fought it most strenuously (p. 23). Although Scripture and the church as it were have accepted the premises of agnosticism and have been more deeply impressed than Kant and Spencer with the limitation of man and the incomparable greatness of God, nevertheless they draw an entirely different conclusion therefrom, the conclusion expressed by Hilary: perfecta scientia est, sic Deum scire, ut licet non ignorabilem, tamen inenarrabilem scias. The knowledge which we have of God is quite distinctive. It may be called a positive knowledge insofar as through it we know (erkennen) a being who is infinitely distinguished from all finite creatures. It is on the other hand negative because we cannot ascribe a single predicate to God as we conceive of such a predicate in creatures. And it is therefore analogical because it is the knowledge of a being who is in himself unknowable and nevertheless can make something of himself known in creatures.

While agnosticism finds herein an irreconcilable contradiction, Christian theology beholds an adorable mystery. It is wholly incomprehensible for us that and how God can reveal himself and to an extent make himself known in the creature, the eternal in time, the immeasurable in space, infinity in the finite, immutability in change, being in becoming. ... That God is the Infinite and nevertheless can and has revealed himself in finite creatures is truly the recognition of an incomprehensible mystery, indeed of the wonder of creation, but in no sense the admission of a tangible absurdity. Finite being cannot detract from the infinitude of God, if only it has its existence in the absolute being of God. And so also our knowledge is not a limitation of God, because it finds its ground in God himself, exists alone through him, and has precisely as its object and content God as the Infinite. (25).

Abraham Kuyper (Dictaten Dogmatiek, 1910, Vol. I)

De Cognitione Dei Summary: “according to the rule finitum non posse capere infinitum a creature cannot have an adequate knowledge of God. Equally unthinkable is a knowledge of God whereby he would be known passively, against his will and apart from his action. Therefore all possibility of knowing God rests upon the self-revelation of the Eternal Being. And finally, the Eternal Being is knowable alone by such a creature as receives aptitude for such knowledge through the creation ordinance, and then alone in the particular form which harmonizes with that aptitude. For man therefore there is no other knowledge than that which is forma humana et pro mensura humana, revealed by God himself from his archetypal self-consciousness ectypally to man. ...” (p. 11).

Exposition: He is dealing in this chapter with the question concerning the possibility of acquiring a knowledge of the eternal One. The problem is that God is knowable and yet incomprehensible (cf. John 17:3 and Job 36:26). This has led in two directions, the mystical and the intellectual. The problem is to set both elements in organic harmony (15).
We have to do then with two elements: (1) a transcendence in the being of God which does not permit knowledge of him, and (2) a revelation of God, which actually gives knowledge of him. Agnosticism has one-sidedly taken hold of the former; rationalism similarly of the latter. These are to be repudiated. And as well mysticism which finds rapport with God in via mystica. The elements are not put in organic relation by rationalists and mystics because of a faulty psychology, which makes either the intellect or the feeling the one and all (25ff.).

If then knowledge of God is possible for man, the question arises as to the limitations to which that knowledge is subject. There is a threefold limitation: The cognitio Dei A. is and always remains finita; B. is data, non sumpta; C. is forma et pro mensura humana.

A. Cognitio Dei finita est. With God we have to do with an ens infinitum. Therefore our knowledge of him is limited; it cannot be adequate. Finitum non capit infinitum. . . . The concepts Creator and creature stand squarely over against each other . . . man is finitum quid. . . . We must always keep in view the difference between the knowledge which God has of himself and which is infinite and the knowledge which we have of him which is a finite knowledge . . . Apprehendimus Deum, non comprehendimus (Alexander of Hales). Knowledge of a finite being is finita; how much more so in the case of cognitio Dei whose being is quite separate from the creaturely. In so far as knowledge of God is possible, it is always bound by the limitations of our finiteness and is never cognitio adaequata.

B. Cognitio Dei data, non sumpta est. Here Kuyper discusses the limitation imposed by our dependence upon divine revelation.

C. Cognitio Dei est forma et pro mensura humana. (36ff.).

1. Forma. All knowledge depends on the subject and the object. When an object is revealed in the same way, results differ according to the receptivity of the subject. So we may distinguish between angelic and human knowledge, and these in turn from divine knowledge (forma divina). Cf. Christ's knowledge as via unionis.

Here we are confronted with a deep question in philosophy: the connection between the noumenon and the phenomenon. If our knowledge of God is forma humana, it is still real knowledge. We do not possess cognitio Dei adaequata, archetypal knowledge, the noumenon; this is in God himself. We have alone the phenomenon, the cognitio Dei forma humana. We would have to say that there is not reality in human knowledge except for the fact that man is created according to the divine image. Therein, and therein alone, lies the guarantee of the reality of the phenomenal, forma humana, knowledge of God communicated to us. (37).

2. Mensura. Man knows according to mensura humana. Cf. I Cor. 13:11. There are variations of measure according to personality, age, opportunity, etc. Revelation takes account of mensura humana.

L. Berkhof (Systematic Theology, 1946)

"The Christian Church confesses on the one hand that God is the Incomprehensible One, but also on the other hand, that He can be known and that knowledge of Him is an absolute requisite unto salvation. . . . " (29) "Reformed theology holds that God can be known, but that it is impossible for man to have a knowledge of Him that is exhaustive and perfect in every way. To have such a knowledge of God would be equivalent to comprehending Him, and this is entirely out of the question. . . . " (p. 30) "God has made Himself known. Alongside of the archetypal knowledge of God, found in God Himself, there is also an ectypal knowledge of Him, given to man by revelation. The latter is related to the former as a copy is to the original, and therefore does not possess the same measure of clearness and perfection. All our knowledge of
God is derived from His self-revelation in nature and Scripture. Consequently, our knowledge of God is on the one hand ectypal and analogical, but on the other hand also true and accurate, since it is a copy of the archetypal knowledge which God has of Himself” (35).

“But in so far as God reveals Himself in His attributes, we also have some knowledge of His Divine Being, though even so our knowledge is subject to human limitations” (43). “We cannot comprehend God, cannot have an absolute and exhaustive knowledge of Him, but we can undoubtedly have a relative or partial knowledge of the Divine being. . . . It will not do at all to say that man knows only the relations in which God stands to His creatures. It would not even be possible to have a proper conception of these relations without knowing something of both God and man. To say that we can know nothing of the Being of God, but can know only relations, is equivalent to saying that we cannot know Him at all and cannot make Him the object of our religion” (44). “Naturally, we should guard against separating the divine essence and the divine attributes or perfections, and also against a false conception of the relation in which they stand to each other. The attributes are real determinations of the Divine Being, or, in other words, qualities that inhere in the Being of God. . . . And because of the close relation in which the two stand to each other, it can be said that knowledge of the attributes carries with it knowledge of the Divine Essence. . . . These qualities cannot be altered without altering the essential Being of God. And since they are essential qualities, each one of them reveals to us some aspect of the Being of God” (45f.).

“The names of God constitute a difficulty for human thought. God is the Incomprehensible One, infinitely exalted above all that is temporal; but in His names He descends to all that is finite and becomes like unto man. . . . On what grounds are these names applied to the infinite and incomprehensible God? It should be borne in mind that they are not of man’s invention, and do not testify to his insight into the very Being of God. They are given by God Himself with the assurance that they contain in a measure a revelation of the Divine Being. This was made possible by the fact that the world and all its relations is and was meant to be a revelation of God. Because the Incomprehensible One revealed Himself in His creatures, it is possible for man to name Him after the fashion of a creature. In order to make Himself known to man, God had to condescend to the level of man, to accommodate Himself to the limited and finite human consciousness, and to speak the human language” (47f.). See also pp. 59ff. on The Infinity of God, and pp. 66ff. on The Knowledge of God.

THE EFFECT OF REGENERATION ON INTELLECTIVE ACTIVITIES OF THE SOUL

It is necessary, in order to provide a Scriptural resolution of the debate in our Church concerning the effect of regeneration on the intellect, to come first of all to an agreement as to the actual state of the question. From one point of view in the debate it has been held that regeneration necessarily effects a change in the understanding, or apprehension, of a proposition such as “Christ died for sinners,” so that a regenerate man will have an understanding of such a proposition differing from that of an unregenerate man; and that the very point at issue is whether regeneration does so change the understanding of such a gospel proposition that a regenerate man and an unregenerate man will differ with respect to their understanding of this same proposition. From the other point of view in the debate it has been held that while regeneration effects certain changes in the knowledge situation yet it does not necessarily effect a change in the understanding of gospel propositions, and that to say that it does...

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is to prejudice the unity and immutability of truth itself; and that the real
point at issue is whether the objective meaning of a true proposition is changed
for a man so that what he understands is different as a consequence of his re-
genration. It will be observed that there is concern, at least to a certain ex-
tent, over different questions. From the one viewpoint there is concern for the
idea that regeneration necessarily changes a man's subjective understanding of
the gospel. From the other, there is concern for the idea that objective truth is
unalterable as it is apprehended.

On first glance it may seem that the whole question may be resolved by
definition of terms. Let all agree, it may be said, that there is a distinction be-
tween a truth and the subjective understanding of a truth; then it can justly be
asserted that while the particular truth itself is unaltered, yet regeneration does
effect a change in the subjective understanding of that truth. But the matter is
not so simple. For while some think this distinction valid, others avoid it, fear-
ing that it will set up a false epistemological system whereby the mind, when
said to know a truth, in reality knows not the truth but rather the "understand-
ing", as though the mind were to know something other than the truth itself.
Thus there has been confusion concerning the word "understanding" and also
the word "knowledge" because of differing attitudes toward an epistemological
problem.

It is not the work of this committee to attempt to deal fully with the prob-
lem of knowledge. The problem needs consideration only insofar as it is di-
rectly involved in the precise theological question at issue. To reach the theo-
logical question, however, some further analysis of the knowledge situation is
necessary.

[*The following materials are included here for information as formul-
ations that have proved helpful to several members of the committee:

Thinking and knowing are two forms of intellectual activity, although
neither is possible in isolation from the other. Thinking is an activity of
the self in which the self conceives an idea, asserts a proposition or infers a
conclusion. Knowing is that act of the self in which the self asserts a
truth, the assertion being grounded upon nothing less than valid proximate
evidence.

There can be no question that the unregenerate man thinks. Likewise
there can be no question that he can know in the sense of thinking true pro-
positions and asserting them to be true, basing his certainty upon valid
proximate grounds. (Such grounds of knowledge as the unregenerate man
possesses by reason of the general testimony of the Holy Spirit we call
valid proximate grounds. Such grounds of knowledge as the regenerate
man possesses by reason of the special testimony of the Holy Spirit we call
valid ultimate grounds.) Nevertheless, the unregenerate man lacks the
recognition of the ultimate valid ground for asserting the truth of the pro-
position he knows, in the sense that he fails to see that truth in its proper
relationship to God who is Truth itself and in whose Light we see light.
In the same sense he is unable to justify the validity of the proximate
grounds.

Man as the image-bearer of God is subject to divinely-ordained laws
and norms in all spheres of his activity. In the intellectual, aesthetic and
ethical spheres, he is subject to the norms of truth, harmony and morality
respectively. Sin has not affected or altered the laws or norms which gov-
ern or hold for the various spheres. Likewise, the laws or norms are not
changed by regeneration. Yet sin and regeneration affect the beings that
are subject to norms. Sin has disrupted the relation of the human subject
to the norm in every sphere, and what has been disrupted by sin has been
restored in principle by regeneration. The moral law in the realm of ethics

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is the norm of all states and activities when viewed as states and activities. Thus knowing when viewed as an activity is subject to the moral law. Intellectual activity, when viewed not as an activity but as intellectual, is subject to the norm of truth, just as aesthetic activity, when viewed not as activity but as aesthetic, is subject to the norm of harmony.]

Total depravity affects every kind of intellectual activity of the soul. The unregenerate knowing subject is out of fellowship with God and oriented away from him and his will. The unregenerate knowing subject as consciously knowing is out of fellowship with God. The unregenerate knowing subject is oriented away from God in his subconscious or conscious states of knowledge. However, knowledge, when viewed as truths known or knowable by the unregenerate rather than as a modification of the knowing subject, is not altered by sin.

Regeneration effects a change in every kind of intellectual activity with reference to the truth. It results in renewed heart-understanding, i.e., "Spiritual" understanding. Spiritual in the sense that it is due to the operation and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The truths previously known are unaltered by regeneration but are now oriented in a theocentric system of truth. The regenerate knowing subject as consciously knowing is now restored to fellowship with God. The regenerate knowing subject as being in a conscious or subconscious state of knowledge is restored to fellowship with God. Knowledge when viewed as truths known or knowable rather than as a modification of the human subject, is unaltered by regeneration.

It has been asserted above that knowledge, viewed as truths known or knowable, is not altered by sin or by regeneration. The assertion is made, without appeal to the Scriptural reasons in support of it, because no party in the debate appears to have any interest in denying this datum. To be sure some have held that certain statements made in the course of the debate (with reference to a change in understanding due to regeneration) have endangered this datum. But the need then is not to undertake to prove the datum positively, but rather to come to a formulation concerning the effect of regeneration upon the intellect which will not prejudice this datum.

When knowledge is viewed as a modification of the knowing subject, on the other hand, it may be clearly distinguished from knowledge viewed as truths known or knowable. For in its former aspect knowledge is mutable, whereas in its latter aspect it is not mutable. Thus in the "knowledge" of the knowing subject there is an objective aspect which is unaltered by sin and by regeneration, and a subjective aspect which is mutable. These two aspects of "knowledge" may properly be distinguished the one from the other, and the distinction applied to the question at hand. Knowledge in its former aspect may be designated as "truth known." Knowledge in its latter aspect may be designated as "the subjective state of cognitive consciousness" (1). Such a state may be subconscious or unconscious, as well as conscious.

What then is the state of the question? The question is whether there is such a subjective change necessarily wrought by sin, and such a subjective change necessarily wrought by regeneration, that the respective states of knowledge of an unregenerate and a regenerate man, with reference to the same truth, must differ.

The virtue of this analysis of the state of the question appears to be that by it the confusion in the use of the word "knowledge" has been eliminated. Moreover much of the epistemological problem about the proper use of such words as "knowledge" and "understanding" can be avoided, and attention can be devoted to the Scriptural evidence bearing upon the question.

(1) Hereinafter, the subjective state of cognitive consciousness will be referred to as the "state of knowledge."

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Before proceeding to the Scriptural teaching, however, it remains to be
demonstrated by reference to the history of the debate that the question as
stated has actually been the point at issue. The full history of the discus-
sion, with all the various arguments employed and authorities appealed to,
need not be traced through the dozen or more relevant documents. To de-
lineate the question will be sufficient.

The Complaint described Dr. Clark's view, to which it objected, as
making "no qualitative distinction between the knowledge of the unregenerate
man and the knowledge of the regenerate man", so that "with the same
ease, the same 'common sense', the unregenerate and the regenerate man
can understand propositions revealed to man" (10:2). To this the Answer
replied: "Both the regenerate and the unregenerate can with the same ease
understand the proposition, Christ died for sinners. Regeneration, in spite
of the theory of the Complaint, is not a change in the understanding of
these words. The difference between the regenerate and the unregenerate
lies in the fact that the former believes the proposition and the latter does
not. The regenerate acknowledges Christ as Lord; the other does not. The
one is a willing subject; the other is a rebel. Regeneration is not neces-
sarily a change in understanding propositions. An unregenerate man may
understand the proposition 'Christ died for sinners', but far from knowing
it to be true, he thinks it to be false. Strictly speaking he knows only that
'the Scriptures teach Christ died for sinners.' When he is regenerated, his
understanding of the proposition may undergo no change at all; what hap-
pens is that he now accepts as true what previously he merely understood.
He no longer knows merely 'the Scriptures teach Christ died for sinners'; he
now knows 'Christ died for sinners'" (pp. 32f.).

It is to be observed with regard to these quotations that in the first
place the use by the Complaint of the words "knowledge" and "can under-
stand" is ambiguous. The adverbial expression "with the same ease", as
qualifying the words "can understand", indicates that the latter words ap-
ply to the knowing subject's subjective state of knowledge concerning the
truth. The reference to an "absolute qualitative distinction between the
knowledge" of the unregenerate and the regenerate man would also indi-
cate that the knowledge spoken of is subjective, for regeneration changes not
the truth but the knowing subject. This appears to have been the intention
of the Complaint. Yet the description is so brief that it might be taken to
teach that Dr. Clark's view was objectionable for the very reason that it
allowed unregenerate men to have knowing contact with divinely revealed
propositions. And this was in fact the interpretation put upon the Com-
plaint's words by the Answer. The Answer desired to uphold the Biblical
teaching that God's revealed truth is the same for all men. But the Ans-
wer went farther than this. It also assumed that back of the Complaint's
supposed opposition to the identity of the truth for all men was a notion
that regeneration actually changed the truth known. To such a notion the
Answer reacted vigorously, in the quotation given above: "Regeneration, in
spite of the theory of the Complaint, is not a change in the understanding
of these words." And by "understanding of these words" the Answer seems
to have meant "the truth known." But the Answer then failed to disting-
uish between understanding in the sense of "truth known" and understand-
ing in the sense of "subjective state of knowledge." For it goes on to re-
fer to the difference between the regenerate and the unregenerate in the
words "the one acknowledges Christ as Lord; the other does not. The one
is a willing subject; the other is a rebel." Regeneration then brings belief
and willing subjection; but these are changes in the knowing subject. Im-
mediately the Answer adds, "Regeneration is not a change in understanding
propositions." So the question arises, is the Answer still speaking of the
knowing subject? Is the Answer rejecting the idea of an intellective, noetic change in the knowing subject due to regeneration? Perhaps not. Perhaps it merely has failed to distinguish between the truth known and the subjective state of knowledge, and while still bearing the former in mind has used words which seem to refer to the latter. However a later sentence reads, "When he is regenerated, his understanding of the proposition may undergo no change at all; what happens is that he now accepts as true what previously he merely understood." Here the Answer does not seem to have intended to say that the truth of the words "Christ died for sinners" is not changed by regeneration, or else it would not have used the significant word "may." The Answer would not want to allow for the possibility that the truth known might be changed. Therefore it appears to be using the words "his understanding of the proposition" not in the sense of "the truth known by him" but rather in the sense of "his subjective state of knowledge concerning the proposition." Then to say that "when he is regenerated, his understanding of the proposition may undergo no change at all" seems to allow for the possibility that there may be in an unregenerate man such a high subjective state of knowledge respecting this truth that regeneration itself may effect no change at all in his subjective state of knowledge respecting it.

Accordingly the complainants, in a paper circulated on their behalf in response to the Answer, continued the debate in the belief that the question at issue was whether regeneration necessarily changes the subjective state of knowledge with regard to the truth. This paper spoke of the insufficiency of common grace to give the same understanding to the unregenerate that special grace gives to the regenerate, and by "the same understanding" it meant "the same subjective state of knowledge": "It goes without saying that common grace saves no one. It does bestow a certain understanding of the gospel upon those who have not been born again; but this understanding is never the same as that understanding received through special grace. If it were the same, there would be for the human intellect no distinction between the benefits of common grace and those of special grace. It should be obvious that the best that common grace can do leaves a natural understanding; special grace brings a spiritual understanding. The difference for the intellect is in effect the difference between being old, and new; being blind, and seeing." The adjectives "natural" and "spiritual" must refer to an understanding which is not "the truth known" but rather "the subjective state of knowledge", for special grace alters not the truth but the knowing subject.

To this quotation, however, Mr. Hamilton then replied as follows: "The complainants cannot escape from the common sense idea that anyone can understand the meaning of the proposition, 'Christ died for sinners,' so they make an artificial distinction between 'natural understanding' and 'spiritual understanding' and in so doing they are obviously trying to capitalize on the Scriptural distinction between the natural man and the spiritual man. That Scriptural distinction is of course just the distinction between the regenerated and the unregenerated man. Now since the complainants clearly reject our doctrine that an unregenerated man can (though not necessarily) understand the gospel (p. 10) they cannot mean that the 'natural understanding' can understand the gospel. Just what can it do then? If a 'natural understanding' is not an intellectual understanding of the meaning (of) the words 'Christ died for sinners,' just what is it? We insist that an unregenerated man may put exactly the same meaning on the words, 'Christ died for sinners' as the regenerated man. The difference is that the unregenerated man does not love the truth which he understands, and does not apply that blessed truth to his own soul for salvation. He does not 'spiritually apprehend' what he intellectually understands" (Studies of the Doc-
trines of the Complaint, No. 1, p. 5). Throughout this passage the reference is to those changes which are wrought by regeneration (loving, and applying the truth, and spiritually apprehending it) and to that which is said to be unaffected by regeneration (intellectual understanding). But inasmuch as only the knowing subject can be affected by regeneration the reference seems to be to that in the knowing subject which is or which is not altered by regeneration. At the same time that which is said to be unaltered is designated by the term “meaning,” a term which is ordinarily used with reference to the truth known, and this suggests the possibility that the words ‘intellectual understanding’ may also be intended in the same sense. On the other hand it is said on the following page of the paper that the word ginosko, in most cases, “means not merely ‘intellectual understanding’ but understanding plus belief, apprehension and experiential knowledge of that which is intellectually understood” (p. 5). Here the various elements found in ginosko, including “intellectual understanding”, would all seem to belong to the subject rather than to the truth known.

A Reply to this paper by Mr. Hamilton was then issued by Messrs. Bradford and Kuschke. The Reply attempted to avoid confusion by a distinction between the “object” and the “content” of knowledge. It explained the “object of knowledge” as truth, which is given through revelation, and which is one for all knowing minds. It explained the “content” of knowledge as the representation, in a mind, of the object of knowledge, and as the mind’s possession of, or grasp of, that truth. It then went on to refer the word “meaning” to the object, or to truth, and the word “understanding” to the content of knowledge; and then on the basis of these distinctions held that it is the “content” or “understanding” which is changed by regeneration. However, these distinctions by no means cleared up the issue but rather gave rise to further problems of terminology, and were strongly criticized. The word “representation” was noted as an indication of a false epistemology and the word “content” was held to be a word that properly meant the truth itself.

The distinctions advanced in the Reply, therefore, cannot be said to have opened the way to an agreement on the question at issue. But it should be noted, in the attempt to delineate the question by reference to the history of the debate, in what way the Reply did define the issue. It was opposed to the view that “an unregenerate man may have exactly the same understanding of the words ‘Christ died for sinners’ as a regenerate man, and that regeneration does not necessarily change at all the understanding of spiritual truth.” It held, on the contrary, “that although an unregenerate man may have an understanding of the truth, this understanding is never the same as that possessed by the regenerate man; and that regeneration always so enlightens the darkened mind that the understanding of the things of God is changed” (p. 1).

Mr. Hamilton then replied in a Second Paper, “We submit that if a man has an understanding of a truth, he knows the meaning or he has no understanding of it. If he understands something different, he does not understand the meaning at all” (p. 1). “The point at issue is whether an unregenerated man can ever grasp the true meaning. Mr. Kuschke and Mr. Bradford say that he can ‘have an understanding’... but that it is not an ‘adequate understanding’. But is the understanding which he has true or not? If true, then how does the truth change with regeneration?” (p. 4). The evident meaning for “understanding” here is “the truth known”, as opposed to the usage of the Reply which is evidently “the subjective state of knowledge.” Yet Mr. Hamilton appears to pass into the latter sense of “understanding” when on the same page of the Second Paper, under the heading, “What regeneration adds to intellectual understanding of truth,”

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he says, “Now to the intellectual understanding of the truth which may be the same for the regenerated or the unregenerated is added faith in the spiritual truths of the gospel. The regenerated man not only intellectually understands it and intellectually believes it; he appropriates it with his whole soul and knows it experientially in the ‘ginosko’ sense. Regeneration adds experiential understanding of truth to the intellectual understanding already possessed” (p. 4).

Finally, in a letter addressed to the Committee on Foreign Missions and circulated in the church under date of April 25, 1947, Mr. Hamilton said: “I hold that while the soul is totally depraved before regeneration and unable to have saving faith for that is the gift only of the Holy Spirit, it is nevertheless possible in exceptional cases for a person to have the same intellectual understanding of the meaning of a proposition of the gospel that a regenerated person has, though his attitude toward it will be entirely different” (p. 2). Thus it is held that although regeneration necessarily produces a change in “attitude” it does not necessarily produce a change in “intellectual understanding.” “Intellectual understanding” does not seem to mean here “the truth known,” or it would not have been stated that it is possible “in exceptional cases for a person to have the same intellectual understanding of the meaning of a proposition of the gospel that a regenerated person has.” The mention of “exceptional cases” seems moreover to refer to the high level of knowledge attained by some apparently unregenerate persons as proof that in their cases regeneration will effect no change in their subjective state of knowledge.

This review of the history of the debate appears to justify that formulation of the state of the question which was given earlier, and which may now be repeated: Is there such a subjective change necessarily wrought by sin, and such a subjective change necessarily wrought by regeneration, that the respective states of knowledge of an unregenerate and a regenerate man, with reference to the same truth, must differ?

Let it be freely acknowledged that there exists on the part of unregenerate persons what may be called intellectual or notional or historical faith. And where there is historical faith there is also a certain knowledge of that truth which is believed. Understanding and faith of this character can reach very high levels. So high may be the level of attainment along these lines in the culture of man’s natural powers and under the non-saving operations of the Holy Spirit that the persons concerned may pass among men as the most exemplary specimens of Christian knowledge, faith and virtue, and no man would be able properly or rightfully to discern that they were not really regenerate. The Scripture itself advises us of this fact when it uses language to describe the experience of persons who have come under the influence of the gospel and of the Holy Spirit, language which we might well think is applicable only to the regenerate but is used, nevertheless, to describe the experience of those who may fall away. (cf. Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:29). Furthermore it is not given to us men so to diagnose the psychology of men that we shall be able to describe the exact difference between the soul exercises of such people who possess this high degree of attainment and grace, short of actual salvation, and the soul exercises of those who may be actually regenerate.

It must also be appreciated that this high degree of attainment and bestowal of non-saving grace covers the whole range of a person’s life and activity. It applies to what we may call the intellective, emotive and volitive aspects of man. Indeed oftentimes it is in the sphere of the intellectual that this attainment is most conspicuous.

Furthermore, we must not suppose that attainment in knowledge of Christian truth is restricted to those who have notional and historical faith. A high
level of knowledge may be achieved by those who do not yield any kind of credence to that which is known.

Finally, it must be insisted that prior to regeneration and saving faith, in the case of intelligent adults, there must be some intelligent cognition of the import of the propositions of law and gospel. Faith does not emerge in a vacuum. Faith comes of hearing and hearing by the word of Christ. Information regarding the gospel must be communicated before faith is exercised and that information must be apprehended by the person who is going to believe. It is necessary therefore to maintain that there is a certain knowledge and conviction that must precede faith.

But even when knowledge of this character in the unregenerate reaches its most advanced development a radical difference remains between it and the knowledge of the regenerate when all aspects of the knowledge situation are considered. For even when the knowledge objectively considered is identical with regard to some or many truths of the gospel, subjectively considered, the knowledge is of as distinct a kind as is the spiritual character of the knower. This appears from the Scriptural teaching concerning the pervasiveness of original sin and the pervasiveness of regeneration.

The teaching of Scripture as to the change wrought by sin in the knowing subject.

With reference to the intellective powers in general. Gen. 6:5—"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the day." "Imagination" is a framing in the mind; "thoughts" means thoughts, devices, inventions. Clearly man's intellective powers are in view. Thus all exercises of those powers are inwardly evil ("every imagination of the thoughts of his heart"); there is no good exercise of those powers ("only evil"); and the exercise of those powers is always evil ("all the day"). God originally "made man upright" (Eccles. 7:29) and in the image of God as to knowledge (Col. 3:10), but the entrance of sin turned his intellective powers inwardly, entirely, and habitually to evil.

In considering the Scriptural teaching as to the manifestation of man's depravity in that aspect of man and his activity which is intellective, cognitive and noetic, it is often difficult to determine precise shades of difference among the terms employed in Scripture to denote that aspect. It should be acknowledged that there is a very close interrelation of the different aspects from which man's soul may be viewed, and it is sometimes very difficult to restrict any of the terms which Scripture uses to designate man on his intellectual side to what we might call intellect in a restricted sense. Nevertheless Scripture does view man from the differing aspects of his activity and uses terms which are intended to focus our attention upon these aspects in their differentiation as well as in their interrelation and interdependence. Without giving any support to a crude faculty psychology we can say that Scripture uses language which recognizes that man has an intellective faculty, an emotive faculty, a volitive faculty, a conscience faculty. And this is the same as saying that man is constituted with diverse capacities.

Of the various Scriptural terms to which attention will be called below, it is not affirmed that any is restricted to a purely intellective sense. The soul is a unit, and thinking or knowing does not exist in isolation from the volitive and emotive powers of the soul. But all the words given below embody the intellective element. Thus when it is said that the "mind of the flesh is enmity against God", there is reflection upon the volitive and the emotive while the intellective is yet embodied in the term "mind." Whatever variety of meaning may be set forth in the Scriptural terms below, that variety reveals the variety of the Scriptural reflection upon the depravity of man when viewed from the intellective aspect.

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With reference to the mind ("nous"). According to Titus 1:15, nothing is pure to the defiled and unbelieving, but "even their mind and conscience are defiled." In II Tim. 3:8 men who resist the truth are said to be "corrupted in mind"; cf. also I Tim. 6:5. Unbelieving Gentiles walk "in the vanity of their mind (Eph. 4:17); their mind is characterized by futility. In Scripture that is said to be vain which is futile and to no purpose, and which has no profit. "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain" (I Cor. 3:20; cf. Titus 3:9, I Cor. 15:17, James 1:26, Rom. 1:21).

With reference to the mind ("noema"). "And if our gospel be hid, it is hid to those who are lost, in whom the god of this world has blinded (etuphlosen) the minds of those who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (II Cor. 4:3-4). In the earlier context Paul has spoken of the glory of the ministration of the Spirit, or of the new covenant, as excelling the glory of the ministration of the old covenant. The glory of the old, upon the face of Moses, was veiled from the children of Israel, and even today a veil upon their hearts prevents them from seeing the glory of that covenant. In the new covenant, by the Spirit of the Lord, the glory of the Lord is beheld with open face; and it is in honest manifestation of the truth that ministers of the new covenant commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Here Paul reverts to the case of the lost or unbelieving, for not all believe the gospel. He uses the same figure that he had used in the case of the unbelieving under the old covenant, that of a veil. The gospel is hid (kekalmumenon) to them, or veiled from them, and through no lack in the gospel, which is glorious (doxes), but rather because the god of this world has blinded (etuphlosen) their minds (noemata) lest the light of that glorious gospel should shine upon them. Their blindness of mind hides the gospel from them and accordingly they stand in striking contrast with those others mentioned in verse 6, who have that light only because God has shined in their hearts to bestow that light: or, in other words, in contrast with those whom God has regenerated and who believe the gospel. Their blindness of mind, however, by no means excludes them from hearing the gospel in its outward ministration, for when the gospel is preached (cf. verses 1, 2, 5) they show themselves to be unbelieving (apiston) toward it. It is rather the light and the glory of the gospel to which they are blind, even as the Jews are blind to the glory of the Old Testament while actually reading it, by reason of the veil upon their hearts (3:7-14). Accordingly their mental blindness of which Paul speaks indicates neither the destruction of their intellective powers, nor the destruction of the operation or exercise of those powers, but rather an impotency or defect, in their intellective powers, rendering them noetically blind to the glory of the gospel. Thus the brightest colors appear only as various shades of gray in certain forms of color-blindness.

With reference to the understanding ("dianoia"). Eph. 4:17-18—"This I say therefore and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart." In II Cor. 4:3-4 the minds of unbelievers are said to be blinded lest the light of the gospel should shine unto them. Here unbelievers contemplated as being darkened (eskolomenoi) in the mind or understanding (dianoia). Darkness is the absence of light; it is opposed to "light in the Lord" (5:8). Associated with this darkness of the understanding is alienation from the life of God, from that Spiritual life which God communicates. These ideas of darkness and death, light and life, are implied again in Eph. 5:14—"awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." The underlying basis for both darkness of understanding and alienation from life is stated to be, "because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart." The ignorance (agnoia) which is in them is that ten
ousan en autois; its seat is in themselves, in their inborn sin. The hardness or obduracy of their heart is likewise the inward original character of their nature. Thus the passage as a whole emphasizes the effects of sin in the unregenerate knowing subject: futility of mind, darkness of understanding, alienation from the life of the Spirit, ignorance whose seat is in themselves, and obduracy of heart. According to the Scriptural doctrine of the unity of the soul, all these effects, even if they do not refer primarily to the intellective powers, nevertheless condition the exercise of these powers.

With reference to the act of knowing ("ginosko"). I Cor. 2:14—"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged." The things of the Spirit of God, which the natural or unregenerate man does not receive, are called "Jesus Christ and him crucified" (verse 2); "the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God hath ordained" (verse 7); "the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (verse 9); "the things that are freely given to us of God" (verse 12). These are the things "which also we speak" (verse 13). It is the gospel message to which Paul refers, and that message is contemplated as being preached (cf. verses 4,6,7,13). But when it is preached to the natural man he does not receive it, for the reason that it is foolishness to him. It is to be remarked that Paul here is speaking generally of the natural man, and of the fact that the natural man as such does not accept the gospel when it is preached to him. Hence the word "foolishness" cannot mean that the gospel to a natural man is a mere outward form of unintelligible words, for the truth undoubtedly conveys meaning to many unregenerate men. But the wisdom of the world allows for no such philosophy as that God should send his Son to die on a cross for sin (cf. 1:18-23); in the estimation of the natural man such things are folly, so he receives them not. Moreover, "he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged." He is unable to know them because he as a natural man, to whom the Spirit of God has not savingly come, is not able to judge them in the Spirit; and the gospel, being spiritual, is judged only in the Spirit. Accordingly verse 14 sets the natural man and spiritual things in antithesis.

In the larger context an antithesis obtains between the natural man and the spiritual man; the one cannot know spiritual things, the other can (cf. verse 12, "we have received . . . the Spirit which is of God, that we might know (oida) the things which are freely given to us of God"). No natural man can judge spiritual things, for he has not been born of the Spirit, and the inability referred to is an inability which belongs to each unregenerate individual and to all unregenerate individuals. But what precisely is this inability to know and to judge spiritual things? Paul evidently does not mean that the natural man is debarred from all acquaintance with the truth of the gospel. But in virtue of the antithesis between the natural man's inability to know and the spiritual man's ability to know, we may say that the sense is that the natural man, being natural, cannot know the spirituality of the things of God. There is that in them which is foreign to him, and for which he has no capacity. He cannot know spiritual things as the spiritual man knows them. He is subjectively incapable of doing so.

This interpretation receives support from certain passages in which a knowledge of God and of his will is attributed to the ungodly. In Rom. 1:21 knowledge of God (with the use of the verb ginosko) and in 1:32 knowledge of the righteous judgment of God (with the use of the verb epiginosko) is predicated of unrighteous men. In Rom. 2:18 it is very probable that the "Jew" who knows (ginosko) the will of God is also contemplated as an unbeliever, and the verses which follow are in this respect very instructive. Thus the natural man may have a knowledge of God. But the knowledge, subjectively considered, must be characterized by the natural man's subjective condition as natural. His knowledge then is of a distinct kind; it is natural rather than spiritual. As long

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as the natural man is natural, his subjective knowledge of the things of the Spirit of God must be natural, and cannot be spiritual. The spiritual man, on the other hand, has a subjective knowledge of God which is of as distinct a kind as is his own condition as spiritual; it is spiritual knowledge.

The natural man's inability to know the things of the Spirit of God is an intellective or cognitive inability. It is not, to be sure, only intellective or cognitive. The Greek word ginosko is often used in a rich and pregnant sense that embraces far more than the barely intellective activity of man. It is rather obvious that it designates a deeply practical and experiential knowledge with emotive and volitive aspects as well as intellective. The knowledge of the Father and of the Son in which eternal life consists is of course not any bare intellectual apprehension but a knowledge that is charged with the notions of love and communion. It is fully admitted that the regenerate man appropriates the truths of the gospel to his own soul and that he comes to have what may be called an "experiential" knowledge of these truths, and that such appropriation with its correlative experience distinguishes the regenerate from the unregenerate man. But the question for the solution of which we refer to I Cor. 2:14 is whether there is a necessary intellective difference in the subjective knowledge of the natural man and the spiritual man. We would be doing violence to the plain import of I Cor. 2:14 if we should exclude man's very intellective knowing, or his state of knowledge, from the scope of the antithesis drawn between the natural man's inability to know and the spiritual man's ability to know, in order to put all the emphasis upon the volitive and emotive aspects of knowing. However much we may emphasize the appropriation of the truth by the regenerate, his emotive and volitive engagement with the truth and the radical change of attitude with reference to the truth, and all of this necessarily and rightly so, we must not exclude, from the contrast between the natural man's inability to know and the spiritual man's ability to know, in order to put all the emphasis upon the volitive and emotive aspects of knowing. However much we may emphasize the appropriation of the truth by the regenerate, his emotive and volitive engagement with the truth and the radical change of attitude with reference to the truth, and all of this necessarily and rightly so, we must not exclude, from the contrast between the natural man's inability to know and the spiritual man's ability to know, intellective activity in its most elementary and rudimentary aspect. However much the verb ginosko may be interpenetrated with appropriative and experiential notions, yet to suppress the intellective or cognitive feature of ginosko, and particularly to suppose that in the matter of intellective knowing or in that of the intellective state of knowledge with respect to the things of the Spirit the antithesis drawn in the text does not obtain, would be wholly unwarranted, would be without any basis in the context and would radically interfere with the leading thought of the passage.

With reference to the act of understanding ("suniemi"). Rom. 3:11—"There is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God". This is a part of the passage from verses 9-19 which shows that all, both Jew and Gentile, are under sin and guilty before God; and which declares all the activities of guilty men, such as those of the tongue, mouth, feet and ways, to be evil and unprofitable. Expressly included in these evil activities is failure to "understand." Since the description applies not only to the Gentile but also to the Jew who knows God's revelation, it cannot be lack of knowledge of truth which is spoken of, but a lack in the knowing subject. The word suniemi, moreover, as clearly as any word in the Greek New Testament, has the force of intellectual understanding. According to Thayer, it "implies native insight, the soul's capacity of itself not only to lay hold upon the phenomena of the outer world through the senses, but by combination (sun and ienai) to arrive at their underlying laws" (p. 118, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, N. Y., Harper, 1887).

In Matt. 13:18-23 is our Lord's interpretation of the parable of the sower (cf. parallels in Mark 4:14-20 and Luke 8:11-15). It is with the interpretation of the parable that we are concerned and hence some of the difficulties inherent in the paraballic form of our Lord's teaching and the purpose for that form, declared in these contexts, should not be regarded as prejudicing the argument.
What we are dealing with is not so much the interpretation of the parable as the bearing that our Lord's interpretation has upon the question at issue.

We need not argue the point regarding the content of the message contemplated in this case; it is the Word of the kingdom, the gospel. All of the four classes heard the gospel and even in the case of those whose attention to it was most ephemeral we are told that it was sown in their heart. We must conclude, therefore, that there was some kind of lodgement of the Word in the hearts of all these respective classes. We may surely suppose that there was some kind of intellectual understanding or of intelligent cognition on the part of all. It becomes particularly necessary to insist on this in the case of those who are compared to the seed sown on rocky ground. The fact that they received the Word with joy and continued for a season requires the assumption that they had some intelligent understanding of its meaning. There is the strongest presumption that the third class, also, are regarded as yielding some kind of intelligent response to the Word.

It should be noted that the rocky ground hearers are represented as receiving the Word. In this respect also there is a rather close resemblance (for a time) to those who bring forth fruit to perfection (cf. Matt. 13:20; Mark 4:16; Luke 8:13 with Mark 4:20). There is then without doubt in the case of this class a ready reception of the Word, which implies a rather high degree of intelligent understanding.

It is noteworthy, however, that "understanding" of the Word is actually predicated only of the fourth class, the class we would call true and regenerate believers. The distinguishing features of this class are that they understand, they receive the Word into an honest and good heart, they hold it fast, and they bring forth fruit with patience.

It might be argued that the "understanding" predicated of the fruit-bearing, abiding believers is not intended to distinguish them from all the other classes but only from the first. For only in the case of the wayside hearers is it said that they did not understand (Matt. 13:19). And so it might be said that the first class heard but did not understand, the second heard and understood, the third heard and probably understood, but the fourth heard and understood and brought forth fruit, so that the fourth is not distinguished from the second and third in the matter of understanding but only in the matter of continuance and fruit-bearing.

This, however, is not a natural or reasonable interpretation. If this were intended we should expect something more direct and positive in the way of understanding to be attributed to the second and third classes. Such is not the case. And so when we read in Matt. 13:23, "This is he who hears the Word and understands" we should surely expect that the "understanding" is a distinguishing feature of this class and lies at the basis of the difference in the final issue. This is surely the natural and reasonable interpretation. And, if so, it means that the regenerate hearer, if we may use terminology appropriate to our discussion, is distinguished by the fact that he understands the Word. The others do not understand. Consequently the distinction between regenerate and unregenerate applies to the very intellectual activity involved in the understanding (suníemi) of the gospel and therefore of the propositions apart from which there is no gospel to be declared or heard.

Moreover in our Lord's introductory statements (Matt. 13:13-14) some very pertinent distinctions bearing upon this very question are drawn. "Seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, neither do they understand. . . . By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive." The thought is that there are those who hear in one sense and not in another, who see in one sense and not in another. On the other hand true believers could be described as those who hear and hear, who see and see. And this distinction characteristic of true believers, of hearing and hearing, of see-
ing and seeing, is also one of understanding and perceiving. Distinction between those who believe and those who do not applies even to hearing and seeing as well as to understanding and knowing.

Accordingly of the four classes of hearers of the Word, it may be said that all hear the same truth, but that a distinction prevails between the subjective understanding of the first three, and the subjective understanding of the last; a distinction so radical that our Lord speaks only of the last, or of the true and abiding believers, as “understanding” the Word.

With reference to the thoughts or purposes ("phronema"). Thayer defines this word as “what one has in mind, the thoughts and purposes.” It appears to mean not only exercises of the mind but also frame and disposition of mind. Rom. 8:6-7 - “For the mind of the flesh is death, and the mind of the Spirit is life and peace. Because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, for it is not able.” The carnal mind is the unregenerate mind, without the Spirit of God and consequently without the blessings of life and peace, so it is said to be “death” (thanatos; cf. Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:13). It is a state of spiritual inactivity and spiritual insensibility. It has no inner living impulse toward God, but is rather “enmity” against him. The lack of spiritual impulse toward God and the presence of active enmity against him is patent at the point of God’s revelation in his law, where God’s glory is most effulgent, and where the demands of his glory come to bear upon us most urgently; here the enmity of the carnal mind becomes most virulent. It cannot be subject to the law of God, Paul adds, in a further reflection upon the state of “death” which he has already ascribed to it.

The teaching of Scripture as to the change wrought by regeneration in the knowing subject.

John 3:3—“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Except by the radical, pervasive, mysterious, sovereign renewal of regeneration no one can be saved, no one can even see the spiritual kingdom of God. The reality of that which is spiritual is to be perceived only as a result of the new birth.

With reference to the mind ("nous"). Rom. 12:2—“Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind” Eph. 4:23—“Renewed in the spirit of your mind.” The renewal begun by regeneration is a renewal extending to the mind, which had been defiled and corrupted by sin (cf. Titus 1:15 and II Tim. 3:8).

With reference to the understanding ("dianoia"). I John 5:20—“And we know (oida) that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding (dianoia), that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.” The Son of God has come, and has given us an insight or a power of discernment to the end that we might know him. Candlish says on this text, “The inward working of the Holy Ghost is here assumed, or asserted; that is the ‘understanding’ or insight that is meant. Jesus Christ coming as the Son of God has given us, not merely new outer light but a new inner eye; otherwise even his coming could not make us know ‘the True One.’ His coming indeed may be said to be itself the outer light. His coming forth from the True One in whose bosom he dwells reveals the True One to us. But the discovery would be in vain if his coming did not secure to us, as his gift, ‘understanding to know’ the True One when thus revealed” (The First Epistle of John, Edinburgh, A. and C. Black, 1877, p. 554).

With reference to the eyes of the heart. Eph. 1:17-18—“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge (epignosis) of him, the eyes of your heart being enlightened, that ye may know (oida) what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints . . . ” The work of saving grace brings enlightenment to the eyes of our heart, to the end that we
may know what is the hope of God’s calling, an enlightenment which must
radically affect the most basic movements of intelligent apprehension with re-
spect to the “hope”, “the riches of glory”, and “the exceeding greatness of
power” which belong to the gospel in its objective accomplishment and effectual
application (cf. verses 18-23). It is obvious that without enlightenment the
eyes of the heart would be blind (cf. II Cor. 4:4) toward these excellences of
the gospel. But now there is new light in the most basic and elemental move-
ments of the intellective understanding of these truths. The new light must be
the light of the Holy Spirit in the soul. Even as natural light is the external
medium for the discovery of physical objects, so the light of the Spirit in the
soul is the inward medium for the discovery of the beauty and excellence of the
gospel. In this connection Acts 26:18 is significant — “To open their eyes, to
turn them from darkness unto light and from the power of Satan unto God, that
they may receive forgiveness of sins”. In II Cor. 3:13-18, as well, the minds
(noemata) of the children of Israel are said to be blinded by a veil upon their
heart, blinding them in the reading of the Old Testament; but that veil is taken
away in Christ, by the instrumentality of the Spirit of the Lord; and then with
open, unveiled face they behold the Lord’s glory.

With reference to the act of understanding or perceiving (“noeo”). Heb.
11:3 - “By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of
God, so that things which are seen did not come of things which appear.” With-
out faith God is not understood to be the Creator; that understanding is attain-
ced by faith, a regenerate exercise.

With reference to the act of knowing or understanding (“oida”). I Cor.
2:12—“And we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit which
is of God, that we might know (oida) the things which are freely given to us
of God.” God’s special revelation, which has been freely given to us, is not
sufficient in itself to provide the whole cure. We need the truth, to be sure; we
need the light of the gospel; but we need also the power in ourselves to know it,
the power of sight, in order that the light may have its effect in us. That is
to say, the truth known is of no saving avail to us unless we have received the
Spirit of God, to the end that we might “know” the truth subjectively. This
“knowing” of the truth is not achieved in mere contact with the truth, other-
wise the reception of the Spirit of God would not be necessary unto it. As al-
ready observed in the study of a passage in the same context, I Cor. 2:14,
the truth is regarded as “given”, as being preached to both the natural and the
spiritual man. It is our subjective knowing of the truth, the consequence in us
of our reception of the Spirit of God, that is designated by the word “know”
in verse 12.

With reference to knowledge (“epignosis”). Coloss. 3:10—“And have put
on the new man, which is renewed unto knowledge (eis epignosin) after the
image of him who created him” (cf. Eph. 1:17-18). Charles Hodge observes that
renewal, according to this verse, is “not in knowledge, much less by knowledge,
but unto knowledge, so that he knows. Knowledge is the effect of the renova-
tion spoken of” (Systematic Theology, II, p. 99). This renewal is of the know-
ing subject; the knowledge is therefore subjective knowledge. The word “knowl-
edge” means “precise and accurate knowledge” according to Thayer, and Light-
foot, in his comment on Coloss. 1:9 observes that “the compound epignosis is an
advance upon gnosis, denoting a larger and more thorough knowledge”.

With reference to knowledge (“gnosis”). II Cor. 4:6—“For it is the God
who said, Let light shine out of darkness, who has shined in our hearts to give
the light (pros photismon) of the knowledge (gnoseos) of the glory of God in
the face of Christ”. Here is the counterpart to verses 3 and 4: “And if our
gospel be hid, it is hid to those who are lost, in whom the god of this world has
blinded the minds of those who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel
of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” Charles Hodgc

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observes, “The apostle recognizes a twofold illumination, the one external by the word, to which Satan renders unbelievers blind; and the other internal by the Spirit, whereby we are enabled to see the glory that is objectively revealed” (An Exposition of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, N. Y., 1876, p. 90). Even the light of all lights, the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, is unknown to the spiritually blind. But God’s power is sufficient. He who once said, “Let there be light”, and dispelled the darkness, has shined also in our innermost hearts, to abolish the blindness there, to give us the light of the knowledge of himself in the face of his Son.

The Westminster Confession of Faith.

The Confession is in accord with the teaching of the passages of Scripture examined above. Chapter VI, Sections II, III and IV say that our first parents “fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all parts and faculties of soul and body. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed; and the same death in sin, and corrupted nature, conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.”

According to Chapter X, Section I, “All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, He is pleased, in His appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by His Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation, by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God, taking away their heart of stone and giving unto them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and, by His almighty power, determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ: yet so, as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace.”

In effectual calling, therefore, the divine activity on behalf of those predestinated unto life terminates upon their minds, their hearts and their wills, which from original corruption had been wholly defiled and utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good. As the divine activity terminates upon their minds, it consists in “enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God.” Clearly, then, without the divine enlightenment they would not understand, and could not understand, the things of God. The subjective state of knowledge of the enlightened toward the things of God therefore differs from the subjective state of knowledge of the unenlightened toward those things.

Conclusions.

1. All unregenerate persons are defiled, corrupt, vain, ignorant, darkened, blinded, and without living impulse toward God, in their intellective powers and activities. The indictment pronounced by Scripture upon the understanding of the natural man admits of no exceptions within the knowing subject. The natural man’s state of knowledge therefore, cannot be regarded as immune from the vanity, ignorance, darkness, even blindness, with which his intellective powers and activities are characterized. To regard his state of knowledge as thus immune would be a denial of the totality of his depravity.

2. The state of the intellective powers of unregenerate persons does not prevent them from thinking and knowing, from knowing the truths of special revelation, or from being in a subjective state of knowledge respecting those truths. The objective truths known by them are in no way altered by their sin. Their subjective state of knowledge respecting those truths, however, is
necessarily and radically affected by sin, since it is an exercise of their own corrupt and darkened intellective powers.

3. All unregenerate persons are characterized by an intellective inability to know the light, the glory, the moral beauty and excellence, and the spirituality of the gospel. They are mentally blind to these things, and are prevented from seeing them by a veil upon their heart. Consequently, their state of knowledge respecting the gospel is radically deficient; they know God’s special revelation apart from its light, glory, moral beauty and excellence, and spirituality. As “natural”, they lack the affinity for such spiritual excellences, and have no noctic capacity for them.

4. Special revelation alone, without the removal of their mental blindness to the glory and spirituality of the gospel, cannot therefore remove the deficiency in their state of knowledge.

5. Regeneration is necessary if a person is to see the kingdom of God. By regeneration the subjective darkness and blindness with reference to the things of the Spirit of God which is characteristic of the natural man is replaced by new subjective light and insight. Regeneration immediately affects and quickens man’s intellect and so into his state of knowledge respecting the truths of the gospel there is injected a new capacity of spiritual vision which does not in any way change the truths concerned but does change, in a very radical way that eludes our detection or analysis, the insight which a man has into the most elementary and central truths of the gospel. There is new light in the most basic movements of his intellective activity concerning those truths. To suppose that there is any respect in which his state of knowledge concerning those truths is not changed by regeneration would be to deny the pervasiveness and inclusiveness of the regenerative act.

6. The implantation by the Holy Spirit of a new spiritual light brings the mind into a new spiritual frame and capacity, and into affinity with the truths of the Spirit of God, so that the glory and spirituality of those truths are seen.

7. Due to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit the regenerate man is in a “spiritual” state of knowledge with reference to any truth of the gospel, while the unregenerate man’s state of knowledge with reference to that truth is not “spiritual” but natural. The former sees the glory and spirituality of that truth; the latter cannot, and is therefore described in Scripture as being in a state of darkness and blindness. The regenerate and the unregenerate man can never be in the same state of knowledge with reference to that truth; their respective states of knowledge are as distinct as their respective spiritual conditions. Therefore their respective states of knowledge with reference to the same truth must and do differ.

Respectfully submitted,
The Committee

THE FREE OFFER OF THE GOSPEL

It would appear that the real point in dispute in connection with the free offer of the gospel is whether it can properly be said that God desires the salvation of all men. The Committee elected by the Twelfth General Assembly in its report to the Thirteenth General Assembly said, “God not only delights in the penitent but is also moved by the riches of His goodness and mercy to desire the repentance and salvation of the impenitent and reprobate” (Minutes, p. 67). It should have been apparent that the aforesaid Committee, in predicating such “desire” of God, was not dealing with the decretive will of God; it was dealing with the free offer of the gospel to all without distinction and that surely respects, not the decretive or secret will of God, but the revealed will. There is no ground for the supposition that the expression was intended to refer to God’s decretive will.

It must be admitted that if the expression were intended to apply to the
decretive will of God then there would be, at least, implicit contradiction. For
to say that God desires the salvation of the reprobate and also that God wills
the damnation of the reprobate and apply the former to the same thing as the
latter, namely, the decretive will, would be contradiction; it would amount to
averring of the same thing, viewed from the same aspect, God wills and God
does not will.

The question then is: what is implicit in, or lies back of, the full and free
offer of the gospel to all without distinction? The word “desire” has come to
be used in the debate, not because it is necessarily the most accurate or felici-
tous word but because it serves to set forth quite sharply a certain implica-
tion of the full and free offer of the gospel to all. This implication is that in the
free offer there is expressed not simply the bare preceptive will of God but the
disposition of lovingkindness on the part of God pointing to the salvation to be
gained through compliance with the overtures of gospel grace. In other words,
the gospel is not simply an offer or invitation but also implies that God delights
that those to whom the offer comes would enjoy what is offered in all its ful-
ness. And the word “desire” has been used in order to express the thought
epitomised in Ezekiel 33:11, which is to the effect that God has pleasure that
the wicked turn from his evil way and live. It might as well have been said,
“It pleases God that the wicked repent and be saved.”

Again, the expression “God desires”, in the formula that crystallizes the
xru of the question, is intended to notify not at all the “seeming” attitude of
God but a real attitude, a real disposition of lovingkindness inherent in the free
offer to all, in other words, a pleasure or delight in God, contemplating the
blessed result to be achieved by compliance with the overture proffered and the
invitation given.

Still further, it is necessary to point out that such “desire” on the part of
God for the salvation of all must never be conceived of as desire to such an
end apart from the means to that end. It is not desire of their salvation irre-
spective of repentance and faith. Such would be inconceivable. For it would
mean, as Calvin says, “to renounce the difference between good and evil.” If it
is proper to say that God desires the salvation of the reprobate, then He desires
such by their repentance. And so it amounts to the same thing to say “God
desires their salvation” as to say “He desires their repentance.” This is the
same as saying that He desires them to comply with the indispensable conditions
of salvation. It would be impossible to say the one without implying the other.

The Committee would now respectfully submit some exegetical material
bearing upon this question and with a view to the resolution of it.

Matthew 5:44-48. This passage does not indeed deal with the overtures
of grace in the gospel. But it does tell us something regarding God’s benevolence
that has bearing upon all manifestations of divine grace. The particular aspect
of God’s grace reflected upon here is the common gifts of providence, the
making of the sun to rise upon evil and good and the sending of rain upon just
and unjust. There can be no question but all without distinction, reprobate as
well as elect, are the beneficiaries of this favour, and it is that fact that is dis-
tinctly stated in verse 45.

The significant feature of this text is that this bestowal of favour by God
on all alike is adduced as the reason why the disciples are to love their enemies
and do them good. There is, of course, a question as to the proper text of verse
44. If we follow the Aleph-B text and omit the clauses, “bless them who curse
you, do good to them who hate you” as well as the verb “despitefully use”, the
sense is not affected. And besides, these clauses, though they may not belong
to the genuine text of Matthew, appear in Luke 6:27,28 in practically the same
form. Hence the teaching of our Lord undoubtedly was that the disciples were
to love their enemies, do good to those who hated them, bless those who cursed
them, and pray—for those who despitefully used them and prosecuted them. And

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the reason provided is that God Himself bestows His favours upon His enemies. The particular reason mentioned why the disciples are to be guided and animated by the divine example is that they, the disciples, are sons of the Father. The obligation and urge to the love of their enemies and the bestowal of good upon them are here grounded in the filial relation that they sustain to God. Since they are sons of God they must be like their heavenly Father. There can be no doubt but that the main point is the necessity of imitating the divine example and this necessity is peculiarly enforced by the consideration of the filial relation they sustain to God as their heavenly Father.

It is just here, however, that it becomes necessary to note the implications of the similarity established and enforced as the reason for such attitude and conduct with reference to their enemies. The disciples are to love their enemies in order that they may be the sons of their Father; they must imitate their Father. Clearly implied is the thought that God, the Father, loves His enemies and that it is because He loves His enemies that He makes His sun rise upon them and sends them rain. This is just saying that the kindness bestowed in sunshine and rain is the expression of divine love, that back of the bestowal there is an attitude on the part of God, called love, which constrains Him to bestow these tokens of His lovingkindness. This informs us that the gifts bestowed by God are not simply gifts which have the effect of good and blessing to those who are the recipients but that they are also a manifestation or expression of lovingkindness and goodness in the heart or will of God with reference to those who are the recipients. The enjoyment on the part of the recipients has its ground as well as its source in this lovingkindness of which the gifts enjoyed are the expression. In other words, these are gifts and are enjoyed because there is in a true and high sense benevolence in the heart of God.

These conclusions are reinforced by verse 48. There can be no question regarding the immediate relevance of verse 48 to the exhortation of verses 44-47, even though it may have a more comprehensive reference. And verse 48 means that what has been adduced by way of divine example in the preceding verses is set forth as epitomising the divine perfection and as providing the great exemplar by which the believer's attitude and conduct are to be governed and the goal to which thought and life are to be oriented. The love and beneficence of God to the evil and unjust epitomise the norm of human perfection. It is obvious that this love and beneficence on the part of God are regarded by our Lord himself as not something incidental in God but as that which constitutes an element in the sum of divine perfection. This is made very specific in the parallel passage in Luke 6:35,36 where we read, “And ye shall be sons of the Most High, because he is kind towards the unthankful and evil. Ye shall be merciful, as your Father is merciful.” This word translated “merciful” is redolent of the pity and compassion in the heart of God that overflow in the bestowments of kindness.

The sum of this study of these passages in Matthew and Luke is simply this, that presupposed in God's gifts bestowed upon the ungodly there is in God a disposition of love, kindness, mercifulness, and that the actual gifts and the blessing accruing therefrom for the ungodly must not be abstracted from the lovingkindness of which they are the expression. And, of course, we must not think of this lovingkindness as conditioned upon a penitent attitude in the recipients. The lovingkindness rather is exercised towards them in their ungodly state and is expressed in the favours they enjoy. What bearing this may have upon the grace of God manifested in the free offer of the gospel to all without distinction remains to be seen. But we are hereby given a disclosure of goodness in the heart of God and of the relation there is between gifts bestowed and the lovingkindness from which they flow. And there is indicated to us something respecting God's love or benevolence that we might not or could not entertain if we concentrated our thought simply on the divine decree.
of reprobation. Furthermore we must remember that there are many gifts enjoyed by the ungodly who are within the pale of the gospel administration which are not enjoyed by those outside, and we shall have to conclude that in respect of these specific favours, enjoyed by such ungodly persons in distinction from others, the same principle of divine benevolence and lovingkindness must obtain, a lovingkindness, too, which must correspond to the character of the specific gifts enjoyed.

Acts 14:17. This text does not express as much as those considered already. But it does witness to the same truth that God gave testimony to His own perfection when He did good to those whom He left to walk in their own ways. God did them good, He sent them rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness. We must infer, on the basis of what we found already, that behind this doing of good and bestowal of blessing, as well as behind the gladness of heart which followed, there was the divine goodness and lovingkindness.

Deuteronomy 5:29 (26); 32:29; Psalm 81:14ff.; Isaiah 48:18. The purpose of adding these texts is to note the optative force of that which is expressed. There can be no reasonable question as to the optative force of Deuteronomy 5:29(26). It is introduced by the idiom mi yitten which literally means “who will give?” but is really a strong optative expression meaning “Oh that there were!” Consequently the text reads, “Oh that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!” It is the Lord who is speaking and we shall have to conclude that here we have the expression of earnest desire or wish or will that the people of Israel were of an heart to fear Him and keep all His commandments always. It is apparent from the book of Deuteronomy itself (cf. 31:9-29) and from the whole history of Israel that they did not have a heart to fear God and to keep all His commandments always. Since they did not fulfil that which was optatively expressed in 5:29 (26), we must conclude that God had not decreed that they should have such a heart. If God had decreed it, it would have been so. Here therefore we have an instance of desire on the part of God for the fulfilment of that which He had not decreed, in other words, a will on the part of God to that which He had not decreitively willed.

In Deuteronomy 32:29 the construction is somewhat different. In our English versions it is translated, “Oh that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end”. This rendering is distinctly optative and has the same effect as Deuteronomy 5:29(26), considered above. It must be admitted that this is a perfectly legitimate rendering and interpretation. The conjunction lu with which the verse begins has undoubtedly this optative force. It has such force unquestionably in Genesis 17:18; Numb. 14:2; 20:3; 22:29; Joshua 7:7; Isaiah 63:19, and possibly, if not probably, in Genesis 23:13; 30:24. When lu has this optative force it means “Oh that” or “if only” and expresses strong desire. In view of what we found in Deut. 5:26 there is no reason why the optative force of lu should not be adopted here. We may not, however, insist that lu must have optative force here because lu is also used with conditional force, as in Judges 8:19; 13:23; II Samuel 18:12 and elsewhere. If lu is understood conditionally, Deut. 32:29 would be rendered as follows: “If they were wise, they would understand this, they would consider their latter end”. This, however, is not the most natural rendering. The optative interpretation is smoother and more meaningful in the context. If this more natural construction is followed it shows the same thing as we found in Deut. 5:26 that earnest desire is expressed for what is contrary to fact (cf. verse 28).

In Psalm 81:14 it may readily be detected that the conditional force of the conjunction lu cannot reasonably be adopted. The thought is rather distinctly optative, “Oh that my people were hearkening unto me, that Israel would walk in my ways.”

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Isaiah 48:18 could readily be rendered conditionally thus: "If thou hadst hearkened to my commandments, thy peace had been as a river and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." It can also be rendered optatively as in our English versions.

It should be noted that even when the conjunction *lu* is given very distinct conditional force, the optative idea is sometimes rather noticeably in the background. This would very likely be the case in Isaiah 48:18 even if the optative rendering gives way to the conditional. The desirableness of that which is expressed in the condition and its corresponding consequence cannot be suppressed. This can be expressed in our English idiom very well when we render, "If only thou hadst hearkened to my commandments, then had thy peace been as a river" etc. Both the conditional and optative appear here and there is much to be said in favour of the conclusion that whether we render Isa. 48:18 optatively or conditionally the optative notion still persists, in the former case, of course, directly and in the latter case indirectly.

Should we make full allowance for doubt as to the exact force of the construction in the case of Deut. 32:29 and Isa. 48:18, there can be no room for question but that the Lord represents Himself in some of these passages as earnestly desiring the fulfilment of something which He had not in the exercise of His sovereign will actually decreed to come to pass. This bears very directly upon the point of issue in this debate.

Matthew 23:37; Luke 13:34. In this passage there should be no dispute that the will of Christ in the direction of a certain benign result is set in contrast with the will of those who are contemplated as the subjects of such blessing. These two stand in opposition to each other—I have willed (or wished), ye have not willed (or wished). Not only so. The will of Christ to a certain end is opposed to that which actually occurred. Jesus says he often wished the occurrence of something which did not come to pass and therefore willed (or wished) the occurrence of that which God had not secretly or decretively willed.

That which Jesus willed is stated to be the gathering together of the children of Jerusalem, as a hen gathers together her chickens under her wings. This surely means the gathering together of the people of Jerusalem under his saving and protecting grace. So we have the most emphatic declaration on the part of Christ of his having yearned for the conversion and salvation of the people of Jerusalem.

It might be said that Jesus is here giving expression simply to his human desire and that this would not indicate, therefore, the desire or will of God. In other words, it might be said that we are not justified in transferring this expression of his human desire to the divine desire or will, either in respect of Jesus' own divine consciousness or the divine consciousness of the other persons of the Godhead.

Christ was indeed truly human and his human mind and will operated within the limitations inseparable from human nature. His human nature was not omniscient and could not in the nature of the case be cognisant of the whole decreitive will of God. In his human nature he wrought within limits that could not apply to the specifically divine knowledge, desire and will. Hence it might be argued that on this occasion he gave expression to the yearnings of his truly human will and therefore to a will that could not be aware of the whole secret purpose of God. Furthermore, it might be said that Jesus was speaking of what he willed in the past before he was aware, in his human consciousness, of the judgment that was to befall Jerusalem, stated in verses 38, 39. A great deal more might be said along this line that would lend plausibility to such an interpretation.

We are not able to regard such an interpretation of our Lord's statement as tenable. It is true our Lord was human. It is true he spoke as human. And it is true he spoke these words or gave utterance to this lament through the

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medium of his human nature. The will he spoke of on this occasion was cer-
tainly one that engaged the total exercise of his human desire and will. But
there is much more that needs to be considered if we are properly to assess the
significance of this incident and of Jesus' utterance. Jesus is speaking here
in his capacity as the Messiah and Saviour. He is speaking therefore as the
God-man. He is speaking of the will on his part as the Messiah and Saviour
to embrace the people of Jerusalem in the arms of his saving grace and cov-
nant love. The majesty that belongs to his person in this unique capacity
shines through the whole episode and it is quite improper to abstract the divine
aspect of his person from the capacity in which he gives utterance to this will
and from the prerogative in virtue of which he could give expression to the
utterance. What needs to be appreciated is that the embrace of which Jesus
here speaks is that which he exercises in that unique office and prerogative that
belong to him as the God-man Messiah and Saviour. In view of the transcend-
ent, divine function which he says he wished to perform, it would be illegitimate
for us to say that here we have simply an example of his human desire or will.
It is surely, therefore, a revelation to us of the divine will as well as of the
human. Our Lord in the exercise of his most specific and unique function as the
God-man gives expression to a yearning will on his part that responsiveness on
the part of the people of Jerusalem would have provided the necessary condi-
tion for the bestowal of his saving and protecting love, a responsiveness, never-
theless, which it was not the decretive will of God to create in their hearts.

In this connection we must not fail to keep in mind the principle borne out
by Jesus' own repeated declarations, especially as recorded in the Gospel of John,
namely, the perfect harmony and coalescence of will on the part of the Father
and of the Son (cf. John 12:49,50; 14:10, 24; 17:8). To aver that Jesus in the
expressed will of Matt. 23:37 is not disclosing the divine will but simply his own
human will would tend towards very grave prejudice to this principle. And,
viewing the matter from the standpoint of revelation, how would it affect our
conception of Jesus as the supreme revelation of the Father if in this case we
were not to regard his words as a transcript of the Father's will as well as of
his own? We can readily see the difficulties that face us if we do not grant the
truly revelatory significance of our Lord's statement.

In this lament over Jerusalem, furthermore, there is surely disclosed to us
something of the will of our Lord as the Son of God and divine Son of man
that lies back of, and is expressed in, such an invitation as Matthew 11:28.
Here we have declared, if we may use the thought of Matthew 23:37, his will
to embrace the labouring and heavy laden in the arms of his saving and lov-
ing protection. And it is an invitation to all such to take advantage of that
will of his. The fulness and freeness of the invitation need not now be argued.
Its character as such is patent. It is important, however, to note that the
basis and background of this invitation are supplied by the uniqueness of the
relation that he sustains to the Father as the Son, the transcendent commission
that is given to him as the Son, and the sovereignty, coordinate with that of
the Father, which he exercises because of that unique relationship and in that
unique capacity. We should not fail to perceive the interrelations of these two
passages (Matt. 23:37; 11:28) and to recognize that the former is redolent of
his divine prerogative and revelatory of his divine will. Verses 38 and 39 con-
firm the high prerogative in terms of which he is speaking, for there he pro-
nounces the divine judgment. And in this connection we cannot forget John
5:26,27, "For as the Father hath life in himself, even so hath he given to the
Son to have life in himself. And he hath given to him authority to execute
judgment, because he is the Son of man".

Ezekiel 18:23,32; 33:11. It does not appear to us in the least justifiable to
limit the reference of these passages to any one class of wicked persons. Suffice
it now to mention one or two considerations in support of this conclusion. In
Ezekiel 33:4-9 the wicked who actually die in their iniquity are contemplated.

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It is without warrant to exclude such wicked persons from the scope of the wicked spoken of in verse 11. While it is true that a new paragraph may be regarded as introduced at verse 10, yet the new thought of verse 10 is simply the despairing argument or objection on the part of the house of Israel and does not have the effect of qualifying the denotation or connotation of the wicked mentioned in verse 11, a denotation and a connotation determined by the preceding verses. Again, the emphatic negative of the first part of verse 11—"I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked"—admits of no limitation or qualification; it applies to the wicked who actually die in their iniquity. Why then should there be the least disposition to limit those spoken of in the text to any class of wicked persons?

In Ezekiel 18:23 the construction is not without significance. This verse is introduced by the interrogative and then we have the emphatic construction of duplication well known in Hebrew. It might be rendered, "Taking pleasure in, do I take pleasure in?" The question implies, of course, an emphatic negative. It should also be noted that the verb in this case takes a direct object, namely, "the death of the wicked" (moth rasha without any article). In this case we do not have the preposition be as in Ezekiel 33:11. (1) It should be noted that the verb chaphez with such a construction can very properly be rendered by our English word, "desire", as frequently elsewhere in the Old Testament. Consequently this verse may well be rendered, "Do I at all desire the death of the wicked?" The force of this is obviously the emphatic negative, "I do not by any means desire the death of the wicked", or, to be very literal, "I do not by any means desire death of a wicked person".

The interrogative construction is continued in the latter part of the verse. Here, however, it is negative in form, implying an affirmative answer to the question just as in the former part the affirmative form implied a negative answer. It reads, "Is it not rather in his turning from his way (the Massoretes read "his ways") and live." The clear import is an emphatic assurance to the effect that the Lord Jehovah delights rather in the turning of the wicked from his evil way that he may live. The adversative form of the sentence may well be rendered thus: "Do I at all desire the death of the wicked, saith the Lord Jehovah, and not rather that he turn from his way and live."

The sum of the matter may be stated in the following propositions. It is absolutely and universally true that God does not delight in or desire the death of a wicked person. It is likewise absolutely and universally true that He delights in the repentance and life of that wicked person. It would surely be quite unwarranted to apply the latter proposition less universally or more restrictively than the former. The adversative construction and the emphatic form by which the protestation is introduced are surely not compatible with any other conclusion. And if we carry over the perfectly proper rendering of the first clause, the thought can be expressed thus, "God does not desire the death of the wicked but rather their repentance and life."

In Ezekiel 33:11 the construction is somewhat different. The statement is introduced by the oath, "As I live saith the Lord Jehovah." Then we have the construction with the Hebrew im, which has the force of an emphatic negative and must be rendered, "I have no delight (or pleasure) in the death of the wicked" (bemoth harasha; in this case the article is used). It should be noted

(1) Kittel says that 20 manuscripts read bemoth as in verse 32. If this reading is correct then, of course, what is said respecting the omission of the preposition be does not hold.

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that the preposition be is used in this case, as also in the second part of 18:23 as observed above. (2) This is a very frequent construction in Hebrew with reference to delight in persons or things. Interesting examples are II Sam. 24:3; Esther 6:6,7,9,11; Ps. 147:10; Prov. 18:2; Isa. 65:12; Mal. 2:17. On certain occasions the Hebrew word could well be translated "desire" in English and the word that follows the preposition taken as the direct object (e.g. II Sam. 24:3).

It has been argued that the preposition be in Ezek. 33:11b has the force of "when" so that the verse would run, "As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked but when the wicked turns from his way and lives." And so it has been claimed that all that is said in this verse is that God is pleased when the wicked turns and cannot be made to support the proposition that God is pleased that the wicked should repent, whether they repent or not. On this view it would be maintained that this verse says nothing more than that God is pleased when a wicked man repents but says nothing respecting the pleasure of God in reference to the repentance of those who do not actually repent.

In dealing with this question a few things need to be said. (1) A study of the instances where this construction of the verb Chaphez with the preposition be occurs would not suggest this interpretation of the force of the preposition be. The usage rather indicates that the preposition points to that upon which pleasure is placed, that to which desire gravitates, that in which delight is taken. That object of pleasure, desire, delight may be conceived of as existing, or as something not actually existent, or as something desirable, that is to say, desired to be. When the object is contemplated as desirable but not actually realized, the thought of Chaphez does not at all appear to be simply that delight or pleasure will be derived from the object when it is realized or possessed. That thought is, of course, implied. But there is much more. There is the delight or pleasure or desire that it should come to be, even if the actual occurrence should never take place. Consequently it appears that the notion that Ezek. 33:11b simply says that God is pleased when a wicked man repents robs the concept expressed by Chaphez be of some of its most characteristic and necessary meaning. It is not in any way denied that this kind of delight is embraced in the expression. But to limit the concept to this notion is without warrant and is not borne out by the usage.

(2) The adversative construction of the verse would not by any means suggest the interpretation that verse 11b says simply that God is pleased when a man repents. In the first clause it is denied that God has pleasure in the death of the wicked. In accordance with 18:23 this means that it is true absolutely and universally that God does not delight in the death of the wicked. This does not mean simply that God does not delight in the death of the wicked when he dies. The denial is much more embracive. In like manner, it would be unnatural for us to suppose that the affirmation of that in which God does take delight is simply the turning of the wicked from his way when it occurs. This is just saying that it is natural to give to the preposition be in the second clause the same force as it has in the first. Rendered literally then the two clauses would read, "I do not have pleasure in the death of the wicked but rather in his turning from his way and that he live." Paraphrased the thought would be, "It is not pleasing to me that the wicked die but that the wicked turn from his way and live." And the same kind of absoluteness and universality denied in the one case must be regarded as affirmed in the other.

(3) Confirmation of this interpretation may be derived from the concluding

(2) The only instances we have been able to find in the Old Testament of Chaphez be, followed by the infinitive construct, are Ezekiel 18:23b and 33:11b. Chaphez without the preposition be is followed by the infinitive construct in other cases (cf. Isa. 53:10).
clauses of verse 11, "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, and why will ye die, oh house of Israel." The thought of the last clause is that there is no reason why they should die. There is no reason because of the grace so emphatically declared in the earlier part of the verse and, by implication, so fully and freely proffered. There will not be any dispute regarding the universality of the exhortation and command in the clause, "turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways." This is a command that applies to all men without any discrimination or exception. It expresses therefore the will of God to repentance. He wills that all should repent. Nothing less than that is expressed in the universal command. To state the matter more fully, He wills that all should repent and live or be saved. When this is related to the last clause, "why will ye die?", it means that the reason why no one need die, why there is no reason why any should die, is, that God does not will that any should die. He wills rather that they repent and live. This declaration of the will of God to the repentance and life of all, so clearly implied in the two concluding clauses, the clauses with which we are now more particularly concerned. We should conclude, therefore, that the will to universal repentance and life, so unmistakeably expressed in the concluding clauses, is also declared or, at least, implied in the words, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked but that the wicked turn from his way and live." This is just saying that the import of the hortatory and interrogative clauses at the end require or presuppose a will of God to repentance and life, a will to which the bare notion that God is pleased when men repent is not by any means equal. The only adequate way of expressing the will implied in the exhortation is the will that all should repent and it is surely that truth that is declared in the oath-supported statement, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked but that the wicked turn from his way and live."

It is not to be forgotten that when it is said that God absolutely and universally takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, we are not here speaking of God's decretive will. In terms of His decretive will it must be said that God absolutely decrees the eternal death of some wicked and, in that sense, is absolutely pleased so to decree. But in the text it is the will of God's benevolence (voluntas euarestias) that is stated, not the will of God's decree (voluntas eudokias.) It is, in our judgment, quite unjustifiable to think that in this passage there is any reflection upon the decretive will of God in the word Chaphez. And neither is there evidence to show that in the word Chaphez there is here any comparative notion to the effect that God takes greater pleasure in saving men than He does in damning them.

It is indeed true that in a few passages in the Old Testament the word Chaphez is used with reference to the decretive will of God (cf. Ps. 115:8; 135:6; the substantive Chephez, also, in Isa. 44:28; 46:10; 48:14). But in this passage everything points to the conclusion that the good pleasure or delight of God spoken of is viewed entirely from the aspect of benevolent lovingkindness. And it is in terms of that aspect of the divine will that the words "absolutely" and "universally" have been used above.

Isaiah 45:22. There can be no question but the salvation mentioned in this text is salvation in the highest sense. It cannot be weakened to mean temporary or temporal security. The salvation must be of the same character as that referred to in verse 17 and implied in the title appropriated by God Himself in verse 21. The text is also an invitation and command to all to turn to God and to be saved. The universalism of this command should be apparent from the expression, "all the ends of the earth." This is a characteristic Old Testament phrase to designate all nations and peoples. The universal scope is, however, confirmed by the context. There are several intimations of this. In the preceding context the Lord asserts His Creatorhood (vss. 12,18). This appeal to His Creatorhood has the effect of bringing to the forefront a relationship
which He sustains to all men alike. Likewise the Lord protests that He is the only God, that there is none else besides Him (vss. 14,18,21). The emphasis on this becomes more specific in the repeated assertion that He alone is the Saviour (vss. 15,20,21). Furthermore, that all men are contemplated is borne out by verse 23, that unto Him every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Finally, this note is implied in the scorn that is poured out upon the heathen in verse 20—"They have not knowledge that carry the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save." All these considerations bear directly upon the universal reference of the appeal in verse 22. It is because God alone is God and because He alone can save that the exhortation is extended to all, "turn ye to me and be ye saved." We could not place any kind of limitation upon the exhortation without interfering with the universality of the prerogatives claimed by God Himself in the context. It is necessary to stress this because it might be thought that the universalism of the command in verse 22 is not distributive universalism but simply ethnical universalism, all nations without distinction but not all people without exception. The considerations of the context would show that there is no exception to the command any more than there is to the sole Creatorhood, sole Godhood and sole Saviourhood of the God who extends the appeal.

This text expresses then the will of God in the matter of the call, invitation, appeal, and command of the gospel, namely, the will that all should turn to Him and be saved. What God wills in this sense He certainly is pleased to will. If it is His pleasure to will that all repent and be saved, it is surely His pleasure that all repent and be saved. Obviously, however, it is not His decretive will that all repent and be saved. While, on the one hand, He has not decretively willed that all be saved, yet He declares unequivocally that it is His will and, impliedly, His pleasure that all turn and be saved. We are again faced with the mystery and adorable richness of the divine will. It might seem to us that the one rules out the other. But it is not so. There is a multiformity to the divine will that is consonant with the fulness and richness of His divine character, and it is no wonder that we are constrained to bow in humble yet exultant amazement before His ineffable greatness and unsearchable judgments. To deny the reality of the divine pleasure directed to the repentance and salvation of all is to fail to accept the witness borne by such a text as this to the manifoldness of God's will and the riches of His grace.

II Peter 3:9. In view of what we have found already there is no reason in the analogy of Scripture why we should not regard this passage as teaching that God in the exercise of His benevolent longsuffering and lovingkindness wills, that none should perish but that all should come to repentance. An a priori assumption that this text cannot teach that God wills the repentance and salvation of all is a gravely unsound assumption, for it is not an assumption derived from the analogy of Scripture. In approaching this text there should be no such prejudice. What this text does actually teach will have to be determined, however, by grammatico-historical exegesis of the text and context.

The choice of the verb "is longsuffering" (makrothumai) will be considered first. In Luke 18:7, the only other instance in the New Testament where it refers to the action of God, it probably relates to the elect. But in that case it is employed in the somewhat distinctive sense of "delay" in avenging them. The "longsuffering" (makrothumia) of God, is spoken of several times, and its usage is illuminating. Romans 9:22 presents a clear instance where it has in view an attitude of God towards the reprobate; He "endured with much longsuffering vessels of wrath." In Romans 2:4, it is associated with the goodness and forbearance of God, and subsumed under His goodness, as that which is despised by the impenitent who treasures up for himself wrath in the day of wrath, who does not know that the goodness of God "leadeth him to repentance" (eis metanoian se agei). The choice of the verb agein is to be noted. Since the im-
penitent are in view, it cannot refer to efficacious grace. Nevertheless, it is a strong verb as its use in Romans 8:14 shows: “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God” (cf. Gal. 5:18). It must be understood as a constraining influence flowing from the goodness of God which is calculated to bring men to repentance. The construction in Romans 2:4 is remarkably similar to that in II Peter 3:9.

On the background of these passages, the usage by Peter may be considered to advantage. In the last days, Peter says, mockers will mock because the parousia has not come. The day of judgment will nevertheless come. The apparent delay in its coming some count slackness. What is counted as slackness by some should, however, really be recognized as longsuffering (II Peter 3:3-9). The longsuffering should not be counted as slackness, but as salvation (v. 15). The longsuffering is, then, a positive favor of God towards sinners which is directed to their salvation.

Up to this point, accordingly, the thought is similar to that of Romans 2:4. Men may despise God’s goodness, forbearance and longsuffering towards them, not knowing that that goodness has in view their turning from their sins to God. Men may count the longsuffering as slackness on God’s part, when actually they ought to account it as designed to extend salvation to them.

But this tentative judgment on the basis of the use of makrothumia must be related to the rest of verse 9. This aspect of the question is considerably complicated by the divergence in the textual tradition at this point. The situation is reflected in part in the divergence between AV and ARV: “to us-ward” and “to you-ward.” But there is a further complication due to the fact that there is significant testimony for the preposition dia, resulting in the possibilities: “on your account” or “on our account.” The reading dia has come to be preferred by Mayor, Moffatt, Greijdanus, RSVmg. The difference between “you” and “us” or “your” and “our” is not especially significant, since in either case the readers of the Epistle would be primarily in view. The actual line-up of authorities does not, however, leave solid external support for the combination “on our account”, though Mayor supports it. The reading “to us-ward” is clearly the weakest reading, judged by external evidence; and it is not commended particularly by other considerations. Hence the choice falls between “to you-ward” and “on your account.” While perhaps it is not possible to decide finally between these two readings, we may judge that the reading “on your account” has a very strong claim. The external evidence for it appears to be at least as strong as for the other competing reading, and transcriptionally it may be preferred as being somewhat more unusual and difficult.

The question now arises as to the specific reference of “you”, whether with the preposition dia or eis. Does the use of this pronoun indicate that reprobate men are out of consideration here? So it has been argued. However, if the reprobate are out of consideration here, the “true believers” will have to be identified with the elect, and the longsuffering of God will have to be understood as the special, saving grace of God manifested to the elect alone. We do not believe that the restriction of the reference to the elect is well-established. The Epistle does not make this restriction. Moreover, since on this view, the believers addressed here are characterized as “living lax Christian lives”, are viewed as requiring repentance, and even as about to “perish” unless they repent, it cannot be argued plausibly that the apostle would not have allowed for the presence of some reprobate among the members of his audience. Even if the “you” is restricted to professing Christians, one cannot exclude the possibility that reprobate men were also in view.

The “you” of this passage can hardly be restricted to the elect. Can it even be restricted to “believers”? Can it be restricted to believers who urgently stand in need of repentance? The determination of this question is bound up with the evaluation of the subordinate clauses. It may be acknowl-
edged that the decision made with regard to “you” will bear upon the meaning of the language that follows. But the reverse is also true. The language of the clauses may be such as to reflect decisively upon the persons referred to in connection with the manifestations of longsuffering. Does not, as a matter of fact, the language “not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” set before us a basic antithesis between the death or destruction that awaits impenitent sinners and, by implication, the life eternal which men may enter upon through repentance? God does not wish that any men should perish. His wish is rather that all should enter upon life eternal by coming to repentance. The language in this part of the verse is so absolute that it is highly unnatural to envisage Peter as meaning merely that God does not wish that any believers should perish, but that he rather wishes that all believers who live laxly should repent of their sins. If they are believers, they have already come to repentance, entered upon life, and escaped destruction, even though the struggle against sin and turning from it must continue. The language of the clauses, then, most naturally refers to mankind as a whole as men are faced with the issues of death or life before the day of judgment comes. It does not view men either as elect or as reprobate, and so allows that both elect and reprobate make up the totality in view.

The most satisfactory view of II Peter 3:9 is:

1) Peter teaches that the delay of the coming of judgment should be acknowledged as a manifestation of the longsuffering or patience of God with sinners.
2) Peter says that God is longsuffering on your account. It is not because of any slackness in God himself, but because of the consideration of the well-being of men. The pronoun “you” cannot be restricted to the elect. It would certainly include the members of the Christian community as possible benefactors of the longsuffering of God, but in view of considerations adduced above may not fairly be restricted to believers.
3) If the reading “to you-ward” is adopted, the thrust of the passage is not essentially altered. The delay is not due to slackness in God, but is to be regarded as an expression of longsuffering towards men, including very specifically those addressed in the Epistle.
4) The reason or ground for the longsuffering of God until the day of judgment is given in what is said concerning his “willing.” He is longsuffering in that, or because, he does not wish that any men should perish, but rather because he wills or wishes that all should come to repentance. Repentance is the condition of life; without repentance men must perish. But the will of God that men be saved expressed here is not conditional. It is not: I will your salvation if you repent, but: I will that you repent and thus be saved. The two clauses then go far beyond defining the longsuffering of God, for they intimate what is back of his longsuffering. This favor is grounded in God himself; it is an expression of his will with regard to sinners, his will being nothing short of their salvation.

The argument that the longsuffering of God that delays judgment could not concern the reprobate, “for they will never repent” is to be met exactly as Calvin met similar arguments. Following his exegesis of II Peter 3:9, Calvin says: “But it may be asked, If God wishes none to perish, why is it that so many perish? To this my answer is, that no mention is here made of the hidden purpose of God, according to which the reprobate are doomed to their own ruin, but only of his will as made known to us in the gospel. For God there stretches out his hand without a difference to all, but lays hold only of those, to lead them unto himself, whom he has chosen before the foundation of the world.”

Conclusions. (1) We have found that the grace of God bestowed in His ordinary providence expresses the love of God, and that this love of God is the source of the gifts bestowed upon and enjoyed by the ungodly as well as the
We should expect that herein is disclosed to us a principle that applies to all manifestations of divine grace, namely, that the grace bestowed expresses the lovingkindness in the heart of God and that the gifts bestowed are in their respective variety tokens of a correspondent richness or manifoldness in the divine lovingkindness of which they are the expression.

(2) We have found that God Himself expresses an ardent desire for the fulfilment of certain things which He has not decreed in His inscrutable counsel to come to pass. This means that there is a will to the realization of what He has not decretively willed, a pleasure towards that which He has not been pleased to decree. This is indeed mysterious and why He has not brought to pass, in the exercise of His omnipotent power and grace, what is His ardent pleasure lies hid in the sovereign counsel of His will. We should not entertain, however, any prejudice against the notion that God desires or has pleasure in the accomplishment of what He does not decretively will.

(3) Our Lord himself in the exercise of His messianic prerogative provides us with an example of the foregoing as it applies to the matter of salvation. He says expressly that he willed the bestowal of his saving and protecting grace upon those whom neither the Father nor he decreed thus to save and protect.

(4) We found that God reveals Himself as not taking pleasure in or desiring the death of those who die but rather as taking pleasure in or desiring the repentance and life of the wicked. This will of God to repentance and salvation is universalized and reveals to us, therefore, that there is in God a benevolent lovingkindness towards the repentance and salvation of even those whom He has not decreed to save. This pleasure, will, desire is expressed in the universal call to repentance.

(5) We must conclude, therefore, that our provisional inference on the basis of Matt. 5:44-48 is borne out by the other passages. The full and free offer of the gospel is a grace bestowed upon all. Such grace is necessarily a manifestation of love or lovingkindness in the heart of God. And this loving-kindness is revealed to be of a character or kind that is correspondent with the grace bestowed. The grace offered is nothing less than salvation in its richness and fulness. The love or lovingkindness that lies back of that offer is not anything less; it is the will to that salvation. In other words, it is Christ in all the glory of his person and in all the perfection of his finished work whom God offers in the gospel. The loving and benevolent will that is the source of that offer and that grounds its veracity and reality is the will to the possession of Christ and the enjoyment of the salvation that resides in him.

Respectfully submitted,

THE COMMITTEE

MINORITY REPORT ON THE EFFECT OF REGENERATION ON INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITIES OF THE SOUL

With much in the report of the committee on this topic the undersigned concurs, while making the following reservations on particular points:

1. It is not clear to the undersigned that the formulation of the status questionis in the report is adequate. In addition to that which is formulated in the report, there must be added the question, whether the subjective change wrought by regeneration is of such a character as to involve a difference in the truth "in the mind." A further question may also be raised as to an element (or elements) of identity in the knowing subject, without which identity the subjective change would be inconceivable. A still further question is whether truth knowable by man is as extensive in the case of the unregenerate as in the case of the regenerate. In connection with the first question the pro-

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piety of contrasting states of knowledge as distinct from knowing subjects in reference to those states of knowledge, may be raised.

2. The undersigned is of the mind that the historical survey pp. 39-42 should have been omitted from the report or, if retained, bracketed. Omission was to be preferred for the following reasons:
   a. The interests of brevity would have been conserved in a report already sufficiently lengthy. The historical section is of a subordinate character in relation to the total report and could have been omitted without impairing the essence of the report.
   b. Although this section achieves impartiality in its restraint as to evaluation of the documents commented on, nevertheless the interpretation of the documents and the estimation of their significance for the history of the question betrays a certain one-sidedness, corresponding to the one-sidedness of the formulation of the status quaeestionis which this historical discussion purports to justify. The omission of significant factors in the status quaeestionis would naturally determine the omission of lack of emphasis upon significant factors of the history.
   c. This section, while employing categories fruitfully applied in the body of the report, fails to employ certain categories of the bracketed section. In particular the distinction between thinking and knowing could be applied to the long paragraph beginning with the words, “It is to be observed...” Understanding the meaning of words or of a proposition is thinking rather than knowing. Its object is meaning rather than truth. On the other hand, the subjective state of knowledge refers to knowing and its object is truth. It is desirable to eliminate confusion of terminology on this point, not only for the sake of clarity of thought and formulation, but also in the interest of actually arriving at truth on the question at issue.

3. Distinguishing clearly between thinking and knowing, as well as between the various spheres of human and cosmic functions, would assist in eliminating confusion between historical faith and knowledge of the truth of the gospel. Propositions concerning the historical facts of the gospel may be thought by the unregenerate and even asserted on valid proximate grounds. Yet the spiritual meaning of the very terms of the gospel cannot be grasped by the unrenewed understanding, nor can the unrenewed mind give assent to these truths upon the only possible valid ground, i.e. the witness of God Himself. Hence the unregenerate cannot know gospel truth.

4. This appears to be the express assertion of I Cor. 2:14. The report fails to provide valid grounds for adopting a relative rather than the absolute construction of the denial of the ability of the natural man to know the things of the Spirit of God. Scripture does not speak of a natural knowledge of spiritual things; but rather correlates spiritual things with spiritual knowledge. This correlation is essential to the argument in the text and context (vv. 11ff.), and cannot be obscured by reference to the exceptional passage, II Peter 2:20, or to the natural knowledge spoken of in Romans 1:21,32; 2:18. In these passages from Romans no reference to special revelation, redemption, or the saving work of the Spirit is involved.

5. The references to blindness further accentuate the absolute character of the noetic effects of sin. The allusion to color-blindness on p. 44 of the report may be misleading in this regard. While it is true that the intellective powers of the unregenerate are not destroyed and their exercise does not cease, nevertheless their operation is both entirely evil in the ethical and religious sense (Gen. 6:5) and, with respect to the intellective aspect, entirely incapable of admitting entrance to a single ray of gospel truth.

6. The assertions in the Conclusions to the effect that the natural man can
know spiritual truth, and that this knowledge is "natural" not "spiritual" are unacceptable in view of the above.

7. The assertion "to suppose that there is any respect in which his state of knowledge concerning these truths is not changed by regeneration would be to deny the pervasiveness and inclusiveness of the regenerative act," in addition to ascribing knowledge of gospel truth to the unregenerate, also appears to suppose that no structural identity in the knowledge situation is requisite in order that the continuity of the knowing subject be maintained throughout the changes wrought by sin and regeneration.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAM YOUNG

MINORITY REPORT ON THE EFFECT OF SIN AND REGENERATION ON THE INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITIES OF THE SOUL

Before a decision can be made on the above subject from the point of view of Scripture and the standards of our church, it is important to understand the points in dispute on this subject. The dispute has not been over the questions of total depravity and regeneration per se. Both parties to the dispute have vigorously held to the so-called five points of Calvinism. The real dispute has been over the effects of total depravity and regeneration on intellectual activity. During the course of the debate there has been much misunderstanding over the meaning of various terms used. As a result there has been a shifting of emphasis and perhaps even a shifting of position as the implications of various statements became plain. It seems unwise to review the various steps of this debate, and we will here present only the most essential points at issue. From one point of view there has been an insistence that objective truth, as it is apprehended by either the regenerated or the unregenerated, is unalterable. From the other point of view there has been an insistence that an unregenerated man cannot possibly have the same apprehension of the meaning of a gospel truth that a regenerated man has. The concern of the first point of view has been to defend the possibility of an unregenerate man's apprehending the meaning of gospel truths. The concern of the second point of view has been to defend an essential difference between the apprehension of the regenerate and that of the unregenerate, or between the "state of knowledge" of the regenerate and the unregenerate. It is thus evident that an epistemological question is basic to the dispute.

In the course of the discussion in the committee many misunderstandings were cleared up, but in this report it seems best to present what may seem to be a fresh approach to the whole subject, in the hope that by avoiding as far as possible the terminology previously used, basic agreement may be reached on the whole question. While logically a discussion of the teaching of Scripture and the standards of the church should precede a statement of conclusions, these conclusions will be here presented first, so that a study of the meaning of Scripture and the standards may be more easily made through comparison with the conclusions reached by the committee.

Thinking and knowing are two forms of human intellectual activity. Thinking is an activity of the self in which the self conceives an idea, asserts a proposition, or infers a conclusion. Knowing is that act of the self in which the self asserts a truth, an assertion grounded upon nothing less than valid proximate evidence. Understanding the meaning of words or of a proposition is thinking rather than knowing. Its object is meaning rather than truth. On the other hand, the subjective state of knowledge refers to knowing and its object
is truth. With these distinctions in mind observe that while a falsehood may be thought, only a truth can be known.

There can be no question that the unregenerate man thinks. Likewise there can be no question that he can know in the sense of thinking true propositions and asserting them to be true, basing his certainty on valid proximate grounds. Such grounds of knowledge as the unregenerate man possesses by reason of the general testimony of the Holy Spirit we call valid proximate grounds. Such grounds of knowledge as the regenerate man possesses by reason of the special testimony of the Spirit we call valid ultimate grounds. Nevertheless the unregenerate man lacks the recognition of the ultimate valid ground for asserting the truth of the proposition he asserts, in the sense that he fails to see that truth in its proper relationship to God who is Truth itself and in whose Light we see light. Total depravity affects every kind of intellectual activity of the soul. The unregenerate knowing subject is out of fellowship with God and oriented away from Him and His will. The unregenerate knowing subject as consciously knowing is out of fellowship with God. The unregenerate knowing subject is oriented away from God in his sub-conscious or conscious states of knowledge. However, knowledge, when viewed as truths known or knowable by the unregenerate rather than as a modification of the knowing subject, is not altered by sin.

Man as the image-bearer of God is subject to divinely-ordained laws and norms in all spheres of his activity. In the intellectual, aesthetic and ethical spheres, he is subject to the norms of truth, harmony and morality respectively. Sin has not affected or altered the laws or norms which govern or hold for the various spheres. Likewise, the laws or norms are not changed by regeneration. Yet sin and regeneration affect the beings that are subject to norms. Sin has disrupted the relation of the human subject to the norm in every sphere, and what has been disrupted by sin has been restored in principle by regeneration. The moral law in the realm of ethics is the norm of all states and activities when viewed as states and activities. Thus knowing when viewed as an activity is subject to the moral law. Intellectual activity when viewed not as activity but as intellectual, is subject to the norm of truth, just as aesthetic activity, when viewed not as activity but as aesthetic, is subject to the norm of harmony.

Regeneration effects a change in every kind of intellectual activity with reference to the truth. It results in renewed heart-understanding, i.e., “Spiritual” understanding, Spiritual in the sense that it is due to the operation and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The truths previously thought and asserted as true are unaltered by regeneration but are now known in an experiential sense and known in their proper orientation to a theocentric system of truth, while new implications and relationships are soon discerned by the renewed soul. The reason for this is that the regenerated knowing subject is now restored to fellowship with God. The regenerated knowing subject as consciously knowing is now restored to fellowship with God. The regenerated knowing subject as being in a conscious or subconscious state of knowledge is restored to fellowship with God. Knowledge when viewed as truths known or knowable rather than as a modification of the human subject, is unaltered by regeneration. It has been asserted above that knowledge viewed as truths known or knowable is not altered by sin or regeneration. When knowledge is viewed as a modification of the knowing subject, on the other hand, it may be clearly distinguished from knowledge viewed as truths known or knowable. On the one hand the objective aspect is concerned with the truth as it is apprehended in knowledge; on the other hand the subjective aspect is concerned with the activity of the subject in knowledge. In the knowledge of the knowing subject there is an objective aspect which is unaltered by sin and regeneration, and a subjective aspect which is mutable. Knowledge in its objective aspect may be designated as “truth as it is known.” Knowledge in its subjective aspect may be designated as “the sub-
jective state of cognitive consciousness." Such a state may be subconscious or unconscious as well as conscious.

In further discussion of this subject it seems best to restrict the use of the verb "to know" arbitrarily to the regenerate only, and to call the intellectual activity of the unregenerate with reference to a gospel truth, "thinking" that truth or "asserting a truth" to be true. As we will see later this will be in harmony with the Scriptural usage of the word "ginosko", "to know", and keep us from minimizing the absolute denial of real knowledge of spiritual truths by the unregenerate (I Cor. 2:14). The full meaning of "ginosko" which refers to spiritual knowledge in an experiential sense, with few exceptions, is applied to the regenerate exclusively in the New Testament. Thus in this pregnant sense we may say that the unregenerate can never "know" gospel truths, though he may think them and assert them to be true. He may clearly think the historical meaning of such truths, and may even assert them to be true, thinking that he knows them, though until he is regenerated he can never truly and experientially "know" them.

This distinction also enables us to differentiate between historical faith and saving faith. In the case of the former, an unregenerate man may clearly think gospel truths and yield assent to them, while only in the case of one who has saving faith does he know the same truths experientially, and believe them savingly.

But is it possible to analyze more closely the subjective states of cognitive consciousness with respect to apprehended truths, in the respective minds of the regenerated and the unregenerated? The difference is so subtle and even mysterious that it almost defies analysis. Yet there are certain observations about it that can tentatively be made. First, there is a difference in his orientation of the truth apprehended, in that now the knowledge of the regenerated man is founded upon the ultimate ground of evidence, i.e., the special testimony of the Holy Spirit, as well as upon the proximate grounds now seen in their true relation to God. Second, there is a clear difference in the intellective attitude and reaction toward apprehended gospel truth. The regenerated man believes it experientially andsavingly, with a warm appreciation of its intrinsic worth and beauty, and love for it, and with conscious appropriation to his own soul of the truth so known. The unregenerated man either disbelieves the truth which he has apprehended, or believes it (in the case of historical faith) without spiritual discernment of it, or conscious appropriation of it to his own soul's needs. Third, there is a mysterious mental blindness toward apprehended gospel truth that is spoken of as a veil covering the heart (II Cor. 3:15). Only regeneration can remove this veil.

To sum up, while an unregenerated man may think gospel truths, and more or less clearly apprehend their meaning, and even (in the case of historical faith) believe those truths to be true, yet he can never before regeneration, truly "know" such truths experientially and spiritually.

Scriptural Teaching Regarding This Subject

With much of the exegesis of the other report we are in agreement, except as it does violence to the principles set forth in this report. It will be unnecessary to cite the many Scriptural passages which teach total depravity, such as Gen. 6:5, for this is generally admitted. The "mind of the flesh is enmity against God" (Rom. 8:7).

II Cor. 4:3-4, "And if our gospel be hid, it is hid to those who are lost, in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of those who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God, should shine unto them." The blind cannot see the gospel. They cannot be healed by the light for they cannot see the light. This cannot be interpreted to mean that the unregenerate cannot apprehend the gospel propositions, or it would deny the
reality of historical faith. It must therefore refer to the fact that they cannot
know experientially the gospel, and must refer to the "veil that covers their
heart" so that they cannot believe savingly and obey the gospel.
Eph. 4:18, "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from
the life of God through the ignorance (agnoia) that is in them, because of the hard-
ening of their heart." Calvin says in this passage, "With respect to the king-
dom of God, and all that relates to the spiritual life, the light of human reason
differs little from darkness; for, before it has pointed out the road, it is extin-
guished . . . All men know, for instance, that there is a God, and that it is our
duty to worship Him; but such is the power of sin and ignorance that from this
confused knowledge, we pass all at once to an idol, and worship it in the place
of God" (Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians, Edinburgh, 1854, p. 290).
The reason assigned by Paul for the darkness of their understanding is the igno-
nance (agnoia) that is in them. This ignorance in turn, is ascribed to the
hardness of their heart. Their hard heart causes them to refuse to know or wel-
come the "life of God" freely offered to them in the gospel.

The Meaning of Ginosko.
The darkness of the understanding and corruption and blindness of the mind
described in the previous passages, although pervading the intellectual activities
of the unregenerated, may not be considered as excluding them from all con-
tact with the truth. As thinking persons they can apprehend the truth. That
truth is not changed by sin. The fact that they do apprehend the truth is in-
dicated by certain passages in which the word ginosko occurs.
In various forms, ginosko, "know", is used at least 203 times in the New
Testament. In at least 187 of these instances this word means intellectual appre-
hension implied in belief and experiential knowledge of what is intellectually
understood. It usually carries with it the idea of acceptance and appropriation
for oneself of the fact or truth known. Only the regenerate are said to know
in the ginosko sense of having experiential knowledge of the gospel truths. (e.g.,
I Cor. 2:14; John 14:17; Rom. 3:17; I Cor. 1:21; 2:8; I Jn. 2:4; 3:1-6; 4:6-8).
In Rom. 1:19, ungodly and unrighteous men are clearly declared to
"know" (ginosko) God, "that which is known of God, is manifest in them." See
also 1:21, "Because that knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither
gave thanks, but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart
was darkened." This passage refers to the remnants of a natural knowledge of
God found in unregenerate men.
I Cor. 2:14 is a most important passage. "Now the natural man receiveth
not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he
cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned." In this passage it is
definitely declared that the natural man cannot know (ginosko) the things of the
Spirit of God. We must not minimize the denial of knowledge to the unregen-
erate here made. It is absolute. The distinction previously made between thinking
and knowing is here especially fruitful. While an unregenerated man can
think about the things of the Spirit of God he cannot know them. The meaning
would seem to be that though the natural man can think about the gospel he
does not receive it into his soul savingly for it is foolishness to him. Not only is it the case that only those born of the Spirit can react to the gospel with a
keen appreciation of the truth and love for it as they apply it to their own soul's
needs, but it is also true that only they are able to know gospel truth with a
knowledge that is inseparably intellectual and experiential. The fact that
anakrinetai and oida (v. 12) commonly refer to intellectual apprehension enforces
this interpretation.
John 12:39-40, "Wherefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said
again, He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart that they should
not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and should turn and I
should heal them." The allusion is to those people who did not believe even

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though our Lord had done so many miracles before their eyes. (Verse 37). They were unable to believe, because the blindness and hardness consequent upon their depravity prevented them from understanding. And yet they saw Christ, beheld his miracles, and heard his words. They apprehended the truth but did not understand it. It is possible that this passage refers to a particular judicial punishment inflicted upon Israel by God, and is not intended to present a universal condition, in which case one could not generalize regarding the knowledge of unbelievers from this passage.

What I Cor. 2:14 asserts of knowledge, the parable of the sower as understood in the report implies of understanding. It may be that “understanding” is here not understanding the meaning of words and propositions, but well-grounded knowledge of gospel truth. In that case the above interpretation of I Cor. 2:14 is underlined by this parable as well as by the express assertion, “There is none that understandeth” (Rom. 3:11a).

Rom. 10:2-3, “For I bear them record that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge (epignosis), for being ignorant of the righteousness of God. . . .” Paul evidently speaks of the Jews, who thought they knew the law and followed after it without attaining to it (9:31). They thought they knew God and had a zeal for him, but that zeal was not according to knowledge. This ignorance of the righteousness of God here mentioned, cannot be a universal ignorance of the righteousness of God on the part of all unregenerated men, for in Rom. 1:19 Gentiles are declared to know the righteousness of God. Nevertheless it is a total ignorance as far as the knowledge of the imputed righteousness of Christ is concerned. Apparently it was a judicial infliction in the case of the Jews. This text enforces the denial of knowledge to the unregenerate shown in other passages.

John 3:3, “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born from above (anothen), he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Except by the radical, pervasive, mysterious, sovereign renewal of regeneration, no one can be saved, no one can see the invisible, spiritual kingdom of God. The word “see” is idein, perceive, have a mental perception. The reality of that which is spiritual is to be perceived only as a result of the new birth.

Rom. 12:2, “Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Here as in Eph. 4:23, the mind refers to the soul as such and a renewal is necessary to believing in Christ savingly.

There are several passages that set forth very clearly the necessity of spiritual illumination in order to understand the gospel. Typical of these passages are I Jn. 5:20, “has given us an understanding (dianoia);” Eph. 1:17-18, “the eyes of your heart being enlightened”; Acts 26:18, “To open their eyes”; I Cor. 2:12, “that we might know (oida);” Col. 3:10, “renewed unto knowledge (eis epignosin)”; II Cor. 4:6, “who has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.” It would seem that this spiritual illumination is connected with regeneration so that without it the vital experiential knowledge of the gospel is impossible.

In this survey of some Scriptural teaching on the matter in dispute, we have discovered nothing which would contradict the position set forth in the first part of this report, namely that while an unregenerated man can think the propositions of the gospel and apprehend their meaning, it is impossible for him to have experiential knowledge of their truth. Justice must be done to the Scriptural passages cited which speak of the veil over the heart, spiritual blindness, and the impossibility of the natural man knowing spiritual truth. The distinction between thinking the truth and knowing the truth is important in this connection. Only the regenerated can experientially know the spiritual truths of the gospel. The truths which the unregenerated man apprehends about the gospel may in certain cases be the same as those which the regenerated man apprehends, but it never, even in the case of historical faith, removes the blindness of his soul, which hinders him from seeing the intrinsic value of such gospel
truth experientially for himself, and this prevents even a proper intellectual apprehension (thinking) and cognition (knowing) of gospel truth.

The Westminster Confession of Faith

The pertinent passages are Chapter VI, Sections II, III, and IV; Chapter X, Section I. These passages which speak of total depravity and effectual calling, are accepted by all, and therefore are not in dispute.

Conclusion

It is clearly the teaching of the Word of God and of our standards that while unregenerated men can think true propositions about the gospel, they are defiled in mind so that they cannot experientially know gospel truths.

To sum up: The noetic change wrought by sin consists in the loss of true knowledge of God, and the qualification of all knowledge in its subjective aspect as morally wicked and intellectually detached from its ultimately valid ground. Regeneration restores to knowledge its ultimate valid ground and makes possible the knowledge of gospel truth.

FLOYD E. HAMILTON
WILLIAM YOUNG
EDMUND P. CLOWNEY

With reservation as to details of exegesis,

MINORITY REPORT ON THE FREE OFFER OF THE GOSPEL

On the free offer of the gospel, the undersigned find themselves unable to concur with the report of the committee for the following two reasons:

1. It is not clear that the exegesis and the conclusions drawn have been conclusively substantiated.

2. The standpoint of the report goes beyond the expressions adopted by the Reformed Churches in the past, and if it should become the viewpoint of our church, might result in the erection of barriers between our church and certain other Calvinistic groups.

What has been the real point in dispute in connection with the free offer of the gospel? It is not the fact that “God freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation through Jesus Christ” (Conf. of Faith, Chapt. on God’s Covenant with Man). It is not the gospel offer as God’s revealed Word that is in dispute, but the element within the Divine will that prompts and grounds the offer. Nor is it even in dispute that God desires the salvation of sinners and proclaims to sinners, viewed simply as such, his desire for their salvation. The point or rather points in dispute appear to be the following:

1. Whether the term “desire” is employed after the manner of man or whether it is to be understood literally as implying an emotion in God.

2. Whether God desires the repentance and salvation of the reprobate sinner qua reprobate or whether God’s desire refers to the connection between the repentance and the salvation of sinners, qua sinners.

3. Whether God’s desires are to be viewed by us as standing unreconciled with his decrees.

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1). This discussion of emotion is oriented not to the committee's report (which refrains from assertions concerning desire as emotion), but to the passage in the Complaint (p. 13, col. 2). That the term desire is employed after the manner of men and is not to be understood literally as implying an emotion in God may appear in view of the following Scriptural principles:

a). There is frequent employment of anthropopathic language in Scripture, in which grief, anger, jealousy, curiosity, and repentance are ascribed to Deity. Such Scripture passages teach that God acts in a manner which we are taught to view as corresponding to the manner of action of human beings moved by such passions. From these Scriptures the presence of such passions in God cannot be inferred.

b. Elements in human desire unsuited to the perfection of God can be mentioned. Desire suggests a want or lack in the one who desires which can be fulfilled only by the gratifying of the desire. This is incompatible with the self-sufficiency of God. Desire is something weaker than the firm determination of the will. No such weak wishing can properly be ascribed to God whose will is firmly fixed and fixes all things. God has not a will that can be frustrated as well as one that cannot be.

c). The particular passages of Scripture alleged to support frustrable desires no more prove desire as an emotion or passion in God than the assertion "it repented God..." etc. proves a real change of his mind, or that God actually desired to know that the wickedness of Sodom was as it had been represented to him.

This position, far from being rationalism, as the Complaint alleges, is in accord with the teaching of the Confession of Faith that God is without parts and passions. The eminent Westminster divine, Samuel Rutherford, says in connection with representations of distress, grief or sorrow in God: "'Tis a speech borrowed from man for there is no disappointing of the Lord's will, nor sorrow in him for the not-fulfilling of it" (Christ Dying... p. 511). In connection with Ps. LXXXI:13, Rutherford remarks, "Which wish, as relating to disobeying Israel, is a figure, or metaphor borrowed from men, but otherwise sheweth how acceptable the duty is to God, how obligating to the creature." ibid, p. 513. (Note Complaint p. 13, col. 2).

2). That God desires the salvation of the reprobate viewed as reprobate is an absurdity not sanctioned by the language of Scripture nor preceded by the language of Reformed theologians. Two points are here involved:

A). Does God desire the salvation of the reprobate, or is the object of His desire not rather the connection between the compliance of sinners with the terms of the gospel offer and their salvation? The Ezekiel passages make express the divine approbation of the connection between repentance and salvation. Samuel Rutherford, in reference to passages of gospel invitation, speaks of "A vehemence, and a serious and unfeigned ardency of desire, that we do what is our duty; and the concatenation of these two, extremely desired of God, our coming to Christ, and our salvation: This moral connection between faith and salvation, is desired of God with his will of approbation, complacency, and moral liking, without all dissimulation, most unfeignedly. And whereas Arminians say, we make counterfeit, feigned and hypocritical desires in God; they clumniate and envil egregiously, as their custom is" (ibid, p. 511). Of God's revealed will in the gospel offer Rutherford asserts: "it formally is the expression only of the good liking of that moral and duty-connection between the obedience of the creature and the reward; but holdeth forth not any intention

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or decree of God, that any shall obey, or that all shall obey, or that none at all should obey" (ibid, p. 512). To say absolutely, God desires the repentance and salvation of the reprobate is to go beyond the mode of expression. To say God desires the salvation of the penitent sinner, God desires that if any sinner repent, he be saved, is to give expression to the meaning of the Ezekiel and similar passages as understood by Rutherford. The gospel offer, in other words, is conditional or hypothetical and as such it is universal. This leads to a consideration of the second point:

B). Does God desire the salvation of the reprobate, or is it the salvation of sinners as sinners which Scripture represents to be the object of the Divine approbation and complacency? Surely it is the latter. Nowhere in the invitations, exhortations, commands, expostulations or offers in Scripture are the reprobate singled out and made the objects of special Divine concern. Sinners without distinction or discrimination are invited in the external call of the Word.

3). When God's free offer of salvation to sinners is understood in these terms, while an amazing and even inscrutable diversity within the Divine will is brought to light, it cannot be said that there is a logical conflict between the gospel and reprobation (Complaint, p. 13, col. 3), or that the two should be permitted to stand unreconciled alongside each other. It is not in accord with Reformed theology to assert or suggest that the Lord's will is irrational, even to the apprehension of the regenerate man. Rutherford argues against the Arminians that their view of the desires of God "maketh the Lord's desires irrational, unwise, and frustraneous" (p. 512). The denial of an unreconciled contradiction for our minds between God's desires and decrees is not to be identified with the denial of mystery in the will and ways of God or with the adoption of rationalism.

WM. YOUNG
FLOYD E. HAMILTON

Appendix 72
MINORITY REPORT ON THE INCOMPREHENSIBILITY OF GOD

The writer of this minority report finds himself unable to agree with much in the report signed "The Committee" in the section on The Incomprehensibility of God. The reason this minority report was not printed and circulated in the church is that the undersigned read the report for the first time after it was printed and circulated in the church, and a copy of said report was not received until April 26th, 1948. The undersigned minority member was unable to be present at one meeting when this report was under consideration, and was forced by business to leave other committee meetings before this subject was discussed. I was unaware of the nature of this report until reading it in the printed form. The rest of the committee has not seen this minority report due to the shortness of time before the meeting of the Fifteenth General Assembly. Apologies are hereby tendered to all concerned and to the members of the Assembly, for such inability to present this report a long time in advance.

I. I wish to present as the first section of my minority report, the Minority Report signed by Edmund P. Clowney and Richard W. Gray entitled A. Historical Survey of Views of Theologians Appealed to in this Controversy, and B. Evaluation of Documents, found on pages 43 to 61 of the printed Report of the Committee elected by the Thirteenth General Assembly of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church to study the Incomprehensibility of God, etc., and on pp. 1 to 4 of mimeographed Continuation of Report. I find myself in complete agreement with this minority report presented last year. I omit the last paragraph on page 61, and certain sentences whose omission is denoted by ( . . . ), from this report. That report is as follows:

A. - HISTORICAL SURVEY OF VIEWS OF THEOLOGIANS' APPEALED TO IN THIS CONTROVERSY

In the Church's struggle to formulate the truth of God it is well to remember that even the best of theologians are not infallible. In the course of their writing they may set forth the truth against one error but employ terminology which is not a sufficient safeguard against other errors. Tertullian and other Antenicene fathers may well have been orthodox in their views of the Godhead; but after the decisions and discussions sharpened the terminology, it is no longer possible to return to the earlier unguarded phraseology. We are living in the post-Kantian era. It would be foolish to ignore the current Kantian meanings of many of the terms that must be employed in a discussion such as this. Phrases which may have been innocuous in the time of Calvin may not be so today. In the face of modernism, Barthianism, and humanism, we must be more careful than ever.

Before reviewing some of the statements of the theologians which have been appealed to in this discussion, it would be well to recall some of the different notions to which the Incomprehensibility of God has been applied.

First, there is the view that the essence of God is unknowable; it cannot be apprehended by man even in revelation. But, this view teaches, man may know God as He appears to us in the attributes which are revealed in His word and the perfections and glory inscribed upon all His works. Thus God, because of His very nature, cannot be known by man the creature; man can never know what God is, even by revelation. All that man can know of God is what God appears to be to the creature. In Kantian language this might be expressed by saying that God is an unknowable noumenon, and that man can know only the manifestations of Himself, the phenomena. This is the language of phenomenalism, the theory that we cannot know things in themselves, only the appearance of things.
Secondly, there is the view that is closely associated with the first. It is that man cannot know God as He is, but that he may have in his mind some representation of God. This is an application of representational epistemology, the theory that we do not know the truth as it is objectively, but only a representation of the truth as it is related to our senses. Representational epistemology may or may not be coupled with phenomenalism. In neither case does the mind possess the same truth which God knows whether it is truth concerning His being or truth concerning His counsel or His works.

Then there is the view that God is incomprehensible in the sense that there is such a disproportion between the Infinite, Absolute, Transcendent God and the finite, created intellect, that man can never have a complete and exhaustive knowledge of Him. Man can, however, know God. But his knowledge is partial, and not exhaustive. What God does reveal of Himself in no way diminishes His incomprehensibility. God is not more or less incomprehensible as He is more or less known, for no matter how much a creature may know of Him, it is still absolutely true that man cannot comprehend Him. But what man does know as a result of God's revelation is truth, and it is the truth which God knows. However, man does not hold the truth in his mind in the same manner God does. He knows as man, and his grasp of the truth is from the human level, the level of his creaturehood. His finiteness conditions his grasp; he knows as a finite creature.

No proper evaluation of the Complaint can be given without an evaluation of the quotations from theologians found in this document. The Complaint claims that these quotations are a part of its exposition of the doctrine of Incomprehensibility. After its brief exposition of the doctrine, it says: “A few quotations from Reformed writers will serve to set forth more adequately the classic doctrine of incomprehensibility” (Complaint, p. 3, col. 1). After the Answer's attack upon the Complaint charging that it taught men can know only an analogy of the truth, the authors of the Complaint repeated the claim that the quotations of the theologians are an essential part of their exposition. The paper, entitled “The Incomprehensibility of God,” circulated by the signers of the Complaint, says: “The complaint did not attempt to state very fully what it meant by the doctrine that man's knowledge is analogical to God's knowledge. It supposed that its brief exposition, together with the statements from Reformed theologians, would suffice to bring this distinction to mind. As a matter of fact, the formulation of this doctrine in terms of analogy finds specific expression in our quotations from Thornwell, Shedd and Bavinck, and it requires only a little study to discover that the same has been true of formulations of Reformed theologians from the earliest days” (p. 3).

In this discussion of the quotations from theologians in the Complaint, we will attempt to show three things. First, that these quotations contain phraseology which though it may have been proper when it was written is no longer sufficiently guarded in the light of the influence of Kantian epistemology upon current theological thought, the most conspicuous example of which is to be found in Barthian theology. Secondly, that the Complaint has uncritically utilized in its exposition of Incomprehensibility some of this unguarded terminology. In so doing it has confused the issue in the controversy and has contradicted itself in expounding the doctrine. And thirdly, that the theologians quoted do not all agree on what Incomprehensibility means.

Calvin's teaching is cited first as of special significance for the formulation of the doctrine. Paraphrasing Calvin the Complaint says: “Calvin says that the divine essence is incomprehensible, that his majesty is not perceived by the human senses, that what God is in himself we cannot know, that from the nature of the case we may learn from his divine activities only what he is to us, that it would be presumptuous curiosity to attempt to examine into his es-
Calvin here is using language which today is applied to the distinction between the unknowable divine essence and the knowable attributes, a distinction which is not an element of the Westminster Confession's doctrine of Incomprehensibility, but rather a distinction which is employed by skeptical theologians. As the earlier part of the report of this Committee which deals with the doctrine in the sixteenth and seventeenth century says, "In the light of Calvin's use of the word "incomprehensibility" it is not defensible to appeal to these passages that deal with the incomprehensibility of the divine essence and of God's secret counsel to show that Calvin taught the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God in the sense in which God is said to be incomprehensible in the Westminster Confession. For, if Calvin's use of the word 'incomprehensible' were applied thus, it would mean that God is inapprehensible, a doctrine which Calvin did not teach." (Appendix 3).

It must be observed that the Complaint in its employment of Calvin's teaching is following Warfield's exposition of Calvin, and Warfield seeks to show that this teaching is not skeptical in character. He says: "The distinction which Calvin is drawing here between the knowledge of the quid and the knowledge of the quals of God; the knowledge of what He is in Himself and the knowledge of what He is to us, is the ordinary scholastic one and fairly repeats what Thomas Aquinas contends for ('Summa Theol. i. qu., art. 12), when he tells us that there is no knowledge of God per essentiam, no knowledge of His nature, of His quidditas per speciem propriam; but we know only habituinem ipsius ad creaturas. There is no implication of nominalism here . . . he (Calvin) is not intending to deny that His attributes are true determinations of the divine nature and truly reveal to us the kind of person He is . . . " (Calvin and Calvinism, pps. 152, 153).

Warfield's exposition does not alter the judgment made above: it is not defensible to appeal to this aspect of Calvin's teaching to expound the doctrine of Incomprehensibility. It is even dangerous, in view of the fact that Barthianism has come into prominence since Warfield's time. And the Complaint is particularly culpable because it italicizes the words "to us" in the sentence, "that what God is in himself we cannot know, that from the nature of the case we may learn from his divine activities only what he is to us." Thus, it emphasizes a distinction which today is open to the charge of skepticism.

The employment of Calvin's teaching of God as unknowable in His essence and in His secret counsel now in expounding the doctrine of Incomprehensibility may also be the explanation of two other confusing, if not dangerous, statements of the Complaint. Reference is here made to the italicized statement, "Because of his very nature as infinite and absolute the knowledge which God possesses of himself and all things must remain a mystery which the finite mind cannot penetrate" (C. p. 3, col. 1). Also to the statement, "Rather his incomprehensibility is viewed as an attribute of God as he is in himself. . . . " (p. 4, col. 2). Incomprehensibility as an attribute of God has meaning only as it relates God to the human intellect. To refer to it as an attribute of God as He is in Himself is liable to convey the teaching of the incomprehensibility of God's essence, the unknowability of what God is in Himself. This is contrary to the Confession's doctrine of the Incomprehensibility of God.

The quotations in the Complaint from Charnock call for evaluation, especially since they are the subject of controversy in the later papers of Dr. Gordon H. Clark and Dr. N. B. Stonehouse. Dr. Clark claims that "Charnock in the context is talking about literal vision with the physical eyes." Dr. Stonehouse rejoins that whereas Charnock is treating the invisibility of God, he makes statements about the incomprehensibility of God.

Charnock says: "God is therefore a Spirit incapable of being seen, and
infinitely incapable of being understood. There is such a disproportion between an infinite object and a finite sense and understanding, that it is utterly impossible to behold or comprehend him" (Discourses on the Existence and Attributes of God, p. 184ff). Judging from the quotation that follows this in the Complaint, it is by no means clear that Charnock is using "comprehend" in the sense of "knowing exhaustively." It is likely that he is using the word in the sense of "contain." As was pointed out in the early part of the report of the Committee dealing with the use of the word "incomprehensibility" in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, one of the meanings of the Latin word, comprehendo, from which "incomprehensibility" springs, is "to contain." In this sense "incomprehensibility" is used with respect to the immensity of God; God is so immense that He cannot be "contained" in a finite mind.

Charnock is speaking of God as an infinite object, "a Spirit incapable of being seen" and also incapable of being pictured in the mind by a mental image because His being is infinite and the human mind is finite. "All our imaginations of him cannot represent him, because every created species is finite; it cannot therefore represent us a full and substantial notion of an infinite Being" (idem. p. 196). In his treatment of God’s Omnipresence Charnock again appears to use the word "incomprehensibility," in this sense. The Omnipresence of God naturally reflects upon His immensity. He says: "Hence may be inferred the incomprehensibility of God. He that fills the heaven and earth, cannot be contained in anything; he fills the understandings of men, the understandings of angels, but is comprehended by neither; it is rashness to think to find out any bounds of God; there is no measuring of an infinite being." (A Discourse upon God’s Omnipresence, Complete Works, Edinburgh, 1864, Vol. I, pp. 447ff., bold face mine.)

This is not to argue that Charnock does not teach the doctrine of Incomprehensibility in the sense in which the Confession teaches it. It simply means that the quotations in the Complaint have to do primarily with the Immensity of God. As such God is Inconceivable (cannot be pictured in the mind) (cf. Hodge, Vol. i, p. 336) and it is to this notion Charnock here applies the term "incomprehensible." This is not what the Confession means by Incomprehensibility.

The view of the doctrine of Incomprehensibility set forth by J. H. Thornwell in his lecture on The Nature and Limits of our Knowledge of God (Collected Writings, Vol. i, Richmond, 1871) is regarded by the authors of the Complaint as important to their exposition of the doctrine. They say that Thornwell "also clearly draws a qualitative distinction between the divine knowledge and the knowledge that is possible to man" (C. p. 3, col. 2). Subsequent to the controversy as to the nature of this qualitative distinction the authors of the Complaint were insisting upon, the latter referred for a fuller exposition of it to their quotations from Thornwell. The paper, entitled "The Incomprehensibility of God" circulated by the erstwhile complainants says, "As a matter of fact, the formulation of this doctrine in terms of analogy finds specific expression in our quotations from Thornwell, Shedd, and Bavinck..." (p. 3). Though the Complaint gives only a few quotations it states that Thornwell’s whole lecture is pertinent.

Thornwell’s concept of analogy, which the signers of the Complaint say is their concept of analogy, derives its significance from the distinction between the essence of God which he holds to be unknowable and the attributes of God which is God as He appears to us. He presses the distinction farther than Calvin, holding that though we can know that God is, we cannot know what He is. He sums up his discussion of the limits of our knowledge of God with these words:

"The result of this inquiry into the nature and extent of our knowledge of God may be summed up in the following propositions. As we know only
in and through our own faculties, our knowledge must be determined by the
nature of our faculties. The conditions of consciousness are such that we can
never directly apprehend aught but the phenomenal and relative; and yet in
the apprehension of that we are constrained to admit a real and an absolute
as the necessary explanation of appearances. The infinite is never apprehended
in itself; it is only known in the manifestations of it contained in the finite.
As existing, it is known—it is a positive affirmation of intelligence; but it can
not be translated into the forms of the understanding—it cannot be conceived
except as the annihilation of those limitations and conditions which are essential
to the possibility of human thought. We know that it is but we know not
what it is. . . . We do not know His perfections, consequently, as they are in
themselves or in Him, but as they appear to us under finite forms and symbols.
This analogical conception, however, is accompanied with the belief that the
relative necessarily implies the absolute. . . . This relative, partial, analogical
knowledge of God is the Catholic doctrine of theologians. . . . ‘His essence,’
says Calvin, ‘is incomprehensible, utterly transcending all human thought. . . .’
(Collected Writings, Vol. I, pp. 123, 124.)

This distinction between the noumenon which is unknowable and the phe-
nomenon he also applies to all human knowledge. He says: “Human knowledge
is the same in form, whatever may be the diversity of its objects. The knowl-
edge of God is, consequently, not different from the knowledge of any other
being. Though unlimited in Himself, the absence of limitation in Him does not
remove the limitation of our faculties, and we are compelled to know Him, as
men, under the same conditions and restraints under which we know the finite.
There are three conditions which consciousness can never transcend. The first
is, that the immediate matter of our knowledge is not things as they are in
themselves, but things as they appear—phenomena, and not the transcendent
reality which underlies them and imparts to them their coherence and unity.
We know matter, we know mind, not absolutely as matter or mind, but as that
which appears to us under the forms of extension, solidity, figure, motion,
etc. . . . Another condition is, that we know only those appearances of things
which stand in relation to our faculties. . . . The third is, that in knowing phe-
nomena, and the phenomena related to us, we are irresistibly impelled to pos-
tulate a transcendent something beyond them, as the ground of their coexistence

This quotation makes it clear that the language of Thornwell is the lang-
guage of phenomenalism, of representational epistemology, of negative theology.
Thornwell himself realized that his formulation might evoke the charge of
skepticism. So he anticipated this objection and attempted to refute it. Whether or not he was successful is not essential to this evaluation. The point
here is that the uncritical adoption of the terminology and phraseology of
Thornwell in the face of the various forms of skeptical philosophy which have
invaded the Church since his day, almost a hundred years ago, is dangerous. To
formulate the doctrine of Incomprehensibility today in terms of Thornwell’s con-
cept of analogy, as the Complaint did, is indeed to open such a formulation to
the charge of skepticism.

The position of Charles Hodge demands a more extended delineation in
reference to an evaluation of the Complaint and the Answer because both have
quoted his views to substantiate their respective theories.

It is of interest to note that Hodge discusses Incomprehensibility under
the subject, The Knowledge of God (Systematic Theology, New York, 1872, Vol.
i, pp. 335-365), and not under “knowledge” in his chapter on the attributes of
God. This suggests that Hodge recognizes that the Incomprehensibility of God
is not an attribute of God as He is in Himself, but rather characterizes God
as He is related to the created intellect.

In his discussion of the knowledge of God, Hodge considers the question,
"Can God be known? and if so, How? that is, How does the mind proceed in forming its idea of God, and, How do we know that God really is what we believe Him to be?" His thesis is: "God can be known." After declaring this to be the teaching of Scripture he says: "It is, however, important distinctly to understand what is meant when it is said, God can be known." He qualifies his thesis that God can be known with four statements upon which he enlarges (idem. pp. 335-338). They are:

1. This does not mean that we can know all that is true concerning God. There were some among ancient philosophers who taught that the nature of God can be as fully understood and determined as any other object of knowledge.

2. It is not held that God, properly speaking, can be conceived of; that is, we cannot form a mental image of God. In this sense, Hodge says that God is inconceivable. To quote, "In this sense of the word it must be admitted that the Infinite is not an object of knowledge. We cannot form an image of infinite space, or of infinite duration, or of an infinite whole. To form an image is to limit, to circumscribe. But the infinite is that which is incapable of limitation. It is admitted, therefore, that the infinite God is inconceivable" (idem. pp. 335, 336).

It is important to note that Hodge does not apply the word "incomprehensibility" to this idea that man cannot form a mental image of God. In this way, Hodge avoids the confusion which has surrounded the discussion in this controversy, in which so often truth as an object of knowledge is confounded with reality as an object of sense experience or an object of which we may have a mental image. He also avoids some of the confusions which seem to have surrounded the subject of the knowledge of God in the discussions of other theologians. Dean Henry Longueville Mansel whose work, Limits of Religious Thought, Hodge refers to numerous times in his treatment, holds that all conception implies imagination, that is, having a mental image of that which is the object of knowledge. For Mansel the mental image which man has of God is an analogy of what God is in Himself. Hodge lays the charge of skepticism at Mansel's door.

Thornwell also appears to confuse the inconceivability or "unimaginability" of God with the incomprehensibility of God. This is seen in his use of Mansel's arguments to answer the objection of skepticism anticipated in reference to his formulation. He says: "'It does not follow,' says Mansel, 'that our representations are untrue because they are imperfect. To assert that a representation is untrue because it is relative to the mind of the receiver, is to overlook the fact that truth itself is nothing more than a relation. Truth and falsehood are not properties of things in themselves, but of our conceptions, and are tested not by the comparison of conceptions with things in themselves, but things as they are given in some other relation. . . .'" (op. cit. p. 128).

It is also possible that Charnock confuses the inconceivability ("unimaginability") of God with the incomprehensibility of God. Such sentences as these which are quoted in the Complaint suggest the possibility of such a confusion: "There is such a disproportion between an infinite object and a finite sense and understanding, that it is utterly impossible either to behold or comprehend. . . . All our imaginations of him cannot represent him, because every created species is finite; it cannot therefore represent to us a full and substantial notion of an infinite being" (C. p. 3, col. 2, bold face mine). In the first sentence, it appears that the words "behold" and "comprehend" refer to physical sight and a mental image respectively. The words "imaginations" and "represent" also suggest having mental images.

Though Hodge says that God is inconceivable in the sense mentioned above, he also recognizes that "to conceive is to think." He adds: "A conception is
Therefore a thought, and not necessarily an image. To say, therefore, that God is conceivable, in common language, is merely to say that He is thinkable. That is, that the thought (or idea) of God involves no contradiction or impossibility. We cannot think of a round square, or that a part is equal to the whole. But we can think that God is infinite and eternal” (op. cit. pp. 336, 337).

Continuing with the qualifications of what is meant when it is said God can be known, Hodge says:

“3. When it is said that God can be known, it is not meant that He can be comprehended. To comprehend is to have a complete and exhaustive knowledge of an object. . . . To comprehend is (1) To know the essence as well as the attributes of an object. (2) It is to know not some only, but all of its attributes. (3) To know the relation in which these attributes stand to each other and to the substance to which they belong. (4) To know the relation in which the object known stands to all other subjects. Such knowledge is clearly impossible in a creature, either of itself or of anything out of itself. . . .” (idem. p. 337).

In Hodge’s development, incomprehensibility is a term employed simply to deny complete and exhaustive knowledge to man. Both parties in the present controversy accept this as a qualification of the knowledge man may have of God. This is not to affirm that the word incomprehensible has always been used in this sense. It is in reference to further qualifications of the knowledge of God man possesses that the differences have arisen.

Hodge’s fourth and last qualification of the thesis that God can be known is that our knowledge is partial. He says:

“4. It is included in what has been said, that our knowledge of God is partial and inadequate. There is infinitely more in God than we have any idea of; and what we do know, we know imperfectly. . . .” (p. 337).

This qualification of man’s knowledge is, according to Hodge, included in the preceding qualification, that is, that man cannot comprehend God. The words “inadequate” and “imperfect” are not defined, and therefore it is difficult to know just how they are being used. In the light of the context and in view of the fact Hodge indicates that he has already stated in other terms what he means when he uses these words, it is proper to describe what he means by simply negating the meaning he gives the words, “to comprehend.” An imperfect and inadequate knowledge, therefore, is a knowledge which is incomplete and inexhaustive.

It is possible to go even further in ascertaining Hodge’s meaning when he uses the words “inadequate” and “partial.” From the context it is possible to say that he does not mean to say that man’s conceptions of the attributes of God, for example, are analogies which do not correspond to what God really is. To use a specific illustration, when man knows, as Hodge says he can know, that God is eternal, he does not mean that man’s conception of eternity does not coincide with God’s own thought of His eternity. For at the conclusion of this section Hodge guards against this skeptical notion. He says: “While, therefore, it is admitted not only that the infinite God is incomprehensible, and that our knowledge of Him is both partial and imperfect; that there is much in God which we do not know at all, that what we do know, we know imperfectly; nevertheless our knowledge, as far as it goes, is true knowledge.” Then he goes on to describe what he means by true knowledge: “God is really what we believe Him to be, so far as our idea of Him is determined by the revelation which He has made of Himself in his works, in the constitution of our nature, in his word, and in the person of his Son. To know is simply to have such apprehensions of an object as conform to what the object really is. We know what the word Spirit means. We know what the words infinite, eternal, and immutable mean. And, therefore, the sublime proposition,
pregnant with more truth than was ever compressed in any other sentence, 'God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and immutable,' conveys to the mind as distinct an idea, and as true (i.e. trustworthy) knowledge, as the proposition. 'The human soul is a finite spirit.' In this sense God is an object of knowledge. He is not the unknown God, because He is infinite. Knowledge in Him does not cease to be knowledge because it is omniscience; power does not cease to be power because it is omnipotence; any more than space ceases to be space because it is infinite." (idem. p. 338, bold face mine).

Having qualified the thesis that God can be known, Hodge goes on to describe how the human mind forms its idea of God. We quote: "How does the mind proceed in forming its idea of God? The older theologians answered this question by saying that it is by the way of negation, by the way of eminence, and by the way of causality. That is, we deny to God any limitation; we ascribe to Him every excellence in the highest degree; and we refer to Him as the great First Cause every attribute manifested in his works. We are the children of God, and, therefore, we are like Him. We are, therefore, authorized to ascribe to Him all the attributes of our own nature as rational creatures, without limitation, and to an infinite degree. If we are like God, God is like us. This is the fundamental principle of all religion. . . . If we are his children, He is our Father, whose image we bear, and of whose nature we partake. This, in the proper sense of the word, is Anthropomorphism. . . ." (idem. p. 339).

In view of the insistence of the authors of the Complaint on the three-fold schematization of knowledge, it is interesting to note Hodge's definition of knowledge. He says, "By knowledge is meant the intellectual apprehension of truth. It supposes a subject and object; an intelligent subject that apprehends, and something true that is apprehended" (idem. p. 339).

The notion of Incomprehensibility which follows Calvin in calling the essence of God unknowable and adds that God is known only through His attributes or what He is to us, Hodge also rejects. "God, therefore, is in his nature a substance, or essence, which is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable; the common subject of all divine perfections, and the common agent of all divine acts. This is as far as we can go, or need go. We have no definite idea of substance, whether of matter or mind, as distinct from its attributes. The two are inseparable. In knowing one we know the other" (idem. p. 367).

Another erroneous notion sometimes associated with Incomprehensibility which Hodge rejects is that our knowledge of the truth is only a knowledge of appearances because we cannot know the objects of knowledge as they are in themselves but only as they are related to our senses and faculties in representations or symbols which the mind forms of them. In contrast to this notion, Hodge says: "To know is simply to have such apprehensions of an object as conform to what the object really is" (idem. p. 338). "The mass of mankind believe that things are what they perceive them to be. This philosophers deny. They affirm that we do not perceive the things themselves, but certain ideas, species, or images of the things; that we have, and can have, no knowledge of what the things themselves really are" (idem. p. 340). Hodge is apparently opposing the very phenomenalism which Thornwell advocates. This is the more evident since Thornwell quotes from Mansel in order to answer the charge of skepticism which he anticipates may be leveled against his formulation, while Hodge criticizes Mansel for holding a skeptical theory of knowledge. Since Thornwell applies the concept of analogy to this distinction between things as they really are and things as they appear to be, it may be significant that Hodge avoids the use of the word "analogy." In any case, it is clear that there is a sharp difference between Thornwell and Hodge on this aspect of the process of knowledge which lies close to this controversy over the doctrine of Incomprehensibility.

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As a summary of the elements pertinent to his discussion it may be noted that when Hodge asserts the Incomprehensibility of God, he means that God cannot be completely and exhaustively known: he explicitly rejects the contention that God is unknowable. He also rejects the distinction between noumenon and phenomenon. He rejects this distinction in its extreme form that would make God altogether unknowable; and he rejects the less objectionable form which identifies the essence of God with the noumenon and the attributes of God with the phenomena, for this form makes a “part” of God unknowable. Hodge does not employ the term analogy or the phrase analogical knowledge. Nor does he use the term “contents” as distinct from “object.” In fact he plainly implies the two-fold division of the knowledge situation into mode and object. He does not draw a distinction between truth and a representation of the truth. Knowledge is simply “the intellectual apprehension of the truth.” It assumes an object and the psychological activity of holding the object in the mind. These are tantamount to object and mode.

Shedd is quoted in the Complaint as a part of its exposition of analogy as the subsequent paper, “The Incomprehensibility of God”, indicates. He says: “Man knows the nature of finite spirit through his own self-consciousness but he knows of the Infinite spirit only analogically” (Dogmatic Theology, I, p. 152). This brief reference does not throw much light on the relation between God’s knowledge and man’s. That it can be applied to the qualitative distinction the Complaint is contending for can hardly be proved in the light of a subsequent statement of Shedd on the finiteness of man’s knowledge. The Complaint contends that the doctrine of Shedd and the other Reformed writers found classic expression in the Confession of Faith. When the Confession speaks of the knowledge of God as infinite (II, 2), the Complaint claims it means “that knowledge of God is evidently thought of as differing from the knowledge possible to the creature in a qualitative sense, and not merely in degree” (C. p. 4, col. 2). On the other hand, when Shedd speaks of the knowledge of God as infinite, he thinks of it differing from the knowledge possible to man simply in a quantitative sense. He says: “The Infinity of God is the Divine essence viewed as having no bounds, or limits. And since limitation implies imperfection, the infinity of God implies that he is perfect in every respect in which he is infinite. If knowledge in any being has bounds, it is imperfect knowledge; if holiness has degrees or limits in any rational spirit, it is imperfect holiness. Yet finite holiness is real excellence, and limited knowledge is real knowledge. The finiteness of holiness does not convert it into sin; neither does the limitedness of knowledge convert it into error, or untruth. The imperfection or limitation of the finite relates not to quality, but to quantity” (idem. p. 339).

This quotation is not adduced to argue that the Complaint’s notion of the difference between God’s infinite knowledge and man’s finite knowledge is necessarily erroneous, but simply to show that the Complaint erred in quoting Shedd to expound its notion of the difference and to identify its concept of analogy with Shedd’s.

The position of Bavinck has been influential for the formulation of the doctrine in the Complaint because the subsequent paper by its authors already quoted calls attention to his statement concerning analogy as definitive for their concept of analogy.

Bavinck links the unknowability of God’s essence with the doctrine of incomprehensibility, and declares that this is the fundamental thought of Christian theology. He says: “This doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God and of the unknowability of his essence becomes also the point of departure and the fundamental thought of Christian theology” (Gereformeerde Dogmatiek, II, p. 10). It is unfortunate that Bavinck adopted the terminology of Calvin, a terminology which, as we have already noted, is dangerous in this

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post-Kantian era. Nor can Bavinck be held above reproach in using this terminology since in this connection he explicitly mentions the doctrine of unknowability of modern philosophy. And speaking of such modern philosophers as Kant, Fichte, and others, he makes the amazing statement that we can, to a remarkable degree, agree with them in their formulation of the doctrine of the unknowability of God. After a review of this doctrine as it appears in the modern philosophers, he says: “To a remarkable degree this doctrine of the unknowability of God can be agreed to and whole-heartedly approved” (idem. p. 23). It would appear that he sees a marked similarity between Kant’s noumenon and “the unknowable essence of God” about which he speaks. And when he applies the term “analogical” to the knowledge man may have “of a being who in himself is unknowable but nevertheless can make something of himself known to his creatures” (idem. p. 24), he is open to severe criticism. In effect, he is saying that the truth about God which man possesses is an analogy of the unknowable truth about God as He is in Himself. It appears that this is the notion of analogy which influenced the authors of the Complaint in their use of the word “analogical.” Speaking of Dr. Clark’s efforts to avoid skepticism they say: “It is done at too great a cost. It is done at the sacrifice of the transcendence of God's knowledge. His thoughts are not our thoughts . . . we dare not maintain that his knowledge and our knowledge coincide at any single point. Our knowledge of any proposition must always remain the knowledge of the creature. As true knowledge, that knowledge must be analogical to the knowledge which God possesses, but it can never be identified with the knowledge which the infinite and absolute creator possesses of the same proposition” (c. p. 5, col. 3). If this is the conception of analogy held by the authors of the Complaint, it then becomes clear why the Complaint insists that propositions cannot mean the same to God and man (idem. p. 7, col. 3, p. 5, col. 2).

Though Abraham Kuyper is not quoted in the Complaint, it will be profitable to make some comments about his position by way of anticipating an exposition of Berkhof’s formulation. In speaking of Incomprehensibility, Kuyper says: “We have to do with two elements: (1) a transcendence in the being of God which does not permit knowledge of him, and (2) a revelation of God, which actually gives knowledge of him . . . . (Dictaten Dogmatiek, 1910, Vol. I, p. 25ff.). To these two elements he applies the philosophic distinction between the noumenon and the phenomenon, when a bit later he says: “Here we are confronted with a deep question in philosophy: the connection between the noumenon and the phenomenon. If our knowledge of God is forma humana, is it real knowledge? We do not possess cognito Dei adaequata, archetypal knowledge, the noumenon; this is in God himself. We have alone the phenomenon, the cognito Die forma humana” (idem. p. 37).

Kuyper, it is evident, also employs the distinction between the noumenon and the phenomenon and relates it to the knowledge of God as He is himself and the revelation of himself in His attributes. He contends that the reality of the phenomenon is guaranteed by the creation of man according to the divine image.

Although we have completed a critical review of quotations in the Complaint of the Reformed theologians, it is hardly fitting to stop here. It has been shown that there is by no means agreement among these theologians as to their formulation of the doctrine of Incomprehensibility. It is true that there are vital elements which they have in common, elements which lay great stress upon the disproportion between the infinite God and the finite intellect of man which seeks to know God. Because of that great disproportion, all the theologians quoted agree that man can never have a comprehensive knowledge of God. All agree that finitum non est capax infiniti. In each case rationalism has been avoided. But if rationalism is the Scylla of the doctrine of Incompre-
hensibility, agnosticism is the Charybdis. While it is not contended that any of the quotations cited reveal that the author became ensnared in agnosticism, it is claimed that the language which is employed by some if adopted uncritically today opens the formulation using such language to the charge of skepticism. As has been pointed out, Calvin's use of the term "incomprehensibility" to designate the unknowability of God's essence was misleading. His teaching the divine essence is unknowable is also misleading. It is therefore unfortunate that succeeding theologians have adopted that sharp distinction between the essence and the attributes of God, of what God is in himself and what He is to us. This terminology became especially dangerous after the emergence of Kant for human thought became apparent. Kant held that man could not know the noumenon, the essence, the things as they are in themselves; he can only know the phenomenon, the appearance (attributes), the things as they appear to us. Since the emergence of Barthianism, this terminology is especially dangerous. The dialectical position of Barth polarizes a Deus Absconditus (Hidden God) and a Deus Revelatus (Revealed God). His negative theology teaches that we cannot know God as He is in himself because He is the Absolutely Other.

Berkof, as a contemporary theologian facing Barthianism and the other theologians which have their epistemological fatherhood in Kant, does great service to the Church in purging the doctrine of the Knowledge of God of this dangerous terminology. He also does great service in synthesizing the Dutch, Scottish, and American Reformed traditions and in passing them on to us freed from unguarded phraseology.

Berkhof begins his exposition of the knowledge of God with the assertion that the knowledge of God is possible and necessary. We quote him rather fully (Reformed Dogmatics, Vol. I, pp. 17-19):

"A. KNOWLEDGE OF GOD POSSIBLE AND NECESSARY. Though Reformed theology is averse to all agnosticism, there is a sense in which it also maintains that God is unknowable. But its denial of the knowability of God is simply to the effect that it is impossible for man to have a knowledge of God that is exhaustive and perfect in every way. To have such a knowledge of God would be equivalent to comprehending Him, and this is entirely out of the question: 'Finitum non posse capere infinitum.' Moreover, it is also admitted that man cannot give a definition, or, as it were, a partial description.

The one great qualification which is placed upon the knowability of God is that it is impossible for man to have a knowledge of God which is exhaustive and perfect in every way.

Berkhof continues his exposition by setting over against the qualification of the knowability of God, other qualifications which really deny that God is knowable.

"B. THE KNOWABILITY OF GOD DENIED. The knowability of God is denied on various grounds. This denial assumes several forms:

1. Man Knows Only Phenomena. The position of Kant is well known, that we know only phenomena and not the thing in itself, and that it is therefore impossible for us to know God.

2. Man Knows Only by Analogy. It is sometimes said that we know only that which bears analogy to our own nature or experience. But while it is true that we learn a great deal by analogy, we also learn by contrast.

3. Man Knows Only What He Grasps in Its Entireity. He cannot comprehend God who is infinite, and therefore cannot know God.

4. All Predicates of God Are Negative and Therefore Furnish No Real Knowledge. Hamilton says that the absolute and infinite can each only be conceived as a negation of the thinkable;

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"5. All Our Knowledge Is Relative to the Knowing Subject. It is said that we know the objects of knowledge, not as they are objectively, but only as they are related to our senses and faculties. In a sense this is perfectly true, but the import of the assertion seems to be that, because we know things only through the mediation of our senses, we do not know them as they are. But this is not true; insofar as we have any real knowledge of things, that knowledge corresponds to the objective reality. The laws of perception and thought are not arbitrary, but correspond to the nature of things. Without such correspondence, not only the knowledge of God but all true knowledge would be utterly impossible."

In this exposition Berkhof explicitly guards against phenomenalism (No. 1 above), against representational epistemology, which teaches that the mind alters the truth so that only a representation of it is in the mind (No. 5 above), and against the type of analogy which teaches that the only conception which we may have of an attribute of God is one which is analogical to the corresponding attribute in us.

In his treatment of the essential nature of God, Berkhof unequivocally rejects the sharp distinction between the essence and the attributes of God made previously by some theologians, and on which the distinction between an unknowable essence and knowable attributes was drawn. He says: "The question is raised, whether man can know something of the very being of God or knows only the relations in which God stands to his creatures. Some assert that our knowledge is limited to these relations, but this is not correct. It would not be possible to have a proper conception of these relations without knowing something of both God and man. To say that we can know nothing of the being of God is equivalent to saying that we cannot know Him at all. We cannot comprehend God, but we can undoubtedly have a relative or partial knowledge of the absolute being of God. . . ." (idem. p. 28).

Under knowledge as an attribute of God Berkhof delineates the distinctive features of God's knowledge. The following part of the exposition of the knowledge of God as an attribute is pertinent:

"(1) The Nature of It. God's knowledge is: (a) Archetypal, i.e. He knows the universe as it exists in his own eternal idea before it exists as a finite reality in time and space, and so his knowledge is not obtained from without. (b) Intuitive rather than demonstrative or discursive; it is innate and immediate and does not result from a process of reasoning. (c) Simultaneous and not successive, so that He sees things at once in their totality, and not piecemeal one after another. (d) Complete and fully conscious, while man's knowledge is always partial, frequently indistinct, and often fails to rise into the clear light of consciousness.

"(2) Its Extent. The knowledge of God is called omniscience, because it is all comprehensive. . . ." (idem. p. 43).

It is difficult to find in this delineation any elements which may not properly be included under mode (psychological activity of knowing) and object (truth known). God's knowing is archetypal, that is, essential ("He knows the universe in his own eternal idea before it exists as a finite reality") and originative ("his knowledge is not obtained from without"). Man's knowing would therefore be ectypal, that is, revelational and derivative. God's knowing is also intuitive, simultaneous, and complete; man's is discursive, successive, and part-penetrating. The extent of what God knows is described as "all-comprehensive"; nothing is beyond the scope of his knowledge. The extent of man's knowledge would therefore be described as apprehensive, non-exhaustive; man knows only a part of the truth God knows.

From this historical survey of the theologians appealed to in this controversy, it is apparent that there are marked differences in regard to some of the elements included in the various formulations of the doctrine of Incomprehensibility. For example, some include the notion that the divine essence
is unknowable as requisite, while others deny this teaching altogether. It has also been shown that the language used by some of the theologians cited in the Complaint is language which is dangerous today in the face of modernism, humanism, and Barthianism. The Complaint is therefore at fault in uncritically adopting these quotations as a part of its exposition of the doctrine of Incomprehensibility. And since some of these theologians regard the dogma of the unknowability of the divine essence as an important part of the doctrine of Incomprehensibility, it is understandable how the Answer thought the Complaint was teaching this and declared in refutation that “The essence of God’s being is incomprehensible to man except as God’s reveals truths concerning his own nature” (p. 9). The confusion which results from declaring the unknowability of the divine essence as part of the doctrine of Incomprehensibility is also revealed, as has been shown, in the language of the Complaint itself. It says: “Because of his very nature as infinite and absolute the knowledge which God possesses of himself and all things must remain a mystery which the finite mind cannot penetrate” (C. p. 3, col. 1). In paraphrasing Calvin approvingly, the Complaint also uses unguarded language: “Calvin says that the divine essence is incomprehensible. . . . that what God is in himself we cannot know, that from the nature of the case we may learn from his divine activities only what he is to us” (C. p. 3, col. 1).

This historical survey has also thrown light on that which the Report of the Committee elected by the Twelfth General Assembly to study the Complaint, called the crux of the debate, the insistence by the authors of the Complaint on a qualitative distinction between God’s knowledge and man’s knowledge which they define in terms of “content” and “analogy.” This survey has been significant because the signers of the Complaint have insisted that “content” and “analogy” found specific expression in the quotations from the theologians included in the Complaint. But we have seen that these expressions are not uniform with each other, nor with the Complaint. Shedd, as was pointed out, uses the term “analogy” but declares that the difference between God’s knowledge and man’s can only be expressed quantitatively and not qualitatively. Bavinck, on the other hand, employed the term “analogy” in reference to the knowledge man may have “of a being who in himself is unknowable but nevertheless can make something of himself known to his creatures.” And Bavinck has indicated that to a remarkable degree he can agree with the doctrine of the unknowability of God as it appears in philosophers such as Kant and Fichte. Thornwell, the third theologian quoted in the Complaint who utilized the concept “analogy” applied it not only to the distinction between the “unknowable essence” of God and His attributes, but also to man’s knowledge of everything. For Thornwell maintains that man cannot know things as they are in themselves (noumena), only things as they appear to his sense and faculties (phenomena).

The Complaint in uncritically adopting the language of these theologians in expounding their doctrine of “analogy” and “content” has indeed erred dangerously. The extent to which these skeptical notions have permeated the rest of the Complaint and the thinking of the erstwhile complainants will be considered in the next section of this report which will evaluate all of the major documents which have appeared in this controversy.

B—EVALUATION OF DOCUMENTS

Having studied the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God as it appears in Scripture and the Westminster standards, and reviewed something of the theological expressions of the doctrine, there remains the task of relating the fruits of this study to the documents that have appeared in the current controversy.

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The Complaint begins the section dealing with incomprehensibility with a formulation of that doctrine. Much of this formulation is quite satisfactory and expresses the doctrine as we find it in Scripture and the Westminster standards. The Complaint is most emphatic in asserting the knowability of God, but insists, quite properly, that man’s knowledge of God can never become comprehension. There is thus set up at the outset a perfectly valid distinction between apprehension of God which man has by revelation, and comprehension which he can never have. It is also pointed out, quite properly, that the doctrine of incomprehensibility is not to be identified with the doctrine that He can be known only if He makes Himself known, and insofar as He makes Himself known. While the language of the Complaint is perhaps a little unguarded in declaring that this “does not enter into the elements of the doctrine,” yet it is certainly true that incomprehensibility in the strictest sense must be sharply distinguished from the sovereignty of God in revelation. As indicated in the outline given of the validity and extent of human knowledge of God, incomprehensibility appears in Scripture as an essential limitation of human knowledge, and as such is distinguishable from the limitations of God’s sovereign decrees of revelation. Incomprehensibility, as the Complaint points out, arises from the very nature of God as infinite and absolute in relation to the finite human understanding. The use of the word “incomprehensible” in this opening part of the first doctrinal section of the Complaint is in most cases in clear harmony with the quotation given with approval from Charles Hodge, “to comprehend is to have a complete and exhaustive knowledge of an object” (page 3, col. 3).

The Complaint focuses attention on one particular aspect of the incomprehensibility of God, the incomprehensibility of His knowledge. It would have been equally legitimate to focus attention on the incomprehensibility of God’s power, goodness, justice, etc., for it is not simply in the sum total of His attributes that God is incomprehensible, but in each attribute. But to avoid confusion the Complaint should have indicated that the subject was being narrowed down in this way.

But apart from this confusing gap in orientation in the treatment of the Complaint, there is another factor which complicates the presentation of the doctrine in that document. This appears in the quotations from certain theologians, in the attack on Dr. Clark and perhaps also in the concluding paragraph of the formulation proper on the top of col. 1, page 3. It is a factor which appears to contradict, or at least modify the statement of the knowability of God by implying that in a sense God is unknowable even to the degree that He has revealed Himself.

In referring to the reformed theologians, the Complaint throws great stress on the teaching of Calvin on the subject. To quote the Complaint, “Calvin says that the divine essence is incomprehensible, that His majesty is not to be perceived by the human senses, that what God is in Himself we cannot know, that from the nature of the case we may learn from His divine activities only what He is to us, that it would be presumptuous curiosity to attempt to examine into His essence, that rather we must be content to adore, to fear and to reverence him (Institutes, v. i, 9; ii. 2; x. 2; cf. Warfield, Calvin and Calvinism, pp. 150ff.).”

It cannot be denied that this paraphrase or summary statement of Calvin’s view employs the term “incomprehensible” in quite a different sense from that of the definition in the quotation from Hodge. The incomprehensibility of God’s essence is paraphrased in the above quotation by the words, “what God is in Himself we cannot know,” God’s essence is “what God is in Himself.” It is incomprehensible in the sense that we cannot know it. The Complaint stresses this by italicizing the words “to us”—that which we may know of God, what He is to us, is thus forcibly set off from what God is in Himself, which we cannot know. This view of Calvin’s is analyzed more particu-
larly elsewhere in the report; the Complaint's uncritical use of it here strongly suggests that the Complaint may associate a form of inapprehensibility with incomprehensibility.

This same element is taken up in the quotation from Bavinck selected by the Complaint. Bavinck is quoted as declaring, "This doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God and of the unknowability of His essence becomes also the point of departure and the foundational thought of Christian theology" (p. 4 col. 1). Here the doctrine of the unknowability of the essence of God is explicitly conjoined with the doctrine of incomprehensibility proper. Bavinck goes on to assert, in the quotation of the Complaint, that the knowledge of God is "analogical because it is the knowledge of a being who in Himself is unknowable but nevertheless can make something of Himself known to His creatures." Analogy is here oriented not to incomprehensibility, but to unknowability. The unknowability of the essence of God is made one pole upon which the dialectic of analogy is stretched. If God's essence is not unknowable (not merely incomprehensible), the doctrine of analogy as here formulated would lose its point.

The idea of the unknowability of the essence of God seems to be reflected upon in the Complaint's exegesis of I Tim. 6:16, where it is stated that "man the creature may never trespass or even draw near to contemplate God as He is in Himself." Of course, while we judge the sharp distinction between God as He is in Himself and God as He is to us to be misleading and without warrant in Scripture, we also recognize that it is quite true that Scripture does present, as we have seen, the overpowering transcendence of the full glory of God. To behold God in His glory, in an established usage of Scripture, would be to comprehend Him, and this no creature can do. We do not deny that the misleading distinction between God as He appears to us, and God as He is in Himself has often been used with the Scriptural intent of asserting that we may know God partially but not comprehend Him fully. It can hardly be insisted that this is not the meaning of the Complaint here if the immediate context is considered.

The most serious question about the doctrine of the Complaint arises in connection with the section in which it applies its concept of incomprehensibility to the views of Dr. Clark, as they are understood.

The chief charge of the Complaint against Dr. Clark is that he denies that there is any qualitative distinction between the contents of the knowledge of God and the contents of the knowledge possible to man. In the analysis of both the majority and minority reports of the 1945-46 committee on the Complaint, it was pointed out that the Complaint here demands a distinction in a category that Dr. Clark does not recognize, a category, furthermore, that cannot be insisted upon for orthodoxy. For while the Complaint, at least by implication, divides knowledge in a three-fold schematism of mode, content, and object, Dr. Clark employs a two-fold schematism, mode and object, as appears in the transcript of his examination before Presbytery.

Both Dr. Clark and the Complaint agree that the mode of knowledge is qualitatively different for man and for God. Dr. Clark asserts, and the authors of the Answer agree, that the object, the truth known, is the same for God and for man. The Complaint itself is by no means clear in presenting this position. While it does speak, in the context of the discussion of Dr. Clark's views, of the differing knowledge which God and man possess of the same proposition, an expression which would seem to indicate an identity of object, yet it offers in support of its contention that Dr. Clark is in error the quotation, "If we don't know the object that God knows, then we are in absolute ignorance" (p. 5, col. 3). This surely seems to indicate a denial of the identity of the object of knowledge for man and for God.

The Complainants however, have denied that they hold that the object of

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knowledge is different for God and for man. A view asserting a difference in the object of knowledge for God and for man would indeed be skepticism, declares Dr. Stonehouse, in a paper circulated early in 1947 (Observations etc. p. 6). The difference upon which the Complainants insist, he says elsewhere in this paper (p. 3) "is not the object of knowledge, which in its import is the same for God and for man; for truth is one. But it is the content of knowledge, or that understanding possessed by the mind concerning the objective truth, that the Complainants have in view." Here the truth as the object of knowledge (in its "import," at least) is said to be the same for God and man.

The question of the object of knowledge is somewhat differently formulated in a paper by two other Complainants, Messrs. Bradford and Kuschke, entitled, "A Reply to a Paper by Mr. Hamilton" etc. pps. 1, 2. There the object of knowledge to man is said to be God's revelation of Himself and of His works, viewed as a product. God knows Himself; in addition He knows the revelation He has made about Himself. It is only with respect to this revealed truth that an identity of object exists. "It is only with regard to revelation, as an object of knowledge, that God and man may each have a grasp of the same object" (p. 2). Strictly speaking under this view, the object of man's knowledge is Deus Revelatus, the Revealed God, an Object, so far as man's knowledge is concerned, other than God as He is in Himself. The paper presents this view in a fashion that sets it against skepticism, however. It declares that the truth as it is in God is made known to man by this revealed truth. In a certain sense the writers doubtless would not deny therefore, that the truth concerning God as He is in Himself is an object of human knowledge, since they say that this truth is made known to man by revelation. But in a stricter sense they seem to insist that this truth as it is in God is not properly the object of man's knowledge, but rather only revealed truth. It must be recognized that it is one thing to say that man, through revelation, knows eternal truth; it is another thing to say that man knows only revealed truth. The latter position must then be guarded against the charge of a two-level theory of truth.

But while the theory of the object of knowledge in the Complaint and as expressed by the Complainants may have a certain complexity, yet it is clear that the position taken is that there is a sense in which the object of knowledge is the same for man and for God.

The crucial definitional question, therefore, is that of content, which the Complainants insist is qualitatively different for man and for God. What is the significance of the term "content" as employed in the Complaint and by the Complainants in subsequent papers?

In the Complaint itself, the meaning of the term is rather plain. It is not used in any specified technical sense; the "contents" of the knowledge of God are spoken of, and ordinary common-sense would take that to mean the things which the knowledge of God contains, i.e., the truths in His mind, or truth as He knows it. This plain significance of the term is borne out by the following argument of the Complaint. Having stated, as the proposition to be proved, that Dr. Clark denies a qualitative difference between the contents of the knowledge of God and the contents of the knowledge possible to man, the Complaint proceeds to adduce evidence by asserting first that Dr. Clark assumes that truth, whether in the divine mind or in the human mind is always propositional. The continuity is obvious. The Complaint is dealing with content, truth in the mind. The argument goes on to apply this principle alleged to be Dr. Clark's fundamental assumption. The trouble is, the argument asserts, that on this assumption "there is no single item of knowledge in God's mind which may not be shared by the human mind." Again it is plainly of content that the Complaint is still speaking: items of knowledge in the mind. Of course the idea of "items" here springs from the Complaint's understanding of Dr. Clark,
and is a term which it opposes, but the idea of content is made plain: that which is in the mind, whether composed of distinct items or one truth.

In this latter context another illuminating synonym is used for content. As an objectionable consequence of Dr. Clark’s position it is said that, “If knowledge is a matter of propositions divorced from the knowing subject, that is, of self-contained, independent statements, a proposition would have to have the same meaning for man and for God.” Elsewhere it is the content which the Complaint declares Dr. Clark makes identical for God and man, here it is the meaning. The meaning that a truth has for a knower is the truth as it exists in his mind, the truth as he knows it. Meaning and content are in this way synonymous.

Still another synonym for content is the word knowledge itself. The things a mind contains, truths as they exist in the mind, are the knowledge the mind possesses. It is in this sense that the word knowledge is very apparently used in the first sentence of the paragraph numbered “2” in the argument of the Complaint, where it is declared that Dr. Clark makes man’s true knowledge of a proposition identical with God’s knowledge of the same proposition. It is not the activity of the mind in knowing that is here in question, for the next sentence proceeds to use the word “meaning” as a synonym for this knowledge of a proposition. The knowledge of it is the meaning it has for the knower.

The identification of content with meaning is perfectly explicit on page 7, col. 3 of the Complaint, where it is said that according to Dr. Clark “propositions have the same content, mean the same, to God and man.”

This interpretation of content is maintained also in the paper of Dr. Stonehouse entitled “Observations… etc., where content is defined as “that understanding possessed by the mind concerning objective truth.” What the mind contains is not the truth, but an understanding of the truth, or the meaning which is derived from the truth. This is the content of knowledge.

Another paper by two of the Complainants (Bradford-Kuschke, A Reply to the Paper by Mr. Hamilton… etc., p. 2) does not hesitate to use the word representation as a synonym for content. “The proper content of knowledge, on the other hand (as over against the object), is the representation, in a mind, of the object of knowledge. It is a mind’s possession of, or grasp of, that object.”

The words “grasp” and “possession” are both ambiguous in this discussion. They may refer to the activity of the mind as grasping or possessing; they may refer to the outcome of such activity. We speak of a man’s grasp of geometry, meaning how much knowledge of the subject he has, the outcome of his having grasped it to a greater or lesser degree. The word “representation” is not ambiguous in the sentence in which it is used, and establishes the meaning of the other two terms. The representational nature of the content of human knowledge is developed consistently through this paper: “Thus, when a human mind becomes aware of revealed truth as an object of knowledge, there is formed in the mind a representation or grasp of that object, and this representation or grasp is the content of knowledge. And there is in the divine mind a representation of the same revealed truth, which representation is the content of the divine knowledge” (p. 2—boldface mine).

“The character of the knowing mind itself fixes the character of the content of knowledge” (p. 2). To speak of the meaning that a man “puts” on certain words is to refer to the content of knowledge (p. 3). “Here it is very important to observe that much of the content of knowledge, or much of the representation, or grasp, which the human mind possesses, flows from the knowing mind itself” (p. 8, boldface theirs).

This paper by Messrs. Bradford and Kuschke also contains an analysis of the use of the term “content” in the Complaint, dealing especially with the passage at the beginning of paragraph 2 in the argument of this section. This analysis is valuable, and is quoted below.
The word ‘meaning’ has also caused difficulty, because it has been used with reference both to the object of knowledge and to the content of knowledge. There is meaning or import, or sense, in the objective truth—an import that is the same for all minds. There is also in the grasp, or content of knowledge, that which corresponds to the import of the objective truth. It is in this latter sense that the word ‘meaning’ was employed in one place in the Complaint. By way of objecting to Dr. Clark's view that man’s knowledge of any proposition, if it is really knowledge, is identical with God's knowledge of the same proposition, the Complaint says: ‘If knowledge is a matter of propositions divorced from the knowing subject, that is, of self-contained, independent statements, a proposition would have to have the same meaning for man as for God.’ In this sentence the word ‘meaning’ and also the word ‘knowledge’ refer to the content, not the object of knowledge; and the intent of the Complaint may be suggested by the following paraphrase: ‘If the content of knowledge consists of an assortment of propositions which, as far as the content of knowledge is concerned, are in no way altered by the knowing mind but are considered as not being influenced by it; then, in that case, a proposition known by both God and man would be represented by the same identical grasp, or content of knowledge, for both God and man; inasmuch as on this hypothesis there would be no real difference between the content and the object of knowledge.’

It must be observed that while meaning in the sense of objective import is the same for all minds, it is not the same in all minds. This meaning is in the truth, but not in the mind. What is in the mind is that which corresponds to the import of the objective truth. The meaning of the truth must be ‘grasped’ in the sense of being represented to the mind by a corresponding meaning. (The mind thus knows through the meaning which it attaches to the meaning of the truth which is a revealed object corresponding to the truth-in-itself as God knows it). In the paraphrase of the paragraph of the Complaint it is clearly stated that what the Complaint intends to demand is that the truth is influenced even “altered” by the knowing mind. It is this alteration by the knowing mind which renders the content of knowledge qualitatively different, while the object, in a certain sense, is the same.

The theory of consistent representationalism as advanced in the paper alluded to is more explicit and detailed than other signers of the Complaint might wish to be, perhaps, but its central interpretation of the Complaint is surely accurate. The Complaint does demand a qualitative difference in the truth as it is held in the mind. The truth must be qualitatively altered in entering the mind. (1) In the form which it takes in the human mind it is analogical to, but never identical with, the truth as it is in the mind of God.

It is not the contention of this minority of the Committee that the specific doctrine of Messrs. Bradford-Kuschke, or the more general approach of the Complaint which they interpret is skeptical. Outstanding exponents of the Reformed Faith have held a theory of knowledge similar to this. We would be loath to charge Calvin, Kuyper, and Bavinck with a skeptical theory of knowledge. But this minority does insist: First, that this theory has serious dangers which must be recognized and guarded against. It is a Christian phenomenalism in epistemology. Bavinck, for one, has recognized this and sought to protect the theory from the charges which might consequently be brought

(1) The subjective “meaning” for God of truth (the representation God makes of the truth, which forms the content of His mind, according to the B-K document, (p. 2) is surely identical with the objective “meaning” of the truth. But the subjective “meaning” for man is qualitatively different from the subjective “meaning” for God. Therefore the subjective “meaning” for man is qualitatively different from the objective meaning of the truth.

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against it. An even greater danger now is the use to which Barthian theology
puts a similar construction. On the whole, the Complainants have shown them-
selves to be aware of the danger of skepticism, and seek in their formulations
to demonstrate that they avoid it.

Second, that this theory cannot fairly be represented as the uniform doc-
trine of the Reformed churches. Reputable theologians have advanced it, but
others have more or less explicitly disagreed with it. Express Scriptural war-
rant for it is, in our judgment, lacking, and warrant by implication has not
been sufficiently advanced, nor clearly enough worked out to make the rejection
of it tantamount to the rejection of Scripture. This theory therefore can by
no means be made a test of Reformed orthodoxy at the present time.

Third, that so far as the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God is
concerned, this theory exceeds the bounds of what may properly be considered
the scope of that doctrine, and demands a stand on different, even if related
doctrines, the doctrine of the relation of divine and human knowledge, and the
doctrine of the nature of human knowledge. It is hard to believe that when
the Westminster divines recorded the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God
they had in mind that it must be insisted that God is incomprehensible for the
reason that everything is incomprehensible, since man's mind cannot comprehend
but only apprehend. Yet this is just what the Complainants insist upon in
the qualitative difference of content. "Hence man's grasp of any truth what-
soever, as distinguished from the divine comprehension of the same truth, has
been designated as apprehension. The divine knowledge is an essential knowl-
edge in that God alone knows a thing as it is in itself, whereas man's knowl-
edge is relative in that he can know it only as it stands related to his finite
perception" (Observations... etc. by Dr. Stonehouse, p. 3). The force of the
term incomprehensible as applied to God would rather seem to imply that God
is distinctive in this regard. Our knowledge of some truth respecting created
things may be adequate, but our knowledge of God can never be adequate. To
this sort of formulation the Complainants have raised the objection that it is
merely quantitative: that it holds that we may know something about God,
but never everything about God. Our reply is that this is the simplest form
of the historic doctrine. When it is said that we may apprehend God, it is
meant that we may know something about Him. When it is said that we can-
not comprehend God, it is meant that we can never know everything about
Him. This simple doctrine is clearly demanded by Scripture. The technical
form in which the qualitative difference is demanded by the Complaint goes
beyond the clear warrant of Scripture. It also goes beyond the doctrine of in-
comprehensibility. The contention that the truth is qualitatively altered in the
form it must take to enter our minds applies to apprehension as much as to
comprehension, and it applies to every conceivable object as well as to God.
This doctrine of analogical knowledge, in and of itself would not refute the
possibility of complete knowledge of God on the analogical plane. Analogy
sets up a polarity between knowability and unknowability which is present
wherever human knowledge takes place: we know, yet we do not know, the
same thing. Incomprehensibility, as a doctrine arising particularly from the
confronting of human knowledge by an Infinite God, does not in itself set any
necessary balancing negative against the positive knowledge we may be given.
It simply requires that we realize that we will never, can never comprehend
God, and that, since God is infinite, this remains absolutely true no matter
how unceasingly we may learn of Him.

Another aspect on the subject of "content" should be noted in the interest
of clarity. The discussion above has proceeded along logical and epistemologi-
cal lines along which the whole debate has proceeded on the whole.
There is, however, another aspect from which those questions of comparative
knowledge may be approached, the psychological aspect. Language proceeds
by the use of symbols, even if thought does not, and for the interchange of

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ideas there must be at least a minimal identity of meaning as to the thing symbolized. Logically speaking, the word "three" must mean the same for two people to use it in a conversation without misunderstanding. Yet while this may be so, and there may be no misunderstanding as to the word, the meaning, in a psychological sense, may be quite different. By the "psychological meaning" we mean the whole reaction of the person's mind to the word. The word "three" might call up to someone's mind a certain visual image of the written numeral, to another a position on the face of a clock dial, etc.

Although it seems clear to this minority that the Complainants define "content" in clearly epistemological terms, a psychological understanding of the word is possible. It is perfectly true that God's knowledge, as infinite omniscience, is qualitatively above ours, and that since God knows all things at once, the distinction of one truth from all truth is for God logical, but not psychological. God knows the distinctions as well as the unity of truth, He knows His attributes as distinct, and the distinction of the Persons of the Trinity, but God does not know truths one at a time, and so far as we may reverently employ the term "Divine psychology," we must assert that the "content" of the Divine psychology is indivisible. From his standpoint it may be declared that the psychological content of our minds is qualitatively different from the psychological content of God's mind, at any point in our knowing, or to any extent of our knowing. The separate, finite contents of our mind, even when including truths revealed of God, are not to be equated with the content of God's mind. God's knowledge of one truth, in this psychological sense, is qualitatively above our knowledge of that truth, since in this category it is not strictly one truth that God knows, but all truth, and that truth infinite and therefore incomprehensible. Knowledge in this sense is an attribute of God in which man cannot participate.

If our judgment is mistaken, and the intent of the Complaint is expressed by this psychological distinction of content, the controversy on this point is, in our opinion, capable of a happy resolution. But if the Complainants insist upon a logical, or epistemological distinction as to content they are insisting, in effect, upon a representational theory of knowledge, and upon an all-important third division in the scheme of knowledge, which, whether called "content" or by some other name, is the product of the knowing action upon the truth, the necessary form which truth must assume to enter the mind. Such a doctrine cannot be made a canon of orthodoxy.

With this study of the Complaint before us, it is in order to consider the Answer. As the title of the document implies, it is in the form of a rebuttal to the Complaint. In the section dealing with the doctrine of Incomprehensibility it attacks two chief points which it declares to be implied in the argument of the Complaint. They are: "First, there is some truth that God cannot put into propositional form; this portion of truth never has the same meaning for man as it has for God. Second, the portion of truth that God can express in propositional form never has the same meaning for man as it has for God. Every proposition that man knows has a qualitatively different meaning for God. Man can grasp only an analogy of the truth, which, because it is an analogy, is not the truth itself." The Answer, p. 9).

The first of these alleged implications does appear in certain questions to Dr. Clark in the examination before Presbytery (Transcript 52:18-53:24) and seems to be included in at least one paper prepared by a signer of the Complaint, but it would be difficult indeed to deduce it as one of the chief presuppositions of the Complaint. It is true that the paraphrase of Calvin's views and the quotation from Thornwell indicate an area of truth that is inaccessible, but this element is not prominent in the argument of this section of the Complaint. The Complaint does attack what is regarded as the fundamental assumption of Dr. Clark, that truth, whether in the Divine mind or in the human

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mind, is always propositional. But the burden of the Complaint here is not to assert that Dr. Clark should have said that only some truth is propositional. The question as to whether truth for men is always propositional is waived by the Complaint, or admitted for purposes of argument. The challenge of the Complaint is with respect to truth for God, which the Complaint here implies is not propositional at all, since in the judgment of the Complaint propositional truth is truth independent of the knower, truth which would have the same meaning for God and for man.

For the second main point opposed by the Answer there is substantial justification in the Complaint. As we have seen, it is perfectly true that the Complaint demands that a truth may not have the same meaning for God and for man, but that there must be a qualitative difference between the two. The meaning of truth is the content of the mind, the form which the truth takes when it is grasped by the mind, in the construction of the Complainants. The Complainants have objected to the interpretation of the Answer in declaring that, according to the Complaint, "Man can grasp only an analogy of the truth, which, because it is an analogy, is not the truth itself." The formula the Complainants would prefer is that man knows the truth analogically, not that he knows analogical truth. Yet they do insist that the actual contents of the human mind—truth as it is held in the mind—is analogical to the absolute truth of God and may not be identified with it at any point. Thus, while man grasps the absolute truth, yet the very act of grasping converts the truth into a relative truth, a different kind of truth. The truth which is held in the mind as known, is therefore, on this scheme, analogical truth.

Considering the vagueness surrounding any indication of an identity of the object of knowledge for God and for man in the text of the Complaint, it is not surprising that the Answer should have overlooked this distinction, and assumed that for the Complaint, truth as the object of human knowledge, as well as truth as the content of the human mind is analogical to the truth of God. The Complaint, of course, does not make explicit the three-fold schematism of knowledge in terms of which its argument is formed.

The Answer does not have a positive formulation of the doctrine of Incomprehensibility like that of the Complaint. The nearest approach to it is a listing, in opposition to the Complaint, of four points anent the doctrine as set forth in Scripture and the Confession.

The first of these declares that "The essence of God's being is incomprehensible to man except as God reveals truths concerning His own nature."

The word "incomprehensible" here must be taken in the sense of "inapprehensible, inconceivable, which is unfortunate in a discussion where the technical significance of the word is the main question. Such a usage here cannot but generate confusion. The phrase "the essence of God's being" seems to suggest an unnecessary qualification in the sentence thus understood, for apart from revelation there could be no apprehension of God whatsoever. But the thrust of this point seems to be against the idea, found in the quotations employed in the Complaint, that there is an unknowable Essence of God. That Essence is unknowable only insofar as it has not been revealed, this point in the Answer maintains.

Concerning the second positive statement of the Answer, that "the manner of God's knowing, an eternal intuition, is impossible for man" little need be said. It may be noted that Dr. Clark, in a paper "Studies in the Doctrines of the Complaint" considers that he has a two-fold theory of the act of knowing, with a qualitative difference in that act between God and man (p. 8). Anything that may be included in the act of knowing, in distinction from the truth known, Dr. Clark holds to be qualitatively different. This is surely not a narrow or minimizing definition of mode. But the Complainants require, on a simple mode-object schematism, that there be included under mode not only the

Appendix 93
knowing act, but a distinct entity, separable from the act itself, and qualitatively different from the truth, the product of the knowing activity, the content of the knowing mind. This is to require, actually, the three-fold schematism of knowledge.

The third affirmation of the Answer is, "Man can never know exhaustively and completely God's knowledge of any truth in all its relationships and implications; because every truth has an infinite number of relationships..." (p. 9)

Responding to the Complaint, the Answer here deals with the general limitations of human knowledge in contrast to the Divine knowledge, a subject closely related to incomprehensibility, though not the doctrine proper. The formulation here does yield a doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God, however. It does not reason that God is incomprehensible because everything is incomprehensible for man, who can never comprehend but only apprehend. Real and direct knowledge of a particular truth is possible for man. But the infinite relationships and implications of any truth stretch forever beyond man. It is evident then, that an exhaustive, complete, or "adequate" knowledge of God is impossible for man. This we judge to be the essential core of the doctrine of incomprehensibility proper.

This formulation is far from a happy one, however, not only because of the oblique approach of the whole controversy to the doctrine in question, but also because of the use of the expression, "knowing exhaustively... God's knowledge of any truth." "Knowledge" here would first appear to refer to the knowing act, with "truth" as the object. But obviously it is not human insight into the mode of the Divine knowledge that is here in question. Presumably, it is to be taken in the other sense of knowledge recognized by the Answer, "information," the sense being that man can never possess exhaustively the information which God possesses as to a truth in all its relationships...

One other formulation of the Answer bearing on Incomprehensibility should be noted. One passage on page 13 indicates the infinite scope of omniscience, including the infinite self-consciousness of God. "When the meaning of omniscience is understood as above, man's increase by revelation in knowledge on the temporal plane would, throughout eternity, still fall infinitely short of omniscience" (p. 14). This statement surely underscores the infinite disproportion between God as the known Object, and man as the knowing subject. It demands an essential incomprehensibility, flowing from the gulf between an eternal, infinite God and a temporal creature.

The fourth assertion reiterates and rejects the "two chief points" said to be implied by the Complaint which were dealt with above.

It is to be regretted that the Answer in attacking the Complaint did not give a positive formulation of the whole doctrine of Incomprehensibility. The exegesis of the Answer will not be discussed here...

In charging the analogy doctrine of the Complaint with skepticism the Answer does not weigh adequately the position of the Complainants on the identity of the object of knowledge for God and for man. This failure is understandable, as we have seen. But the dangers of the theory of truth involved in the Complaint are set forth in the Answer, and these dangers surely warn against the propriety of setting up the epistemology of the Complaint as a test of Reformed Orthodoxy.

II. After reading over the report signed "The Committee", I have regretfully come to the conclusion that there has been little material change in the position of the majority members from that of the Complaint and the subsequent papers issued by certain erstwhile complainants. The letter recently sent to ministers and sessions of The Orthodox Presbyterian Church by the erstwhile complainants, states, to be sure, "We gladly affirm that, when the

Appendix 94
objects of knowledge are contemplated, human knowledge does have contact
with the objects of divine knowledge within the compass of the divine revela-
tion, and that within the sphere of revelation the objects of knowledge as such
are the same for God and for man.” This is excellent as far as it goes. It
must, however, be taken in conjunction with the statements in the report of the
majority of this committee, two of whose members are erstwhile complainants.
These statements (among others) are as follows:

“It should have appeared that the Complaint in the use of the word
‘knowledge’ in every case in the whole of the sentence concerned was employing
the word not in the objective but in the subjective sense.” (Appendix 21, bottom
paragraph). The sentence mentioned is the one in the Complaint, “We dare not
maintain that his (God’s) knowledge and our knowledge coincide at any single
point.” In other words God’s subjective knowledge and man’s subjective knowl-
edge do not coincide at any single point!

In the following paragraph at the top of Appendix 22, it is stated: “We
consider, therefore, that fair examination should have shown that what was
being affirmed was that our subjective knowledge of any truth must never be
identified with God’s knowledge of that same truth and that the distinctiveness
of the divine understanding or cognition or knowledge obtains at every point,
however infinitesimally small may be the point which we consider.” This may
at first seem innocuous until we realize that the writers mean, not that there
are many points of God’s knowledge which do not coincide with man’s knowl-
edge of a truth, but that they mean that there is no coincidence between God’s
knowledge of a truth and man’s knowledge of the same truth at any point. How
could there be even the contact point which the erstwhile complainants admit
in their recent letter, exists, if there is no coincidence at any infinitesimally
small point?

That this is really the doctrine of the report signed “The Committee”, and
therefore of at least two of the erstwhile complainants is plain in the following
quotation from the top of Appendix 26: “What the Complaint had in mind was
the qualitative difference in respect of knowledge and not of the truth known.
The Complaint does insist upon two levels but it is made plain that the two
levels are not two levels of truth but two levels of knowledge. . . .” According
to this doctrine the qualitative difference in God’s subjective knowledge and
man’s subjective knowledge extends to every single point of knowledge, no
matter how infinitesimally small it may be.

Again on p. 27, last full paragraph: “Respecting the central argument of
the Complaint, namely, that there is a qualitative distinction between the knowl-
edge of God and the knowledge possible for man, we find ourselves in agreement
with the contention of the Complaint.”

This doctrine is to be regarded as a test of orthodoxy, for on p. 29, top
paragraph, we read: “it is highly necessary that those who have signed the
Answer assure the church that the qualitative distinction between God’s knowl-
edge and man’s applies to the ‘understanding’, ‘grasp’, ‘cognition’, ‘knowing’ at
every point where God’s knowledge and man’s respect the same truth.”

Now if there is a qualitative distinction between every point of God’s
knowledge of a truth and man’s knowledge of the same truth, so that they do
not coincide at any point no matter how infinitesimally small that point may
be, then the truth that man knows is different in his mind from the objective
truth. This is clearly set forth in the minority report of last year, which is
the first section of this report. Clowney and Gray analyzed the Complaint’s po-
position as follows: “The subjective ‘meaning’ for God of truth . . . is surely
identical with the objective meaning of the truth. But the subjective meaning
for man is qualitatively different from the subjective ‘meaning’ for God. There-

Appendix 95
fore the subjective ‘meaning’ for man is qualitatively different from the objective meaning of the truth.”

Now I submit that this means that man can never in his subjective knowledge have a single item of objective truth as it really is, in spite of the complainants insistence that man knows God’s truth. The erstwhile complainants deny skepticism and assert that man does come in contact with divine knowledge, but if man’s subjective knowledge is qualitatively different from the objective truth with which he is said to come in contact, just what good does it do him to come in contact with it? Moreover if his subjective knowledge is never identical with God’s knowledge at any single point, just how is he to come in contact with the real truth? If when man is said to come in contact with divine knowledge he can never know it as it really is, but always has a qualitatively different subjective knowledge of it, will the erstwhile complainants clearly explain just how this differs from a form of skepticism?

Shall such a doctrine be a test of orthodoxy in The Orthodox Presbyterian Church? This minority maintains that while man can never know God comprehensively and exhaustively, if man knows anything truly, he has that truth, just to the extent that he knows it truly, and to the extent that he thus has the truth, his subjective knowledge and God’s subjective knowledge coincide. “To this sort of formulation the Complainants have raised the objection that it is merely quantitative: that it holds that we may know something about God, but never everything about God. Our reply is that this is the simplest form of the historic doctrine.” (Appendix 91). May The Orthodox Presbyterian Church never depart from it.

In this minority report I have intentionally used the language used in the majority report.

Respectfully submitted,

FLOYD E. HAMILTON

NOTES:


2.—The names of Floyd E. Hamilton, and Edmund P. Clowney are to be appended to the Minority Report on the Effect of Regeneration on Intellectual Activities of the Soul (Appendix 63-65) (See, Minutes, p. 18).

3.—Edmund P. Clowney did not support the report of the Committee on The Free Offer of the Gospel (Appendix 51-63) (See, Minutes p. 18).

4.—Sections of minority reports prepared for the Fourteenth General Assembly over the names of E. P. Clowney and R. W. Gray, and referred to by Floyd E. Hamilton in the Minority Report on the Incomprehensibility of God (Appendix 73-96) are not printed in the identical form which they had in these original minority reports. (See, Minutes, p. 18).

Appendix 96
APPENDIX

STATISTICAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 1948

(Compiled from reports submitted by the sessions and presbyteries to the Clerk of Assembly)

Statistics to March 31, 1948; other material to August 11, 1948

KEY

1. Total Membership, April 1, 1947
2. Total Membership, March 31, 1948
3. Communicant Members, March 31, 1948
4. Baptized Children, March 31, 1948
5. Gain, Communicant Members, Confession of Faith
6. Gain, Reaffirmation of Faith
7. Gain, Transfer
8. Loss, Communicant Members, Death
9. Loss, Communicant Members, Dismissal
10. Loss, Erasure or Discipline
11. Net Gain or Loss of Baptized Children
12. Sunday School Enrollment, March 31, 1948
13. Net Gain or Loss, Sunday School Membership
14. Total Receipts, General Fund
15. Total Receipts for Benevolences
16. Total Receipts for Special Purposes

* - 1947 Figures

PRESBYTERY OF CALIFORNIA

Rev. Robert E. Nicholas, Stated Clerk, 420 Drake Road, Bend, Oregon

CALIFORNIA

Berkeley, Covenant
1632 University Ave.
Robert K. Churchill

Long Beach, First
512 San Antonio Dr.
Henry W. Caray

Los Angeles, Beverly
345 S. Woods Ave. (22)
Dwight H. Poundstone

Grace
9400 S. Western Ave.
Robert H. Graham

Westminster
4652 Eagle Rock Blvd.
Robert B. Brown

Manhattan Beach, First
4th St. and Ingleside Dr.
H. Wilson Albright

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**Average Contribution Per Communicant Member** $67.90 $11.94 $35.58

**Ministerial Changes**
- Ministers Added to Roll:
  - John F. Gray, from Presbytery of New Jersey, September 25, 1947
  - Louis E. Knowles, from Presbytery of the Dakotas, December 15, 1947
- Ministers Removed from Roll:
  - William Harllee Bordeaux, to Presbytery of New Jersey, April 16, 1947
  - Clifford S. Smith, to Tacoma Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church, December 15, 1947

**Other Ministers of Presbytery**
- James B. Brown
- Malcolm C. Frehn
- John F. Gray
- Bruce F. Hunt
- G. Arthur Hutchison
- Louis E. Knowles

**Congregations Received**
- First, National City, California, September 7, 1947

**Total Ministers** - 17
**Total Churches** - 12
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**WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF NO PRESBYTERY**

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PRESBYTERY OF NEW JERSEY

The Rev. John P. Richmond, Stated Clerk, R. D. 3, Elmer, N. J.

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Average Contribution Per Communicant Member

$37.55 $13.32 $20.78

Ministerial Changes

Ministers Added to Roll:
- William Harlee Bordeaux, from Presbytery of California, January 20, 1948
- Robert W. Eckardt, by Ordination, November 21, 1947
- Charles H. Ellis, from Presbytery of Ohio, July, 1948
- Meredith G. Kline, by Ordination, March 5, 1948

Ministers Removed from Roll:
- John F. Gray, to Presbytery of California, April, 1947
- Oscar Holkeboer, to Presbytery of Wisconsin, June, 1947
- Herbert S. Bird, to Presbytery of the Dakotas, October, 1947
- Roy F. Lambert, to United Presbyterian Church, January, 1948
- Carlo Lazzaro, to Reformed Church in America, January, 1948
- Alexander K. Davison, to United Presbyterian Church, February, 1948

Other Ministers of Presbytery:
- Wm. Harlee Bordeaux
- Edward Heerema
- Lewis J. Grotenhuis
- Walter C. Jent (in transit)
- James W. Price

Licentiate: Robert Hamilton

Total Ministers - 16
Total Churches - 10
Total Chapels - 2
**PRESBYTERY OF NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND**

The Rev. Herman T. Petersen, Stated Clerk, Stop 15, Central Ave., Albany 5, N. Y.

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**MAINE**

| Canaan, Chapel       | 36| 38| 27| 11|   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Kelly G. Tucker      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |

**NEW YORK**

| Albany, Covenant     | 48| 53| 33| 20| 10|   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Stop 15, Central Ave. (5) | |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Herman T. Petersen   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |

<p>| Franklin Square      | 63| 73| 43| 30| 3 | 4  |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 38 Franklin Ave.     |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Robert L. Vining     |   |   |   |   |   |    |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |</p>
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<th>Other Ministers</th>
<th>Total Ministers</th>
<th>Total Churches</th>
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<td>P.E.</td>
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<td>1 1 1 +3 63 21</td>
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Ministerial Changes

Ministers Added to Roll:
- Floyd E. Hamilton, from Presbytery of Philadelphia, March 24, 1948
- Calvin A. Busch, from Presbytery of Dakotas, March 24, 1948

Ministers Removed from Roll:
- Edmund P. Clowney, to Presbytery of Wisconsin, May 22, 1947
- Arthur O. Olson, to Presbytery of Dakotas, October 22, 1947

Other Ministers of Presbytery:
- John H. Skilton
- John Murray
- Burton I. Goddard
- Charles E. Stanton

William Young
Floyd E. Hamilton
William C. Goodrow

Total Ministers - 15
Total Churches - 9
Total Chapels - 4
### PRESBYTERY OF PHILADELPHIA


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**Includes Branch S. S.**

**Ministerial Changes**

**Ministers Added to Roll:**
- George J. Willis, from Presbytery of Wisconsin, November 17, 1947
- Thayer A. Westlake, from Presbytery of Philadelphia, Reformed Presbyterian Church in N. A. (General Synod) July 19, 1948
- Henry Tavares, by Ordination, August 10, 1948

**Ministers Removed from Roll:**
- Samuel J. Allen, to Presbytery of Florida, Presbyterian Church in the U. S., December 1, 1947

**Other Ministers of Presbytery:**
- Egbert W. Andrews
- John W. Betzold
- Thomas M. Cooper
- Clarence W. Duff
- Reink B. Kuiper
- Arthur W. Kuschke
- Francis E. Mahaffy
- Robert S. Marsden
- Clarence L. McCoy
- R. Heber McIlwaine
- Leslie W. Sloat
- Ned B. Stonehouse
- Cornelius Van Til
- E. Lynne Wade
- William E. Welmers
- George J. Willis
- Paul Woolley
- Edward J. Young

Total Ministers - 33  Total Churches - 19  Total Chapels - 1
## PRESBYTERY OF OHIO

The Rev. Martin J. Bohn, Stated Clerk, 1014 N. Sterling St., Indianapolis 1, Ind.

### INDIANA

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### OHIO

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**Average Contribution Per Communicant Member**

- $79.80
- $11.70
- $2.01

### Ministerial Changes

- Ministers Removed from Roll:
  - Charles H. Ellis, to Presbytery of New Jersey, June, 1948

- Other Ministers of Presbytery:
  - Gordon H. Clark
  - Thomas M. Gregory
  - Lawrence B. Gilmore

**Total Ministers - 5**
**Total Churches - 3**
**Total Chapels - 1**
PRESBYTERY OF WISCONSIN

Mr. Glenn A. Andreas, Stated Clerk, Merchants Bank Bldg., Cedar Rapids, Iowa

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<td>+3</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>- 3</td>
<td>$10,221</td>
<td>$1,371</td>
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| WISCONSIN |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Cedar Grove, Calvary, V. | 577 | 578 | 396 | 182 | 20 | 3 | 11 | 1 | -9 | 215 | -10 | 20,652 | 2,612 | $3,943 |
| Gresham, Old Stockbridge | 50 | 55 | 24 | 31 |   | +5 | 40 |   | 232 | 204 | 130 |
| John Davies |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Milwaukee, Grace, V. | 23 | 23 | 17 | 6 |   | 35 |   | 1,638 | 167 | 2,911 |
| 2607 N. 50th St. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Oostburg, Bethel | 398 | 403 | 256 | 147 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 2 | -1 | 145 | +3 | 7,432 | 3,851 | 5,770 |
| John Verhage |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| TOTAL | 1,101 | 1,115 | 725 | 390 | 29 | 11 | 2 | 19 | 3 | -2 | 495 | -10 | $40,175 | $8,205 | $12,754 |

Average Contribution Per Communicant Member $55.40 $11.31 $17.59

Ministerial Changes

Ministers Added to Roll:
Oscar Holkeboer, from Presbytery of New Jersey, June 30, 1947

Ministers Removed from Roll:
George J. Willis, to Presbytery of Philadelphia, October 14, 1947
Dean W. Adair, deceased, December 24, 1947

Other Ministers of Presbytery:
Edmund P. Clowney
Richard B. Gaffin
Edward F. Hills
George W. Marston
Jacob Mellema

Total Ministers - 8
Total Churches - 5
## SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

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<th>Presbytery</th>
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<th>5</th>
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<th>Total</th>
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<td>$90,161</td>
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<td>The Dakotas</td>
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<td>647</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>33</td>
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<td>80,720</td>
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<td>1,345</td>
<td>233</td>
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<td>Philadelphia</td>
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<td>12,754</td>
<td>61,133</td>
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No Presbytery  

Total, 1948  

7,683 8,006 5,922 2,084 232 151 105 40 120 114 +92 7,309 +245 $268,935 $78,816 $106,278 $454,028 72 103

*Total, 1947  

7,442 7,572 5,693 1,952 230 129 165 53 143 206 +101 7,049 +475 $248,245 $70,974 $117,877 $437,096 71 105

Total, 1946  

7,443 7,555 5,617 1,938 132 89 118 55 104 119 +89 6,650 +637 $202,225 $63,268 $84,561 $350,054 73 103

Average Contributions per Communicant Member, 1948  

$45.45 $13.31 $18.00 $76.76

Average Contribution per Communicant Member, 1947  

$43.61 $12.47 $20.71 $76.79

Average Contribution per Communicant Member, 1946  

$36.00 $11.27 $15.06 $62.33

*Corrected
MINISTERS OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Corrected to August 11, 1948

Abbreviations:
P. - Pastor
C. - Presbytery of California
D. - Presbytery of the Dakotas
Y. - Presbytery of N. Y. and N. E.
Phi. - Presbytery of Philadelphia

F.M. - Foreign Missionary
H. M. - Home Missionary
J. - Presbytery of New Jersey
O. - Presbytery of Ohio
W. - Presbytery of Wisconsin

Ahlfeldt, Carl A., P., C. - 224 Clayton St., San Francisco 17, Cal.
Albright, H. Wilson, P., J. - 1206 Manhattan Ave., Manhattan Beach, Cal.
Andrews, Egbert W., F.M., Phi. - Foreign YMCA, 150 Nanking Rd., West, Shanghai, China.
Atwell, Robert L., P., Phi. - 332 Grant St., Middletown, Pa.
Balcom, Curtis A., D. - 422 Avenue C, Bismarck, N. D.
Betzold, John W., Capt., Chap., Phi. - 2128th A.S.U. Station Complement, Fort Knox, Ky.
Bohn, Martin J., P., O. - 1014 N. Sterling St., Indianapolis 1, Ind.
Brown, Robert B., P., C. - 2343 Norwalk Ave., Los Angeles 41, Cal.
Churchill, Robert K., P., C. - 1721 Cedar St., Berkeley, Cal.
Clark, Gordon H., Ph.D., Prof., O. - 3429 Guilford Ave., Indianapolis 5, Ind.
Clelland, John P., P., Phi. - 210 W. 27th St., Wilmington, Del.
Clough, Ralph E., P., Y. - 69 Division St., New Haven, Conn.
Clownsey, Edmund P., H.M., W. - 744 S. 9th Ave., La Grange, Ill.
Coe, Bruce A., H.M., J. - 564 Fair Lawn Parkway, Warren Point, N. J.
Coe, Glenn R., P., Phi. - 120 Normandy Dr., Silver Spring, Md.
Coray, Henry W., P., C. - 4536 Whaley Ave., Long Beach 5, Cal.

Davies, John, P., W. - R. D. 1, Gresham, Wis.
DeVelde, Everett C., P., J. - Landis Ave. and State St., Vineland, N. J.
DeWaard, John J., P., Y. - 967 Highland Ave., Rochester 10, N. Y.
Dunn, Leslie A., P. - 207 E. Davis Ave., Wildwood, N. J.
Dyyness, Franklin S., P., Phi. - Quarryville, Pa.

Eckardt, Robert W., H.M., J. - 13 Romana Ave., Crescent Park, N. J.
Ellis, Charles H., P., J. - 56 S. Munn Ave., East Orange, N. J.
Eyres, Lawrence R., P., C. - 3522 N.E. 82nd Ave., Portland, Ore.

Frehn, Malcolm St. Clair, C. - 1763 Mendocino St., Stockton, Cal.
Gaffin, Richard B., F.M., W. - Foreign YMCA, 150 Nanking Rd., West, Shanghai, China.
Goodrow, William, P., Y. - R. D. 3, Amsterdam, N. Y.
Graham, Donald C., P., J. - 600 Westfield Ave., Westfield, N. J.
Gray, John F., C., Tea. - Box 361, Ripon, Cal.
Gray, Richard W., P., J. - 137 W. Commerce St., Bridgeton, N. J.

Heerema, Edward, Chap., J. - Goffle Hill Rd., Wyckoff, N. J.
Hills, Edward F., Th.D., W. - 313 Forest Ave., Oak Park, Ill.
Holkerboer, Oscar, P., W. - 803 Forest Ave., Waterloo, Iowa.
Hunt, Bruce F., F.M., C. - APO 6, San Francisco, Cal.
Hutchison, Dr. G. Arthur, C. - 2515 Workman St., Los Angeles 31, Cal.

Jent, Walter C., P., J. - 532 Pompton Ave., Cedar Grove, N. J.

Kellogg, Edward L., P., J. - 1300 Newton Ave., West Collingswood, N. J.
Kline, Meredith G., P., J. - Ringoes, N. J.
Knowles, Louis E., Tea., C. - 816 E. 19th St., Long Beach, Cal.

Magee, Walter J., P., D. - Leith, N. D.
Marsden, Robert S., Gen. Sec., Phi. - 460 N. Union St., Middletown, Pa.
Marston, George W., H.M., W. - 9935 S. St. Louis Ave., Evergreen Park, Ill.
McCoy, Clarence L., Phi. - New Lisbon, Ohio.
Mcllwaine, R. Heber, F.M., Phi. - Mi-lun Hualien, Tiawan, China.
Meiners, Raymond M., P., Y. - 1138 Parkwood Blvd., Schenectady 8, N. Y.
Mellema, Jacob, W. - Fairchild, Wis.
Murray, John, Prof., Y. - Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia 18, Pa.

Nicholas, Robert E., P., C. - 420 Drake Rd., Bend, Ore.
Nonhof, Melvin B., P., D. - Box 11, Bancroft, S. D.

Olson, Arthur O., P., Y. - Volga, S. D.

Petersen, Herman T., P., Y. - Stop 15, Central Ave., Albany 5, N. Y.
Piper, Russell D., P., D. - Box 396, Bridgewater, S. D.
Price, James W., P., J. - 33 Maple Ave., Morristown, N. J.

Rankin, John C., P., Y. - Worcester, N. Y.
Richmond, John P., P., J. - Elmer, N. J.

Schauffele, Charles G., P., C. - 1040 E. 17th St., National City, Cal.
Schowalter, Delbert E., P., C. - Rt. 2, Box 318, Santee, Cal.
Sloat, Leslie W., Editor, Phi. - R. D., Ayertown, Medford, N. J.
Stonehouse, Ned B., Th.D., Prof., Phi. - 333 Cherry Lane, Glenside, Pa.

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Tichenor, C. Alan, P., Phi. - 2216 E. Cumberland St., Philadelphia, Pa.
Tucker, Kelly G., P., Y. - R. D., Skowhegan, Me.

Verhage, John., P., W. - Oostburg, Wis.
Vining, Robert L., P., Y. - 64 Garfield St., Franklin Square, Long Island, N. Y.
Voorhees, Reginald, P., D. - 1925 S. 49th St., Omaha 6, Neb.

Welmers, William E., Ph.D., Inst., Phi. - P. O. Box 31, Saltpond, Gold Coast, British West Africa.
Wybenga, Edward, P., D. - Hamill, S. D.

Young, Edward J., Ph.D., Prof., Phi. - Box 4038, Philadelphia 18, Pa.
Young, William, Th.D., Prof., Y. - 115-39 123rd St., S. Ozone Park, New York 20, N. Y.

FOREIGN MISSIONARIES OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Andrews, Rev. Egbert W., Foreign YMCA, 150 Nanking Rd., Shanghai, China
Duff, Rev. and Mrs. Clarence W., American Evangelical Mission, Ghinda, Eritrea, East Africa
Frehn, Rev. Malcolm C., 1763 Mendocino St., Stockton, Cal. (On leave of absence)
Gaffin, Rev. Richard B., Foreign YMCA, 150 Nanking Rd., Shanghai, China
Gaffin, Mrs. Richard B., 2607 N. 50th St., Milwaukee, Wis.
Handyside, Miss Florence, Seoul Billeting Section, Hdqtrs. XXIV Corps, APO 235, San Francisco, Cal. (On leave of absence)
Healy, Miss Frances, c/o Committee on Foreign Missions, 728 Schaff Bldg., Philadelphia 2, Pa.
Hunt, Rev. and Mrs. Bruce F., APO 6, San Francisco, Cal.
Mahaffy, Rev. and Mrs. Francis E., American Evangelical Mission, Assab, Eritrea, East Africa
Mcllwaine, Rev. R. Heber, Mi-lun Hualien, Tiawan, China (Loaned to the Presbyterian Church in Canada)
Stanton, Rev. and Mrs. Charles E., American Evangelical Mission, Irafalo, Eritrea, East Africa

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SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE FIFTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
COMMITTEE ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE
SIXTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Robert H. Graham (Convener), Robert B. Brown, Dwight H. Poundstone, Henry E. Wade

COMMITTEE ON GENERAL BENEVOLENCE

COMMITTEE ON LOCAL EVANGELISM
Calvin K. Cummings (Chairman), Arthur Armour, George W. Marston, John Murray, J. Lyle Shaw, D.D., Ph.D.

COMMITTEE ON REVISIONS TO THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT
Ned B. Stonehouse, Th.D. (Convener), John P. Galbraith, John Murray

COMMITTEE ON SECRET SOCIETIES
R. B. Kuiper (Chairman), Glenn A. Andreas, John P. Galbraith, Oscar Holkeboer, Edward L. Kellogg

COMMITTEE ON TEXT AND PROOF-TEXTS OF
THE SUBORDINATE STANDARDS
John Murray (Chairman), John H. Skilton, C. Alan Tichenor

COMMITTEE ON TRAVEL FUND AND TRAVEL
TO THE SIXTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
William Harllee Bordeaux, Th.D., (Convener), John P. Clelland, Joseph H. McClay

COMMITTEE ON UNION WITH THE REFORMED
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA
(GENERAL SYNOD)
Calvin K. Cummings (Chairman), John P. Galbraith, Jesse Gump, LeRoy B. Oliver, William Young, Th.D.

FRATERNAL DELEGATE TO THE SYNOD OF
THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
To Synod of 1948 - John P. Galbraith
To Synod of 1949 - John P. Clelland

REPRESENTATIVE AT THE INTERNATIONAL
COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES
Ned B. Stonehouse, Th.D.; First Alternate, Robert Churchill;
  Second Alternate, John Murray

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