

## NEO-CALVINISM

You have asked me to speak on the topic **Neo-Calvinism**. What is Neo-Calvinism? Well, the word **neo** means new and Calvinism is the name given to that branch of Protestantism that followed the teachings of John Calvin. As such Calvinism is another word for Reformed. When people say Calvinism they mean the Reformed Faith as distinguished from, say, Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism or Arminianism. The term neo-Calvinism, therefore, would suggest that it represents a form of Calvinism that is new or different from its original form. This is indeed the case. Let me say first of all that the word Calvinism and its derivatives, Calvinist and Calvinistic, are not really proper as synonyms for the Reformed Faith and Reformed churches. Calvin himself was opposed to calling the Reformed churches after his name and those churches did not want to be referred to as Calvinistic either, but simply as Reformed. The reason for this was that they felt that the church of Christ should never be associated with a mere human being. As indebted as the Reformed churches were to Calvin, they understood that the doctrines he taught were not products of his own genius but simply the doctrines of Christ which he had found in the Gospel. Another reason for rejecting the name Calvinism was that historically it had always been heretics whose names were given to the movements they started, e.g., Arianism, Pelagianism and Montanism. A third reason was that Calvinism was a label put on them by their opponents, the Roman Catholics, Lutherans and Anabaptists. The name Calvinist became an abusive nickname for anyone holding to the hated doctrine of predestination which many thought to be the invention of Calvin.

For these reasons, then, the Reformed rejected the label Calvinism and they maintained that position for a long time.

Why then was the name Calvinism eventually adopted? I suppose it was inevitable that in their controversies with Rome as well as other Protestant churches, the Reformed were increasingly identified with their great leader and his system of theology.

But while Calvinism eventually became just another name for Reformed because of the doctrines associated with Calvin, especially predestination, in more recent times the term Calvinism has come to represent something more than that. It is here where Neo-Calvinism comes in. And Neo-Calvinism brings us to Abraham Kuyper, the great Dutch theologian and statesman whose name is inseparably connected to what has been called the great revival of Calvinism in the Netherlands.

In his book **Calvinism**, which is a collection of lectures on that subject delivered at Princeton University, N.J. in 1897, Kuyper mentions four uses of the word Calvinism. According to him Calvinism may be viewed as:

1. a **sectarian** name given to the Reformed by their opponents.
2. a **confessional** name used by those who subscribe to the dogma of Predestination and other related truths.
3. a **denominational** name used by churches which want to be identified as Calvinist, such as Calvinistic Baptists and Methodists.
4. a **scientific** name, either in a historical, philosophical or political sense.

Says Kuyper: Historically, the name of Calvinism indicates the channel in which the reformation moved, so far as it was neither Lutheran, nor Anabaptist nor Socinian. In the philosophical sense, we understand by it that system of conceptions which, under the influence of the master-mind of Calvin, raised itself to dominance in the several spheres of life. And as a political name, Calvinism indicates that political movement which has guaranteed the liberty of nations in constitutional statesmanship; first in Holland, then in England, and since the close of the 18th century in U.S.A.

It is in this **scientific** sense that Kuyper understands the concept of Calvinism, namely as "an independent general tendency which, from a mother-principle of its own, has developed an independent form both for our **life** and for our **thought** among the nations of Western Europe and North America."

For Kuyper the domain of Calvinism was much broader than what most people in his time understood by it. His contemporaries in Reformed circles saw Calvinism as basically an ecclesiastical and confessional movement. Reformed or Calvinistic for them meant believing in the depravity of man and his absolute dependence on God for salvation. In other words, they stressed the doctrines of grace or the so-called Five Points of Calvinism in opposition to Arminians and Modernists who denied these doctrines.

Kuyper saw it as his mission in life to convince his fellow Reformed believers that Calvinism was much more than that. It was an all-encompassing world-and-life view, he insisted, which enables us to understand and make sense of reality. Our task as Christians, he said, is to bring the principles of Calvinism to bear upon the world so as to influence and change it, redeeming and claiming it for Christ to whom the whole created order belongs.

The key-concept of Calvinism, according to Kuyper, is the sovereignty of God over the whole cosmos in all its spheres. This Divine sovereignty is reflected in a three-fold human sovereignty, namely in the State, in Society and in the Church.

Now it is this concept of Calvinism that has come to be referred to as Neo-calvinism, not only by its opponents, but by Kuyper and his followers themselves.

It is neo or new in that it represents ideas and teachings which are not found in the original, classic Calvinism or the Reformed Faith, although Kuyper claimed that many of his ideas were **seminally** present in Calvin. The seeds are there in Calvin's thought, he says, they only need to be worked out and applied.

Now it is true that Calvin taught the sovereignty of God in all things. He also knew that God's sovereignty is not limited to salvation but that there are implications of this doctrine for all of life, including Church-State relations, the role of the family, the Christian's calling in society, the place of science, etc., etc.

Yet in the process of working out the implications of Calvin's thought, Kuyper ended up with a system of Calvinism that in some important areas constituted a departure from its original version.

Kuyper has often been praised for the impact he has made on the Netherlands by applying Calvinistic principles to society in all its spheres. This praise is well-deserved. The man was a phenomenon in every respect. For those of you who are not too familiar with Dutch church history let me give you a thumb-nail biographical sketch of this great man so you can appreciate his importance.

A. Kuyper was born in 1837 at Maassluis, S.H. His father, J.F. Kuyper was a minister in the Dutch Reformed Church and belonged to the moderate party. Young Abraham was exceptionally intelligent. A voracious reader from the time he mastered the alphabet, he needed no prodding from parents to apply himself to his studies. At the age of 12 he was enrolled at the gymnasium of Leiden which he completed with distinction 6 years later. The next 7 years were spent at the famous Leiden university from which he graduated in 1862 with a doctor of theology degree summa cum laude.

Kuyper left the university with different religious views from those he held when he entered it. He had been brought up fairly conservative and even felt called to the ministry. But during his university years Kuyper became thoroughly influenced by liberalism. His model was a Dr. Scholten, one of the leading exponents of modernism. Therefore, if God had not called him to a halt Kuyper would have gone far down the road of apostasy, probably even further than his mentors. But God did intervene and changed the direction in which this brilliant but blind student was going at break-neck speed.

In 1862 Dr. Kuyper became a candidate for the ministry in the State Church, but due to an oversupply of candidates he did not get a call until almost a year later. He was ordained as pastor of the congregation of Beesd, a small village in Gelderland. But not all members of the congregation were happy with their new minister. There was at least one lady who did not agree with his preaching. Her name was Pietje Baltus, a God-fearing woman who sensed immediately that her minister was a stranger to God and to grace. When he came to visit her she told him how the Lord had converted her and spoke to him about the needs of his soul. She warned him that unless he was born again he would perish forever.

Kuyper listened and was impressed. More visits followed. And it pleased the Lord to use the testimony of this simple, uneducated woman to bring about a radical change in Kuyper's life.

Through contact with this Godly woman as well as others who feared the Lord in Beesd, Kuyper's life was completely changed. He went through a deep struggle but there came a moment when he surrendered to the Lord and experienced the peace that passes all understanding through faith in Christ and His finished work on the cross.

The re-born preacher rapidly became known as a champion for orthodoxy and started to receive calls from larger, more influential congregations. In 1867 he accepted a call to Utrecht and three years later he moved to Amsterdam where he became the leader of the Doleantie, a movement which in 1886 led to a separation from the State Church similar to yet also different from the earlier Secession of 1834.

For many years Kuyper worked tirelessly in an effort to reform the Dutch State Church from within. But he was not just concerned with Church reform. The nation also had his interest and he became actively involved in politics. Soon he became editor of a weekly paper called *De Heraut* (The Herald) and a Christian daily, *De Standaard* (The Standard). He was elected to Parliament and became leader of the Anti-Revolutionary Party (anti, against the godless principles of the French revolution). From 1901 to 1905 he served as PM and helped to pass many laws improving the lot of the poorer classes and promoting social justice for all citizens.

Kuyper was also the main founder of the Free University, a school of higher learning based on Scripture and Reformed **principles**. An accomplished speaker with great oratorical gifts, he could hold audiences spell-bound for hours on end.

For almost half a century he dominated the ecclesiastical and political scene. During that time Calvinism became a force to be reckoned with in the affairs of the nation. Almost singlehandedly he was able to mobilize Reformed Christians into a powerful constituency strong enough to secure many seats in Parliament and even form governments.

This was certainly a great accomplishment. Though he respected God-fearing folks like Pietje Baltus, he realized that their faith was too inward directed and that they had to be brought out of their religious and cultural isolation. They needed to let their light shine and take seriously their task as Christians **in** the world, while still showing that they were not **of** the world.

How did Kuyper convince and persuade his religious constituency? He did so by teaching two seemingly contradictory doctrines, namely those of the antithesis and common grace. The word **antithesis** is made up of anti, meaning against, and thesis which means proposition, theory or statement. Antithesis, then, means taking position against beliefs held by one's opponents e.g., in the area of religion and philosophy. According to Kuyper there exists a basic "antithesis" between the church and the world. The redeemed live out of one principle-love for God-and all others live out of the opposite principle, enmity of God, however this might be expressed.

One might conclude from this that with such a gap existing between church and world there could be no cooperation at all between the two camps. But Kuyper found the solution to this problem by constructing a new doctrine, namely that of common grace.

I shouldn't say it was new, really, because we find elements of it already in Calvin and the Reformed confessions, but it is a fact that Kuyper put his own stamp on this doctrine. What, then, is common grace as defined by Kuyper?

It is the idea that in addition to special or saving grace which is given only to God's elect, there is also a grace which God bestows on all men. Whereas special grace regenerates men's hearts, common grace (1) restrains the destructive process of sin within mankind in general and (2) enables men, though not born again, to develop the latent forces of the universe and thus make a positive contribution to the fulfillment of the cultural mandate given to man before the Fall.

Because all men share in this common grace by virtue of the image of God left in them, Christians can and should work together with unbelievers towards improving living conditions, fighting poverty and promoting social justice for all. Besides, Kuyper argued, common grace enables us to recognize and appreciate all that is good and beautiful in the world and allows us to enjoy God's gifts with thanksgiving. Therefore Christians should be actively involved in the arts and sciences and thus in the development of culture. In this way Kuyper challenged the Reformed community to "purge themselves of their 'pietistic dualisms,' their separation of Sunday from the workweek, of the spiritual from the physical-in theological terms, of nature from grace" (James Bratt).

Kuyper's doctrine of common grace has been called the linchpin of his entire work and thought. By skilfully combining it with the doctrine of the antithesis, he reassured those who were concerned to preserve the difference between church and world, while on the other hand he also satisfied intellectuals within the Reformed camp who appreciated at least some aspects of culture.

Common grace thus served a dual purpose. It reconciled the doctrine of total depravity with the presence of good among the unconverted, while at the same time emphasizing God's sovereignty by insisting that whatever good there still is in the world is not the result of human effort but the fruit of divine grace. But not only that, common grace also showed that such institutions as the government and the law, the arts and sciences were not just **products** of grace but **means** of grace- instruments whereby God restrained sin and enabled man to develop creation as He had originally intended.

But if common grace was the linchpin of Kuyper's thought, it also proved to be the Achilles heel of his system. For while many Reformed people followed Kuyper and his ideas enthusiastically, there were also many who disagreed with his views. Especially in the Secession churches there was much opposition to Neo-Calvinism. Men like Lindeboom and Ten Hoor were convinced that in some very important areas Kuyper's teachings were contrary to Scripture and the Reformed confessions. I cannot go into detail here, but I will mention three areas of concern.

First there was Kuyper's doctrine of the church. Second, there was his view of the primary task of the church. And, third, his optimistic view of culture and the potential for redeeming it.

Kuyper believed that a distinction should be made between the church as institute and the church as organism. As institute the church has been entrusted with the three offices and is called to preach and administer the sacraments and exercise discipline. As organism or body of believers she is to be involved in social activities and thus carry out the cultural mandate. As such there was nothing wrong with this distinction, but the way Kuyper used it alarmed the Seceders. Kuyper seemed to say that the real church is not the church as institute but the church as organism. This is how he put it: "The church as institute is not all of the church, nor the real or essential church, not the church itself, but an institute established through the church and for the church in order that the Word can be effective in

its midst." In other words, the church as institute exists to serve the church as organism, equipping the saints for their task in the world. And what is that task? For Kuyper it is primarily one of social involvement, redeeming the world for Christ, obeying the cultural mandate.

Thus neo-Calvinism marks a radical departure from the older Calvinism or Reformed theology. Until Kuyper's time the Reformed viewed the church as a salvation-institute, the work-shop of the Holy Spirit, where sinners are saved and believers nurtured in the faith as well as equipped for living in this world as Christians.

But in Kuyper's scheme the elect enter this world already regenerated and thus may be presumed to be in a state of grace from birth. In fact, infants are to be baptized on the ground of this presumption. Consequently, the church's primary task is to **nurture** the regenerate and prepare them for life in the world.

Prior to Kuyper the Reformed, while not denying that the church has a task in society, put the emphasis on the salvation of sinners. Preaching for the Old School Calvinists, therefore dealt with the great Biblical themes of repentance-and then not just daily repentance of believers, but also the initial act of repentance on the part of the unconverted in the church-faith, the new birth, justification, sanctification and so on. But with Kuyper a shift in emphasis took place. Not what the Holy Spirit works in sinners' hearts through the Word, but what Christians should do to redeem society and culture-that became the important thing.

This brings us to the cultural mandate. Kuyper believed that the task God gave Adam before the fall is still the task of Christians today. In fact, he says it is really only Christians who are able to carry out this task properly because they have been regenerated by the Spirit of God and restored into the original relationship which was lost through Adam's fall.

What was that task? Let us read Gen.1:28, "And God blessed them, etc. This verse, Kuyper says, sums up God's real purpose for man. That purpose, ultimately, is not the salvation of **sinners**, but the redemption of the **cosmos**. Salvation is but the means to that end. God's real purpose in saving us is that we will carry out that original command or cultural mandate first given to Adam and Eve.

So important is this mandate for Kuyper and his disciples that it seems to take precedence over the Great Commission. Kuyper believed that Christ is not only the Mediator of redemption but also Mediator of Creation. That means Christ died not only for lost sinners but also for a lost world or cosmos.

To put it still differently, in Kuyper's view, predestination does not just concern the salvation of the elect but also the restoration of the entire creation. God in predestination focusses His attention on the whole creation so that the decree encompasses all of history and is directed to the end that He will receive the glory from all the works of His hands. In this way, Kuyper felt, one's attention is not restricted to the work of particular or special grace, but it also extends to that completely different work of God in the realm of common grace.

The Christian, then, has a formidable task in this world. He is to carry out his cultural mandate and fully develop the creation's potential. In fact the believer's activity in this area is absolutely necessary as a preparation for the coming of God's Kingdom. Christ will not return until this mandate is completed.

For us, Kuyper says, it is certain that the Parousia must bring us not only a change from the militant to the triumphant church...but also that everything that God has hidden in nature and the world must be brought to light **before the end can be ushered in.**

Surely Kuyper went too far here. And so did and do many of his followers. Not many years ago, B. Zijlstra, one of the spokesmen for the Toronto based ICS., formerly AACS, wrote that the church is essentially "redeemed humanity restored to its original task assigned to mankind at the beginning," and that in his view the missionary mandate of Matt. 28 is basically a republication or restatement of the cultural mandate of Gen. 28.

But is this Biblical Christianity? Hardly. The very notion that Christ's second coming is contingent on the progress we make with our cultural endeavours is preposterous, to put it mildly. If the timing of our Lord's second coming has anything to do with our activity it is our involvement in **missionary** work that is emphasized in the NT. As Jesus Himself states in Matthew 24:14, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

But what about Gen.1:28? Does it have nothing to say to us today? Yes it does. It cannot be denied that here God speaks of a definite task or mission given to man. But is this so-called cultural mandate still in force in the same way as it was for Adam? Clearly it is not. The very notion of a cultural mandate has a legalistic connotation. It is a term that does not belong in the context of grace and the covenant of grace. When God gave this mandate, if you want to call it that, the fall had not yet taken place. When Adam sinned, however, he was no longer in a position to carry out this command. It was Christ, the second Adam, who took over this responsibility from the first Adam and fulfilled the task assigned to man at the beginning. No, God did not abrogate His original demand. Rather, in Christ He Himself met that demand. By His obedience He has kept the law for us. The result of His saving work is that the character of our work and activity has fundamentally changed. Good works, cultural or otherwise, are now performed by the believer out of gratitude and never out of fear. Any notion, therefore, that our activities, or the lack of them, could either hasten or delay the return of Christ is to be firmly rejected.

For this and other reasons the term cultural mandate should be avoided. As dr. W.H. Velema says, "as a term it does not show a relation to the work of Christ and puts us all the way back to the starting line... Our work takes place after Christ has brought about a decisive turn in world history." When the apostles urge believers to perform good works they always join the imperative to the indicative. In other words, the command to work is always issued on the basis of Christ's **finished** work. All our spiritual activities are grounded in His saving activity. Neo-Calvinists, with their emphasis on cultural, rather than missionary endeavour tend to lose sight of the fact that believers do their work in the sphere and context of Christ's soteriological work. This is a tragic error which has hindered

the progress of the real work of the Gospel.

Recently, theologians like J. Douma and W.H. Velema have questioned the exegetical basis which Kuyper and his followers have adduced for the cultural mandate. Douma, e.g., wonders if such passages as Gen. 1:28; 2:15, 3:23 and Psalm 8 really constitute such an all-encompassing mandate as Neo-Calvinists believe. True, Gen. 1:28 and 2:15 assign man the task of subduing the earth as well as dressing and keeping the garden, but does this have to be seen as a mandate to bring the life of creation to its full potential?

Douma points out that the Hebrew verb **abad** means simply to cultivate a field. This labour is required of man if he is to eat (Gen. 1:29; 2:5; 3:17ff.). What these verses seem to tell us is that there is a connection between working and eating and that sin has made work difficult. Douma does not deny that there may be implications here for culture in a broader sense, but he cautions against reading more into these verses than is warranted. Culture in the sense of the unfolding of what God has put in His creation in seed form, in his view, is more a matter of consequence than a specific mandate. Because God has created man in His image and with the urge to reproduce himself the human race will populate the earth and in the process a culture will develop that will go beyond eating and drinking so that man may still enjoy many good things. Velema agrees with Douma and rejects the idea that Christians are under obligation to finish off a specific cultural program, for in that case such a program would first have to be drawn up, but for this we find no evidence at all in the NT, let alone that it prescribes a "mandate." He warns against such a preoccupation with culture and social involvement that the Christian life loses its "pilgrim" character. We are first and foremost strangers and pilgrims on earth. Being a pilgrim is essential for the church of Christ. "The congregation of the NT knows that she is 'on the way.' She is not at home here. She has been loosed from her old environment and now looks for the future revelation of the Kingdom which Christ will establish, not man.

Velema prefers to speak of the Christian's vocation or calling in the world instead of a mandate. And what is this vocation? it is to live in this sinful and corrupt world as salt and light. Just as salt checks decay in meat and other foods, as well as giving it flavour, so Christians should by their Gospel witness and holy walk seek to influence the world around them. In other words, their presence and activity in the world should help to alleviate and offset the baneful effects of sin and make life in society tolerable and conducive to the work of proclaiming the Gospel. Everything we do as Christians should have a missionary and eschatological focus. Even our cultural involvement such as it is, should take place from the perspective of Christ coming kingdom. This is the clear teaching of the NT. As Paul writes to the Philippians, "Do all things without murmuring and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain." (2:14-16). Cf., I Thess. 3:13; 5:23; 2 Pet. 3:14.

While it is our calling as Christians to try to have this kind of impact on the world, we should not entertain unrealistic hopes of success. We should certainly not expect the Kingdom of God to come through our efforts, be they cultural or missionary. The most we can look for in the way of visible results is that the Lord will graciously enable us to erect a few **signs** of the coming Kingdom. That Kingdom is basically and eschatological reality, i.e., as far as its



fullness and visible manifestation is concerned, it is still a future reality. During this dispensation it is basically inward, spiritual and invisible. The kingdom of heaven, Jesus said, is within you. Christ now rules in the hearts of His people and He is King in His Church and acknowledged as such.

True, Christ is also King of the world, but until His return Satan continues to rule, be it illegally, as prince of the world, and as long as this dispensation will last "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (or in the wicked one, Satan.) I John 5:19

Summing up, the question is not whether Christians have a task in this world or not, but what this task consists of and what is the Scriptural basis and warrant for it.

Kuyper, as we saw, found the basis in the doctrine of common grace. This doctrine, or at least the way he formulated it, is open to serious question. If he had only meant by common grace what the church has always understood by it, namely God's gracious disposition toward all men, so that He lets his sun shine and his rain fall on the just and the unjust, I would have no problem with it. Again, if common grace for him meant that God wants His Gospel to be preached to the whole world and offers his grace to all, we would heartily agree. But Kuyper's version of this doctrine includes much more than that. For him common grace is primarily a grace directed to the redemption of the cosmos and culture. By rooting this doctrine in the divine decree of predestination he was able to construct a system whereby God's plan for His creation is realized along a double track: the elect are brought to salvation by Christ as Mediator of redemption (particular grace) and the cosmos with all its potential for culture is redeemed by Christ as Mediator of creation (common grace). Such a conception had to lead to an essentially optimistic view of culture and the world. Not that Kuyper himself lost sight of sin and its awful consequences for the human race and the cosmos. He deeply believed in the antithesis and thus in the fundamental difference between common and particular grace. The same cannot be said of his disciples, however. If some had problems with his theory of common grace because they saw in it a threat to particular or saving grace, many others were only too happy with it because it offered an escape from what they considered a too rigid view of the Christian's separation from the world. Thus common grace opened the door to worldliness.

Is Neo-Calvinism different from the old, classic Calvinism? Yes, in many ways. W. Aalders, a great scholar in the Netherlands who has studied this issue thoroughly does not hesitate to refer to Kuyper and the whole Neo-Calvinist movement as **De Grote Ontsporing**, The Great Derailment. In his view, Kuyper with his lopsided emphasis on culture and social involvement has contributed greatly to what he calls the externalization of the doctrines of grace, especially justification and regeneration. In Neo-Calvinistic circles, he says, justification is not denied, but no longer experienced as it was by Luther, Calvin and all who live by God's Word rather than by human, be it Christian philosophy. What do Neo-Calvinists still know of justification as an inner occurrence wherein the living Word in union with the Spirit introduces a sinner into the spiritual reality of Christ and His Realm? Speculative, abstract, philosophical thinking has eliminated the sovereign, spiritual, inward working of the Word, turning it into a cerebral, intellectual concept. An abstract, organic idea of regeneration as a slowly maturing seed has taken the place of regeneration and justification by Word and Spirit.

Kuyper's zeal for the kingship of Christ in the world had to lead to an acceleration of the process of the secularization of spiritual values. Through ever-increasing contact with the world and exposure to spirit of the world, the Reformed faith became more and more externalized or hollowed out. Some of Kuyper's closest friends were alarmed by this growing trend in Reformed circles.

J.C. Aalders, himself a Neo-Calvinist warned his colleagues at a ministers' conference in 1916 in these words:

Our Reformed people, having gradually come into contact with the world of culture are in great danger of being influenced by humanism. To the degree that mysticism and anabaptism have been overcome, God's people have recognized their earthly calling. But now we face the danger of contamination by the spirit of the age. The doctrine of common grace, confessed and put into practice by our people, opens with the world at the same time the danger of conformity to the world. We have not escaped a certain imbalance in our spiritual food. Not enough attention is given to the needs of the individual heart and soul. Outward obedience is not sufficient to salvation.

About a decade earlier, H. Bavinck had written in an introduction to a Dutch translation of sermons by Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine:

Here we have an important element which is largely lacking among us. We miss this spiritual soul-knowledge. It seems we no longer know what sin and grace, guilt and forgiveness, regeneration and conversion are. We know these things in theory, but we no longer know them in the awful reality of life.

It is well-known that Bavinck became very disillusioned with certain aspects of the Neo-Calvinist movement towards the end of his life, because so much of it seemed to result, be it ever so unintentionally, in worldliness, superficiality and pride.

What Neo-Calvinism has ultimately led to or at least contributed to, can be seen in the apostasy taking place at present in the very churches Kuyper did so much to establish, the Gereformeerde Kerken and to a lesser extent in their sister churches in North America, the Christian Reformed Church. May God help us avoid making the same mistakes and may He preserve us in the faith once delivered to the saints by the apostles and rediscovered and set forth by the Reformers and their successors the Puritans. What we need is not Neo but Old Calvinism or the true Reformed Faith because it is Scriptural, confessional and experiential.

