

April 2012

Dear friends,

A letter from the Armenian Missionary Association and Armenian Evangelical Church Union, after having received copies of the recently published *Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism* by Ursinus writes:

“We hope that these theological and historical works, printed in Armenian for the first time, will be the best guide to acknowledge God and learn his word, and will illuminate many dark souls.”

Ani, one of the translators and editors on our Armenian team, comments the following regarding the Heidelberg Catechism:

Responses from different churches, organizations and our faithful brothers and sisters assure that the decision of the committee to publish this theological work in Armenian was right. The Heidelberg Catechism is a work full of religious enthusiasm. It is based on profound theological learning and is guided by a great common sense. It was baptized by fire of the great Pentecostal Reformation. However, it's notable that it was deprived of polemical fervor and intolerance, which are so characteristic of the turbulent period when there were truly the most important developments in Church's history since the time of Christ and His faithful apostles

[it] can be used as a teaching tool for both adults and children. It is the inspiration for daily studies and an excellent resource for private study, family worship, individual devotions, and more.

It is fitting to mention that this year, Armenia is celebrating the 500-year anniversary of the first printed Armenian books in Venice (5 theological works), by Armenian printer Hakob Meghapart. The use of the printing press was enormously important to the large Armenian diaspora of the time who longed to retain its national unity through the use of the Armenian language and Armenian churches as they waited to someday return to their homeland.

In light of this, we can understand the particular significance that our own program of publication in the Armenian language has had and the enthusiasm with which it has been received as a tool in rekindling a knowledge and a love of the Gospel.

We continue, then, with renewed zeal and would like to report the following:

The Armenian translation of Eryl Davis' book *Truth under Attack* on sects and cults has been completed, and Rev. Eric Kayayan's book on the nature of Christian Hope is due out before July. We are half-way through our translation of Herman Bavinck's *A Survey of Christian Doctrine* and are in the process of translating twenty of Rev. Eric Kayayan's French radio messages in order to air them on Radio Hay. This is particularly important

as it will add needed new broadcasts to the existing pool left by Rev. Aaron Kayayan.

Another teaching trip to Armenia is scheduled to be held between July 3 and 11, led by Rev. Eric Kayayan and Rev. Mark VanderHart. Some of the topics that will be lectured upon include Christ in the Old Testament, the social and political reach of prophetic preaching in the Old Testament and its contemporary applications for Armenia today, and the role of tradition in view of the self-sufficiency of scripture. Also a large part of this trip will be to meet with the Armenian staff of CFA, encourage and pray with them as well as meet with students, teachers, and listeners.

Our next committee meeting will be held at the end of September during which time we will plan the work for the following year and hear a report of the July trip.

In her book, *Intimations of Christianity Among the Ancient Greeks*, the great 20th Century French philosopher Simone Weil argues that in the Gospels there is no question of man searching for God, but rather of God searching for man. God searches for humankind as it slumbers, captures it, and once captured, a mutual recognition between man and God, a holy encounter occurs. Weil, a Marxist of Jewish origin who toward the end of her short life converted to Catholicism, posits that Christian or not we all possess an intuitive knowledge of God. Indeed, this “intuition” existed in the soul of this fierce activist who cultivated a dangerous asceticism before, as she puts it, Christ overcame her.

The idea of an innate sense of religion in humankind is not new, since we read already read in Genesis that we were created to be in communion with God, and Calvin talks of it in his “Institutes;” curiously, it is also a phenomena currently studied in the secular field of cognitive psychology!

What does this have to do with Christians for Armenia? We would argue that the intuition of God possessed by all, has far-reaching implications for the work of evangelization. Through the spreading of God’s Word, this intuition can awaken, allowing man to recognize the God who already has full knowledge of him. What a mystery and a privilege this is! Our goal is to reach the “pre-Christian,” that he and she may turn, face God, and embrace the cross. As we do so, we remain confident that God Himself is already facing him, her.

Dear friends, we praise God for His faithfulness in upholding this ministry, and the faithfulness He has shown through your steadfast support. We move forward confidently, knowing that He leads and directs all the things of the world and all the things of the kingdom.

In His name,

The committee of Christians for Armen