

November 2007

Dear Christian friends,

Warm greetings in the precious name of our Lord and in the communion of the Saints. A few days ago I was reading an article I had signed some 25 years ago in the *Reformed International Bulletin* under the title: *Reclaiming the Land: Ambassadors of the Kingdom*. I was referring necessarily to some facts of that period of history; yet, overall, the main theme seemed to have remained relevant. **WE REMAIN THE AMBASSADORS OF HIS KINGDOM**. Today, no less than 25 years ago, or in the 16th century, or twenty centuries ago, the Church of Christ has been sent to this world as his messengers and ambassadors.

Some Christians during the past decades have spoken of the *secularization* of the present world which they pretend is the natural outcome of the Christian faith. Too much optimism for my Reformed taste! Others, rightly pessimistic, qualify it as *secularism* which means an open and deliberate opposition to the Kingdom of God.

What about Armenia, one of the most neglected, not to say ignored spots of the world? I would first express my deep frustration upon hearing news concerning the non-recognition of the Armenian genocide of 1915, by Muslim Turks; a historical fact which is either ignored or deliberately denied due to wicked political and diplomatic interests by some Western powers. Lobbies of pro Turkish background as well as of Jewish origin have placed a heavy pressure on members of the US Congress* (which in form 106 had decided to officially recognize it), and threaten to interrupt diplomatic relations with our administration unless it opposes its being voted on in the Congress. Thus, fanatic Muslim Turks and Jews with their memories of massacres during the Second World War, attempt to resist the recognition of the Armenian tragedy. At the time genocide of Armenians was occurring, the American Ambassador in Turkey, Henri Morgenthau, gave ample evidence of it in his official reports. Even more distressing is that to guarantee diplomatic and economic interests, the USA also neglects its most elementary Christian duty to do justice to a people and to express humanitarian concern.

Shall this state of affairs continue? Will some so-called evangelicals with their infra-theological and anti-gospel pro-Jewish politics support one cause while despising another? Please remember what this Christian people suffered at the hands of the most inhuman Muslim government history has ever known during the past century.

On the religious scene in Armenia I have also several reasons to feel frustrated. A traditionalist and nationalist church, the invasion of strange cults and, alas, the insufficient witness of certain Evangelicals, adherent to liberal theological tradition, who raise the question as to whether they will function as AMBASSADORS in Armenia. An Armenian protestant publication from Lebanon —of the same liberal tradition— recently wrote that *the existence of the church is due to the sweat and blood of the nation, and not to doctrine and orthodox teaching!* Indeed, unbelievable. Not a word about the sweat and blood of our precious Savior!

I have decided, as I was exposing it some twenty five years ago, to become the messenger-ambassador-servant of the KINGDOM. Under not so favorable working conditions, my contribution will be very modest. Yet, besides four weekly messages produced and the four yearly quarterly bulletin issues, the present year has seen the appearance of our two major volumes: some 700 pages of *Islam and the Gospel*, and the near 400 pages of the *Daily Meditations*. Soon to appear will be the catechism for teen agers containing the life and ministry of our Lord with a doctrinal course.

I have just received one of the most moving letters I have ever received from the director of the Paralyzed Armenian Association. She does not just thank me in a dry formal way for the publications she and the association she leads have received, and from which they so much benefit. She offers one of the most touching expressions of her and her friends' coming to understand the powerful effects the proclaimed word and the published works have produced upon what can be considered in human terms a miserable existence. The letter is just a fantastic confession of faith. I could not help shedding some tears while reading it.

Another letter arrived from Georgia, the first one, where a few months ago my dear friend and helper, Arthur, traveled to offer recorded messages and samples of our publications. The gentleman who writes is amazed that Christian faith can be exposed this way. His wife, a Georgian by origin, shares his astonishment and thanks *Reformed Faith and Life* for making it accessible to them and to many Armenians residing in Georgia for the first time in their life.

Dear friends, shall we go on as Messengers-Ambassadors-Servants of the Kingdom? In Armenia too? I do not have a doubt! However, let me not hide that it will need your prayers and naturally your financial support without which my personal determination will be of no practical value.

May the grace and peace of God accompany you during this season when soon we will again celebrate the incarnation of the Son and of our Lord.

In His service and fellowship

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