

God's methods for christianizing our Modern World – by Rev. Prof. Dr. Francis Nigel Lee

God has not left us in the dark as to how to overcome Anabaptist (and all other deleterious) influences even in our modern World! Those methods are: firstly, the powerful preaching of the Gospel; secondly, the 'improving' (or daily living-out) of one's own baptism; thirdly, the joyful outworking of the preached Word of God; fourthly, the State's punishment of criminals. Thus, fifthly, we confidently approach the future millennium -- when, predestinatedly, Consistent Christianity (alias Calvinism) will triumph **internationally**. We now examine these methods, *seriatim*.

First. There needs to be the **powerful** preaching of the Gospel. States the *Westminster Larger Catechism* 155 & 159: "The Spirit of God maketh the reading but **especially the preaching of the Word** an effectual means of enlightening, convincing and humbling sinners...and drawing them unto Christ...; of strengthening them against temptations and corruptions...and establishing their hearts in holiness. Nehemiah 8:8; Acts 2:37-41; 8:27-38; 26:18; Psalm 19:8; Matthew 4:4-10; Ephesians 6:16f..... They that are called to labour in the Ministry of the Word, are to preach sound doctrine...in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Titus 2:1-8 & First Corinthians 2:4." How little preaching today is like that!

Second. Christians are to **'improve'** their own baptism. States the *Westminster Larger Catechism* 167: "**The needful but much neglected duty of improving our baptism** is to be performed by us all our life long..., by serious and thankful consideration of the nature of it and...the privileges and benefits conferred and sealed thereby and our solemn vow made therein; by...growing up to assurance of pardon of sin and of all other blessings sealed to us in that sacrament; by drawing strength from the death and resurrection of Christ into Whom we are baptized...; and by endeavouring to live by faith...in holiness and righteousness. Colossians 2:11f; Romans 6:4-11; Galatians 3:26f; Romans 6:22." In other words, baptized people should live the way all baptized Christians should!

Third -- and proceeding from the foregoing -- there is to be a joyful **outworking of the Word of God in our lives**. States the *Westminster Confession of Faith* 13:1 & 16:3 & 19:7: "They who are effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are farther sanctified really and personally through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, by His Word and Spirit dwelling in them. John 17:17; Second Thessalonians 2:13.... Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ. John 15:4f; Ezekiel 36:26f." God's Word is to be lived out, every day!

"There is required an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit to work in them to will and to do of His good pleasure. Philippians 2:12f & 4:13; Second Corinthians 3:5. Yet are they not hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty unless upon a special motion of the Spirit! But they ought to be diligent in **stirring up** the grace of God that is in them..., **the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully which the will of God revealed in the Law requireth to be done**. Hebrews 6:11f; Second Peter 1:3-11; Isaiah 64:7; Second Timothy 1:6; Acts 26:6f; Jude 20f; Ezekiel 36:27; Hebrews 8:10; Jeremiah 31:33." Come, O Spirit, and keep on stirring us up!

Fourth. The State, as God's servant, is to **punish all criminals**. Explains the *Westminster Confession of Faith* 20:4 & 23:1: "They who, upon pretence of Christian liberty, shall oppose any lawful power or the lawful exercise of it..., resist the ordinance of God. Matthew 12:35; First Peter 2:13-16; Romans 13:1-8." Antinomianism is anarchy!

"For their publishing of such opinions or maintaining of such practices as are contrary to the light of nature or to the known principles of Christianity..., they may **lawfully be called to account and proceeded against...by the power of the civil magistrate**. Romans 1:32; Deuteronomy 13:6-12; Ezra 7:23-28; Nehemiah 13:5-30; Second Kings 23:5-21; Second Chronicles 34:33 & 15:12-16; Daniel 3:29; First Timothy 2:2; Isaiah 49:23; Zechariah 12:2f... God the supreme Lord and King of all the World hath ordained civil magistrates to be under Him over the people...for the defence and encouragement of them that are good and for the punishment of evil-doers. Romans 13:1-4; First Peter 2:13f." Christonomic ethics!

Fifth. We are to be **confident** of the Church's future! Matthew 28:19; Psalms 2:8 & 22:27-31 & 72:6-17; Isaiah 49:18-23 & 50:3-9; First Corinthians 15:24-28; Revelation 11:15 & 15:4 & 21:24-26 & 22:2-4.

States the *Westminster Larger Catechism* 53 & 54: "Christ was exalted in His ascension..., triumphing over enemies. Ephesians 4:8." He "visibly went up into the highest heavens, there to receive gifts for men. Acts 1:9-11; Ephesians 4:10; Psalm 68:18.... As God-man, He is advanced to the highest favour with God the Father...and power over all things in Heaven and Earth; and **doth gather and defend His Church and subdue their enemies**. Philippians 2:9; Ephesians 1:22; First Peter 3:22; Romans 8:34."

This means eschatological optimism! And such **confidence** is rooted in the Lord's Prayer (*q.v.* below).

Predestinatedly, it is quite inevitable that of all our planet's nations (obviously including also their babies) will yet be brought into baptismal subjection to the Triune God. For Jesus urges and promises this, in the "Lord's prayer" for His disciples.

There, Christ enjoins us prayerfully to petition God each day: "Thy Kingdom come!" Matthew 6:10 & Luke 11:2. God commands this; and God Himself shall execute it. Not just throughout World History -- but also within World history, throughout our own lives!

Here, explains the *Westminster Larger Catechism* 191, "we pray: that the kingdom of sin and **Satan may be destroyed**; the **Gospel propagated throughout the World**; the **Jews called**; **the fulness of the Gentiles brought in**." And it is especially the people of God who are to be involved in such destruction, propagation, and ingathering.

This is then a prayer that "the Church [be] furnished with all Gospel-Offices and **Ordinances**." It is a petition that the Church be "**purged** from corruption" and be "**countenanced** and maintained by the Civil Magistrate" against all ungodliness." Romans 10:1f & 11:25f.

The Westminster Assembly's *Directory for the Publick Worship of God* rightly understands the above petition to be a promise that the Church will ultimately **calvinize all the World**. That

includes de-brainwashing heretics -- and redirecting them toward the untruncated Word of God.

For in its 'Publick Prayer before the Sermon' the Minister is "**to pray for the propagation of the Gospel and Kingdom of Christ to all nations** -- for the conversion of the Jews; the fulness of the Gentiles; the fall of Antichrist." He is also to pray: "for the deliverance of the distressed churches abroad from the tyranny of the antichristian faction and from the cruel oppressions and blasphemies of the Turks [alias the Muslims]; **for the blessing of God upon the Reformed Churches**"; and **for God to "establish...the purity of all His ordinances, and...remove heresy."**

This is to be effected even in "the universities and all schools and religious seminaries of Church and **Commonwealth**, [so] that they may **flourish more and more** in learning and **piety**." For we are to pray "that God would **pour out a blessing** upon the Ministry of the Word, **sacraments** and discipline; upon the **civil government**; and all the several **families** and persons therein." This is to be done "with **confidence** of His mercy to His whole Church" -- thus giving "evidence and demonstration of the **Spirit and power**."

"Our Father in Heaven! May Your Kingdom keep on coming! May Your will keep on being done! Keep on giving us each day our daily bread! Keep on delivering us from evil! For the Kingdom and the power and the glory are Yours, for ever and ever! Amen!

Thus we are to be **confident** about the future of Christ's Church **also here on Earth**. Even as it always shall be in Heaven.