pure, will do irreparable damage to both.

As we reflect upon our obligations, however, as we size ourselves up, both as parents and teachers, as to our ability to perform these tasks, we conclude that we are so inadequate. We deal with profound and serious matters, we deal, in our contact with students, with creations of God "wonderfully and fearfully made." One thought comes back time and time again: God's grace underlies it all else it would all be a horrible flop and an exercise in futility. Thanks be to Him for His truth, for the rich heritage given us, and thanks be to Him for the ability and the desire to remain faithful, as covenant people, to that truth and heritage and the callings He has given us.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

by Rev. H. Hoeksema

This article by the late Rev. Herman Hoeksema is reprinted from the Standard Bearer, Volume 3, number 22.

In Sept., 1916, we delivered before the congregation of Holland Fourteenth St. which we were then serving, a sermon on the subject of the Christian Education of the children of God's covenant. As the time is again approaching, when Catechism-classes and schools are reopened; and as, moreover, the question of a covenant-education remains principally the same, only, perhaps, becoming more serious and urgent as the years go by, we thought it not unsuitable to publish the entire sermon, as we preached it at that time. It is on the text from Deut. 6:7: "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

The sermon here follows:

That education of the child is one of the most important subjects that can possibly demand our consideration, is a truth, that is clearly realized, not only by the Christian, but still more so by the children of the world. Especially is this true of our own age. Witness the many books that are published on the subject, the many magazines that see the light and that are devoted particularly to educational problems, the large sums of money that are spent, the laws that are enacted, the edifices that are raised — all in the interest of education. On the importance of education in general, therefore, we are entirely agreed.

But there is more, and I may safely limit this statement. For I am entirely safe in saying that we also agree that our children ought to have a Christian education. There is no one that would deny this, apart now from the question as to the character this Christian education ought to assume. For as Christians we all agree that we are not satisfied to know that our children receive an education of the world and for this world, but we confess that we are pilgrims, and we are travelers to another city, and that, somehow, the education of our children must be related to that other city that is in heaven. I repeat, therefore, that as Christian parents we cannot be indifferent with regard to the religious instruction of our children. Religious instruction they certainly must have, and they must be brought up in the fear and admonition of the Lord, our covenant God in Christ Jesus.

Once more I will limit this statement and maintain, that as Reformed Christians we will also insist that our children must receive a religious education of a very

marked type. That we agree on this is evident from the confession we repeat every time we offer our children for Baptism. We promise to bring them up "in the aforesaid doctrine, or help or cause them to be instructed therein to the utmost of our power." Now this is very significant. For this doctrine is the Reformed doctrine. And one of the characteristic features of the Reformed faith is, that it confesses that all things exist for the glory of God, that even our salvation is not the ultimate end of all things, but that it is a means to an end. It is, for the Christian of the Reformed type, not sufficient to know that his sins and the sins of his children have been washed away in the blood of Christ Jesus, and that now he and they are marching heavenward. On the contrary, his covenant God did save him, in order that with His children he might be to the praise of His glory, here in the Church-militant and in the midst of the world, and presently in the glory of heavenly perfection. He must fight the good fight. He must walk in the precepts of His covenant God. He must reveal himself as a child of light in every sphere of life. Now, this conviction has a definite influence upon his conception of the task of education. Were it different, it might be an irrelevant matter to him, as to what sort of education the child might receive to help him through this world, as long as he is saved. But entirely different it becomes if also the salvation of your child is in your view only the means to the highest aim: the glorification of the Most High. Then you will aim in your education at the perfect man of God, knowing the will of his God for every sphere of life and for every step he takes upon the path of life, and you will take care that in his life he is well equipped with a clear and concise knowledge of all the precepts of the Most High. And since for the Reformed Christian the subject of the education of his children is so highly important, we thought it very appropriate to devote our discussion to this topic this morning and in connection with the words from Deut. 6:7 to speak to you on:

THE LORD'S COMMAND REGARDING THE INSTRUCTION OF OUR CHILDREN

I. IN RESPECT TO THE MATERIAL OF THAT INSTRUCTION.
II. IN REGARD TO THE TIME FOR THAT INSTRUCTION.
III. IN REGARD TO THE BASIS OF THAT INSTRUCTION.

I. I think we will all agree if we define education, in the sense in which we are dealing with that subject this morning, as the impartation to the child of knowledge regarding his material and spiritual relation in the world. With this all education has to do. We bring children into the world. And when these children come to consciousness, that world is strange to them if they are not informed about their relation to the same. But to the Christian this is not enough. No, there is not only a world, but there is also a God. And the child must also learn to see his true relation to that God. In short, principally the education of the child must give him an answer to the question: Who am I? Who am I in relation to the world in which I live? Who am I in relation to my God? And thus education becomes the transmittance of such knowledge from generation to generation. But when our text says: "Thou shalt teach them unto thy children," it uses in the original a word for teaching that places the nature of education in a very peculiar light. The word really means in the first place "to sharpen," and is used for instance to denote the sharpening of a sword. From this basic idea it further derives the meaning "to sharpen the tongue," and further to use pointed speech, to express oneself definitely and concisely, and in this sense it is finally used to denote the idea of teaching. To teach according to

this idea is to sharpen in. **Inscherpen**, the Dutch would say. Education according to this conception must not be vague or indefinite, but sharp and concise. So definitely was this idea of conciseness conceived of as essential to education, that to the view of Scripture, to teach meant actually the same thing as to express something clearly and sharply to the understanding of the child.

The question, then, is, what must be taught according to the words of our text? What is the material of this instruction? And our text tells us: "Teach **them** unto they children." In the words immediately preceding our text the man of God says to the people: "And **these words** which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart." In our text he refers, therefore, once more to **these words**, and he enjoins the children of his people that they shall also teach them to their children to the seed of the covenant. Nor is it difficult to find out what is really meant by "these words". They simply refer to the law of the covenant-God, as has been delivered unto Israel before, and as is now repeated by the man of God summarily, as they are about to enter the promised land, and as he is about to leave them. All the precepts of Jehovah the parent must teach definitely and concisely to his children. And these precepts are again expressed in principle in the fifth verse of our chapter where the prophet says to his people: "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." In brief, Scripture, here as well as throughout, knows but of one kind of actual religion. It is the religion of obedience. And again the Word of God knows of but one kind of obedience, it is the obedience from love. Obedience and love are for that very reason often used promiscuously in Scripture, seeing that they may signify the very same thing, and the one without the other is inconceivable. For this reason, it is to the obedience of God's covenant-people, that the man of God refers in the text. The natural man does not know the love of God, for his mind is enmity against God, and he walks in darkness. But God's people, the people the man of God is here addressing, have been saved and redeemed by the power of His grace. They are once more His covenant-people. God cleansed them and forgave all their iniquities. God delivered them and formed them to be a people unto Himself. He spread abroad in their hearts a new love, the love of God in Christ Jesus. In that love they must obey the Lord their God and keep His precepts. This obedience must be an obedience from the love of their whole heart, with all their mind and soul and strength. For mark you, Scripture knows of no division of our life, one part for the exercise of this obedience in covenant-love and another part entirely separated from that love. The Christian possesses but one life. And that whole life must be consecrated to the Lord his God, who redeemed and delivered him. In other words, all the time and everywhere in the midst of the world or in the Church, in the home or in society, he must reveal himself from the principle of the new life he received from his covenant-God by grace. Thus we promise and confess it in our Baptism-Form so beautifully and truly, when it says, that our part of the covenant is, that we love the Lord our God with all our mind and heart and soul and strength, and walk in new obedience before Him. To know, therefore, and to keep the precepts of the Lord our God and to acknowledge no other precepts than His, that is our covenant-religion. But if this is true, then it is also clear, that we must teach these precepts and none other to our children. For the Lord established His covenant with us and our children in the line of generations. With us and our seed the God of our salvation raises His blessed covenant. We and our children are His covenant-people. And, therefore, very logically the man of God comes to this

injunction: "And thou shalt teach them unto thy children." In all our life, at home or at large, in the Church or in the world, we have to do with the precepts of our God and we acknowledge but one Lord. These precepts are the rule of our thinking and willing, of the life of the soul and of the body, our guide according to which we desire by the grace of God to walk in every sphere of life. But then, it is evident, that also these precepts must constitute the subject-material of all our education, and that it is quite impossible to conceive of any sphere or branch of instruction from which these precepts of our God may or can be excluded. If, therefore, you ask What, according to Scripture, must be the material in which our covenant-children are instructed? We answer without hesitation: The precepts of the Lord our covenant-God with relation to every sphere of life.

II. That such is actually the conception of the words of our text is evident. Let us ask the question: How much time must be devoted to this instruction in the law of the Lord? A few hours, say, every day? Or must this instruction in the precepts of Jehovah perhaps be limited to the Sabbath-day? Shall we transfer the burden of this injunction to the preaching in the church and to the Sunday-school? And is it sufficient, if in addition to all this the children receive an hour's instruction in the precepts of the Lord in catechism during the week? Listen. The text says: "thou shalt talk of them (these precepts) when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou risest up and when thou liest down." Now, this is expressing the thing figuratively, but, very concisely and unambiguously. It simply tells us that we must instruct our children in the precepts of the Lord all the time and everywhere, in the home and outside of the home, and that there is no education that has nothing to do with the law of the Lord. That is simply all. Always, in the home and out of the home, from morning till evening, Israel must instruct his seed in these precepts of Jehovah. There was nothing else for the young covenant-child to learn outside of that law of God. Nothing else might the parent-teacher have in his mind but to instruct the child in that law. And, therefore, it is perfectly clear, that our text deems the instruction in that law all-sufficient. That does not mean that the young Israelite might learn nothing but the law of the ten commandments, learn nothing but how to sing the songs of the fathers, how to celebrate the solemn feasts, and how to bring his sacrifices and tithes. No, the Jew of old did not know of such a narrow conception of religion and of the law of God. But it meant that the Israelite, always and everywhere, had to live according to the will of God, and that for every sphere of life he had to teach his children those same precepts.

Notice, in the second place that all this time, the parent is held responsible for the training of his children. Moses does not at all address the congregation of the people of God in general, but emphatically he speaks in the singular. He addresses the individual parent. Thou shalt teach them unto they children. Thou shalt talk of them, etc. Education is therefore, the duty of the parent and of no one else. And this stands to reason. In the first place there is no one that has more right, more God-given right to the child than the parent. Education determines to a large extent what the child shall be in the future. How it shall think and act. And surely there is no one that has more right to determine this than the parent. But especially is this so with the covenant-parents. They are the believers, and they are the ones that are held responsible, and that express the promise before God and His congregation time and again that they shall see to it that the children are educated according to the doctrine of the covenant. They, therefore, have the duty to educate their children, and no one else

has that obligation as they have. The parent according to the words of our text must educate his children always and everywhere, in the home and outside, from morning till evening, in the commands of the Most High. It is, therefore, not true at all that the parent can educate his children at home in the precepts of the Lord, and that he can excuse himself for the rest and say that he can do no more, that he has fulfilled his duty, and lived up to his promise. No, that does not at all finish his task. The parent must also educate his children outside of the home. In the catechism and in the school, on the street and in every other place, it is the parent whose duty it is to educate his children. He may perhaps perform that duty through someone else, that is his servant, but that does not make any difference. Not the teacher, private or public, has any duty regarding your children, the duty to educate them is yours, and it can only become the duty of the teacher, by your employing him.

And from this follows in the second place that you are responsible for all that your child is taught. It is not thus, that you are responsible for what it learns directly in the home, and someone else for what it learns in the school, and again someone else for what it learns in the catechism and in the Sunday-school, but you are responsible always and everywhere. Not as if these other persons that teach your children have no responsibility. Surely they do. But their responsibility is entirely different from yours. You are responsible for all that your child is taught, responsible before God. Of course, we realize that this was far easier in the time of Moses and the children of Israel than in our modern times. Life was so much more simple. The parent was not so busy from morning till night, that he could find no time to personally instruct his children in the precepts of God. And life was not so complicated, not so exacting, the child did not have to learn so much, all things were more simple that they are today. And for that reason the education in the home was either the only or the main education the child received. And the parent could realize directly his responsibility for the instruction of his children. But this is now entirely different. The parent, at least the father, is not at home from the time that he rises up till the time that he lies down, the mother is too busy or at least often makes herself too busy if she is not, and time for direct instruction by the parent is actually insufficient. Besides, if the parent did have just as much time as the Israelite of old, he would not be able to instruct his children in all the necessary branches of education. And the result is that we have now the school, the catechism, the Sunday-school, where one person systematically instructs many of our children at the same time. Especially in the school the child receives the lion-share of his education. The school it is that trains the child, that practically shapes him, and the words of the teacher have more authority for him than any other. And the result is that we begin to feel and to act more and more as if we were not responsible for that part of the education of our children. And that is a mistake. All these institutions are merely extensions of the home, the teacher is merely the servant of the parent, and even as the boss always remains responsible for the job his servants perform, so the parent is absolutely responsible for the education of his children by the teacher. The parent, also now, must instruct his children in the precepts of the Most High, always and everywhere, for those precepts control our entire life. And if the teacher, the parent employs, cannot reasonably be expected to do this, it is the parent that is and remains responsible for that instruction. And thus it is with the entire system in which the child lives. From morning till night the parent is responsible. The literature the child reads, the places he

visits, the friends he associates with, the recreation he enjoys, in a word, the entire sphere of his life, must be dominated by the law of the Lord, and the parent is responsible that in that sphere the child is trained and very definitely instructed in the commands of the Lord.

Let us apply this for a moment. How is our instruction in comparison with this injunction? How is it in our homes? Are we obedient in this respect? Are we talking about the precepts of the Lord, when we rise and when we lie down, so that our children hear them? No, that does not mean, that we do as a certain doctor told us not long ago, his father always did, who said nothing to his boy but: "Johnnie, Johnnie, think of that never ending eternity!" from morning till night. No, that is sickly. Surely, it is good also that we early impress our children with the truth that time is short, and that eternity is coming, but the fear of eternity must not become the principle of their religion, for that is absolutely wrong. No, but do we speak of the precepts of the Lord in the good and healthy way, so that our children learn from us definitely, how they must walk in the way of the covenant? Do we ever talk with them about their baptism? Ever speak to them about the joy of the assurance that they are covenant-children, but also of the heavy responsibility that because of that covenant rests upon them, to walk in the way of the covenant? In a word, do your children receive the impression in your homes that the precepts of the Lord are dominating there? Or are material things predominating, perhaps the one thing that receives attention? Do you, when you are with your children, perhaps leave them alone and read the newspaper? Or talk about parties and picnics and outings and automobile rides, and nice dresses, or about the homely face of the new neighbor-lady, about the new hats you saw in church, and the faults of brother so and so. In a word: what is the sphere in which your children live in the home? What is the literature you allow them to read? Is also that literature based upon and permeated by the precepts of the Lord? Where are your children when they are not at home? Who are their friends? Is this entire sphere such, nay, I will not say that they gradually drift away from Christianity in general, but yet such that they become alienated from their own church circle? Remember, it is you that are responsible as parents, from morning till night, responsible that your children are instructed and brought up in the precepts of the Most High.

And how is it when you walk by the way? In other words, how is the education of your children outside of your home life? Do they come to catechism regularly? And when they come are they well prepared? Are you co-operating with us also in this respect? Especially in respect to our young people, and still more especially in respect to our young men, I would urge you: See to it that they are educated in the precepts of the Most High. And to some of you directly, I would come and remind you of the fact that Catechism again starts. Some of you, alas, already are old enough to assume your own responsibilities, and still you have not confessed your God as your personal Lord. Remember, we expect you in the class. Do not withdraw yourselves from the influences of the precepts of God. And finally, parents, how is the education of your children in the school? Oh, I hear many of you say, as you have also told me when we visited you in your homes, the education in our public schools is good enough! According to what standard do you call it so, my brother and sister? According to the standard of the Word of God? God tells us that in the home, and without, the children must be instructed in the precepts of the Lord. And that no one but you is responsible for this education. That this education in the commands of the Lord must not be vague, but must be pointed and definite. I ask

you this morning to go to your God and honestly tell Him, that you are living up to this precept in this respect, and that your child is educated, not once in a while, but from morning till evening, and everywhere, in the precepts of the Lord. No, we need not talk about our public schools. But you know as well as I do, that they receive no covenant-education, that they cannot receive a convenant-education in those schools. And, your children must have a covenant-education and nothing less. For this is the injunction in the words of our text, that in the home and without, from morning till evening the children must be brought up in the precepts of the Lord for every sphere of life.

III. But, I hear someone remark, this command was given to Israel of old and not to the people of the New Testament. Many laws and commands are given in the Old Testament that are obsolete, that are not at all applicable to the days of the new dispensation, and this is one of them. And we, of course, frankly admit that the first statement is true. There are, indeed, many laws given in the O.T. that have no direct value, no binding force for our day. But it is not true, that commands as we have discussed one this morning also belong to that category. This temporal and passing character of the O.T. laws is true only of those that applied to the particular dispensation of Israel, in their religious and civic life. There were laws regarding their religious life, laws regarding sacrifices and feasts, that have passed away with the coming of Christ, that have lost their binding force, when the Lamb of God was sacrificed on Golgotha, and the veil rent in twain. There were also laws that applied to the particular civic life of the theocracy of Israel, and also they have lost their particular force with the passing away of Israel as a nation. But this is not true of those laws that dealt with general subjects, that gave precepts in regard to life in general. And such a subject is the subject of education. The education of our children is not something that applied to Israel alone but that is general in its character. And what is more, the basis of this command is not found in something that is applicable to Israel alone, but that holds as well for the people of God of all ages.

In the first place, we find that this command is based upon and brought into direct connection with the covenant-relationship of the people of God. God has established a covenant with Israel as a nation, thus the man of God has told them in the chapter preceding ours. In that covenant God had promised to bless them and to give them Canaan for an everlasting possession. But He also had His demands. The people had received blessings from their covenant-God. He had delivered them from the house of bondage, and He would give them the land of promise, but there was also another side. The people were in duty bound to walk in the way of the covenant and to love the Lord their God with all their heart, and with all their mind, and with all their strength. And from this same covenant obligation follows also their duty to educate their children, always, in the fear of the Lord, so that also they may know His precepts, understand their covenant-relation, and learn to walk in the way of that covenant that God has established with them.

In the second place, the general character of this covenant-education is based upon a general principle also. It might be remarked, as we have heard it so often that instruction in the law of the Lord is sufficient if it is given in the home and in the catechism, in the home and in the church, but that school education has nothing to do with it. And again upon the basis of Scripture this must be denied. The principle of such a statement is wrong. God told His people of old that they should educate their children from morning till night and everywhere in the precepts of the Lord And why? Because

in the immediate context we read that the Lord our God is one Lord. He is Lord, Lord over all. Lord over every sphere of life. His precepts cannot be excluded from any sphere. Therefore, Israel had to educate his children only in His precepts. Not in one part of life the precepts of the Lord, and in another part these precepts excluded, but in all life, these precepts acknowledged. And thus also with our preparation for that life. Not the precepts of the Lord in one part of the education and another part nothing to do with this law of God. But all our education permeated with the precepts of the Lord. And this holds true today as well as in the time of Isreal. Because the Lord our God is one Lord.

Also we are a covenant people. Every time when we come with our babies before God and His congregation, we confess that we have an eternal covenant of grace with God. We confess, that in that covenant God gives to us and to our children all the blessings of salvation, we confess that also our chidren are really in that covenant of grace, that they are partakers of grace, that they are sanctified in Christ, that they are members of His body, that they are children of God, heirs of the kingdom and of the covenant. And every time we confess that it is our side of the covenant to walk in new obedience from true love of that covenant-God that has so richly blessed us. And every time you, therefore, promise that you will to the utmost of your power, teach your children the way of the covenant, and that you will help and cause them to be instructed therein. You see, that same basis still exists, the basis of the covenant, for we are a covenant-people. And upon that same basis we come to you with the same word of God and say: Ye shall teach them unto your children and talk of them in your home and ourside of your home and everywhere. And since conditions are such that undoubtedly you will have to entrust a large part of your education to others, there we again come to you and say: Send them there where you know that they receive a covenant-education, an education in the precepts of the Lord. Send them to our catechism regularly and do not neglect it, send them also to our Christian schools, where you know that they receive the education they must have.

And finally, also today, the Lord our God is one Lord. Also today He is Lord over all. Lord not only in the church, but Lord also in the state, Lord also in social life, Lord in our home life, Lord in the life of our education. And for that very reason, also today His precepts are valid for every sphere of that life. But if this is so, then it is also clear, that the child must learn to see and honor those precepts, for all those spheres. And that those precepts must form the very basis of education. Religion must not be something that is added to our life, but it must be the heart of our life. Religion must not be something that is added to our education, but it must be the heart of our education, the precepts of the Lord must be the basis from which our entire education must proceed. And, therefore, we come once more to you upon the basis that the Lord our God is one and only Lord over all, we come to you as your pastor, anxious about your spiritual welfare, anxious that also your children shall be educated in the fear of the Lord, and enjoin you to be faithful, in the home and to talk of the precepts of the Lord to the children God has given unto you, from morning till night, definitely and sharply, to be faithful in regard to the catechism classes that are presently to begin again for the coming season, faithful in regard to the education the child receives in the school, and to send them to that school, of which you are certain that they will receive a covenant-education. Then we have hope, also for the future. For then we have the promises of God for His faithful covenant-people that He will continue to bless us and our children, as

His people, and we shall walk before Him in childlike obedience, subjects of His kingdom, in the home, in the church, in society, and in the great land in which God has given us a place, acknowledging His one and only Lordship.

CREATIVITY AND THE REFORMED CHRISTIAN TEACHER

by Agatha Lubbers

Miss Agatha Lubbers presented the contents of this paper originally for the mini-course sponsored by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Christian Schools, 1974. Miss Lubbers teaches history of the church and literature at Covenant Christian High School.

Preponderant sections of the professional literature written to stimulate teachers and to influence their thinking discuss and advocate either creative teaching or the teaching of creativity. I remember one of my college professors in the education department of Calvin College who insisted that every teacher must be an artist, and that an essential task of each teacher is to develop unique teaching procedures and original teaching materials. This undoubtedly can be considered a vital form of creativity.

The task of this paper is as follows:

1. To present a Biblical definition of creativity.
2. To present some ideas that will assist in the understanding of the cultivation of the creative mind.
3. To discuss some of the implications for teaching creatively so that creativity and imagination will be stimulated in the student.

I. The Biblical Definition

The Scriptures begin in Genesis 1:1 with the explicit and simple statement: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." In order to present the Scriptural teaching concerning creativity and the fundamental idea of creation it will be necessary for us to examine briefly this universal concept and this Scriptural truth.

There is a difference of opinion among Reformed scholars on one of the fundamental questions posed by the basic truth of creativity. There are those scholars within the Reformed and Christian academic community who insist that man's ability to think and to develop ideas and material objects is rooted in his being created in the image of God.

Although this idea has some appeal because man is different from the animals, it is my opinion that such thinking is not correct. Such thinking is rooted in a concept which speaks of the image of God in man in a wider and a narrower sense. The Reformed Confessions and the Word of God do not refer to the image of God in man as being represented by man's rationality and his intellect. Man, as an **image-bearer**, thinks and wills but the Scriptures and the Confessions denominate the image of God as consisting in "true righteousness and holiness" so that man "might rightly **know** God his Creator, heartily love him and live with him in eternal happiness to glorify and praise him." From that righteousness and holiness man fell and became instead an **image-bearer** of the Devil. It is from that depravity that the first Adam and all the elect had to be saved. In the sending of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, our Immanuel, God with us, we are saved and have received