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## Dance and Dancing

James Koldenhoven

*Dordt College*

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science, while we fear the awesomeness of that power. The humanist view has infiltrated the Christian's dependence on God by suggesting, for example, that now that we have the weather forecaster we don't have to pray anymore about weather conditions. His critique of Dietrich Bonhoeffer also furthered this point about the humanist influence on secularization. He pointed to Bonhoeffer's belief that we should not worry about secularization which is a natural result of power. In this view religious feelings and practices are needed only when we can't answer the problem. Then we should turn to God. "Prayer is unnecessary when you can manage yourself," he said in reporting Bonhoeffer's view, and added, "Redemption is that man can come to power." The key to this view of Bonhoeffer is that "God saves us by leaving us."

In response to this secularization of Christianity through human power, the speaker made the following observations: 1) this view is not Scriptural; 2) man is not "mature," "free," or "at home," but an alien because of sin; 3) power is not power apart from God, for existence is determined by "being in Christ"; and 4) secularization is not inevitable, though it appears to be so because man has so projected that

opinion on reality and it has become a religious, moving force.

In turning finally to the influence of secularization on power, van Riessen demonstrated how man needs some absolute. Man may eliminate God, but he will find a substitute. And that substitute he locates in creation. His system becomes closed, for the idol is now an absolute because man has determined that it should be such. Historically this process of secularization begins with the Renaissance and the Reformation—both of which say man is important. His own importance, his influence, his power equip him to project an idol of his own choosing which in turn begins to define reality. During the following discussion, the speaker noted that death and evil are within man, and these make him look outside himself for something to trust.

Van Riessen gave a final warning to his listeners, not to fall into the trap of explaining things scientifically, as if a scientific analysis alone is sufficient or absolute in the search for meaning and truth.

\*Tapes of the lectures are available from the Media Center, Dordt College.

## The Dance and Dancing

"The dance," and "dancing," are two very different things. Unfortunately, the same word identifies both.

An honest inquirer on this subject

referred to the March issue of Pro Rege and a short report called "Introduction to Dance—Choreography." Others in the Christian community also ask about this

strange word of dubious ancestry.

The question raised is whether Pro Rege is speaking of dancing? The answer is, "No." Dancing refers to social dance which can be innocent (perhaps), but also quite sensually provocative and self-seeking. "The dance," on the other hand, is an art form which explores the world of space, movement, time, and kinetics. While exploring in this world of "the dance," a dance artist-choreographer is also serious about his or her meaning exploration and expression, while in movement, or while moving from one stationary pose to another, as the sculpture is when molding a figure in stone which seems to be in motion.

There are, no doubt, two ways to perform "the dance," just as there are two ways to write a story, two ways to bake a pie, and two ways to be a farmer. Either, one does what he does with a heart that wishes to praise God, or with a heart

that is indifferent or opposed to praising God. Yes, in that sense, "the dance" can also be self-seeking, God-denying, and degenerate. The problem, however, facing the Christian community, is that there is little (if any) real Christian leadership in this art form. In short, we find ourselves embarrassingly ignorant (before God and our fellow man) and incapable of making sound judgments in this art form.

For the time being, we are only able to learn the rudiments of the art of dance, to make some generalizations about the different kinds of dance, to say emphatically that there must be two ways to do this art (for or against God), and to accept (cautiously) the expertise of our humanist neighbors to get us started.

For now, let us get clear this much: social dance is not the same as "the dance." The Lord can bless even such a simple beginning in clarification.

## Calvin Scholar Lectures

Dr. Ford Lewis Battles, Professor of Church History at Pittsburg Theological Seminary, lectured to the Dordt College community and to the public on September 22 and 23. Dr. Battles, a noted scholar in Calvin studies, presented three public lectures: "Calvin's Humanist Education," "The Writings of John Calvin," and "Calvin as Exegete."

In the first lecture, "Calvin's Humanist Education," Dr. Battles traced the in-

fluence of six of Calvin's teachers on his work. The influence of Mathurin Cordier, Pierre de l'Etoiles, Andrea Alciati, Melchior Wolmar, Guillaume Budé, and Pierre Danès was significant in grounding Calvin in the best of the classical studies of his day. Battles maintains that in establishing the Academy at Geneva, Calvin attempted to infuse Reformed thought into a classical humanist curriculum. Dr. Battles attributed Calvin's orderliness of thought and