

*[c. 1940s. Although the author of this document is not listed, this title (His People) and a section of the text was quoted as belonging to Gordon Clark by Herman Hoeksema in the Standard Bearer, published on pages 4-5 of "The Clark-Van Til Controversy"]*

## **His People**

Gordon H. Clark

WHEN the angel before the birth of Christ explained the significance of what was about to happen, he said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

Here and elsewhere the Scriptures teach that in eternity God gave to Christ a special people. As John 6:37 states it, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me." In the tenth chapter of John this people is pictured as flocks of sheep in danger of attack by wolves; and Jesus gives his life for his sheep. And in John 17:6 Jesus mentions those whom the Father gave him, and a few verses below he prays for them as he does not pray for the world.

There is of course a sense in which Christ died for all men. He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, as this same John tells us in his first epistle. No greater sacrifice would be needed even if all men were to be saved. But obviously Christ is not the propitiation for all sin in the sense that he saves all men, but only in a vague, general sense.

Beyond this reference to all men, there is another sense, a much more precious sense, and a much more definite sense in which Christ died for some only and not for all. In I Tim. 4:10 Paul says, "we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe." Christ died for these in the sense that on the cross he definitely intended to save just those and no others. For example, Christ definitely intended to save Abraham and Moses; he did not intend to save those who were destroyed in Sodom.

How then can a widely read religious paper print the following? "If Christ died for all, he died for each; for no one more than another, and no one omitted."

The untruth of this quotation is attested by Matthew, by John, by Paul, and by the whole consistent teaching of the Bible.

And why, may one ask, does any true Christian, even when emphasizing the general propitiation for all sins, wish to conceal or deny the particularizing grace and election of God by which God chose him specially and personally out of a mass of lost mankind? We who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world are his people whom he came to save. To God alone be all the glory.