

Invitation

Welcome in the name of our Lord!

This Institute for Calvinistic Studies in Korea (ICSK) was founded in the hope of both establishing a life-system in Korea true to the Calvinistic thought and life and building Biblical Reformed faith through the preservation and research of the works by John Calvin and his followers. Last October, ICSK held an exhibition on John Calvin's works, and thousands of Christians joined thankfully in commemorating this great servant of God. We are having, this time, an exhibition on Dr. Abraham Kuyper who was the most prominent figure in the Calvinistic movement during the last century.

Even by his opponents, Dr. Abraham Kuyper was thought of as a man who was equipped with ten heads and a hundred hands. We are safe to conclude that his life was totally devoted to the expansion of God's Kingship (*Pro Rege*).

Dr. Kuyper, as a second Calvin, unreservedly accepted the whole of Calvin's thought. He particularly emphasized common grace and claimed that God's sovereignty reaches every sphere of our lives. At the opening address of the Free University in 1880, he propounded the famous thought of sphere sovereignty. He strongly preached that not only every church must be built on Calvinistic theology but every individual in the political, economic, cultural and artistic field must have Calvinistic thought.

Abraham Kuyper was a great theologian, a great statesman who was a party president and prime minister, a great pastor, a great educator and also a famous journalist for half a century. Also he was a passionate preacher, a lover of art, a university professor and a great thinker.

Though our Korean church boasts of the growing number of its members, it is still hard to say that all of us have truly committed our lives to the glory of God. We at ICSK sincerely hope that Christians in Korea may learn about Abraham Kuyper's life which was one of total devotion to God. As many as 150 books and about 70 pictures, cartoons and articles will be shown at this exhibition.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. De Bruijn of the Free University and Mr. Tengbergen, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Korea, for rendering warm assistance for this exhibition. Also I have to thank all the pastors and brothers and sisters who gave us help. The congratulatory messages from Dr. R.F.M. Lubbers, Prime Minister of the Netherlands and from other prominent scholars abroad are deeply appreciated.

Finally, we pray that this exhibition will be used by our Lord as an opportunity to encourage our Korean Christians to give up the dualistic framework of faith and to live for God's glory, admitting His sovereignty in every sphere of our lives.

10/17/1988

Prof. Dr. S.K. Chung

Presbyterian General Assembly

Theological College and Seminary

President of ICSK

Messages of Congratulations

I would like to congratulate the Institute for Calvinistic Studies in Korea with the first exhibition in Korea on the life and works of Dr. Abraham Kuyper, and in particular Professor Chung, Director of the Institute for Calvinistic Studies, without whose dedication, this exhibition probably would never have taken place.

Dr. Kuyper (1837-1920) was a statesman and theologian of considerable importance. He served as Prime Minister of the Netherlands from 1901 to 1905, and was one of the most authoritative Dutch Reformed theologians of the latter part of the 19th century. Today he is, among theologians, still known as the author of *“Encyclopaedie der HeiligeGodgeleerdheid”* and, especially, *“De GemeeneGratie,”* in which work he defended the Orthodox Reformed Dogmata against secularism and modernism.

The public at large remembers him as the politician who sought to emancipate the lower and middle classes of the Calvinist part of the nation (*“De KleineLuyden”*). He founded the Calvinist *“VrijeUniversiteit”* (Free University) in Amsterdam in 1880 and greatly strengthened the political role of the *“KleineLuyden”* by forging the existing Calvinist *“Antirevolutionary Party”* (which was formed earlier in the 19th century against the principles of the French Revolution) into a powerful popular party.

I am convinced that this exhibition will further increase the knowledge of the life and works of Dr. Abraham Kuyper in Korea. I sincerely hope that the visitors to this exhibition will find inspiration in Dr. Kuyper’s theological and political heritage; today it still stimulates many of my fellow countrymen to study his books.

J. van EbbenhorstTengbergen

Ambassador of the Netherlands to Korea

It is certainly wonderful that the life and works of Abraham Kuyper is so vividly introduced to the Korean public through an exhibition like this.

Some of his theological views are already familiar to Reformed theologians in this county, but Abraham Kuyper as a politician, journalist, and educator is not so well known.

He was one of the greatest politicians of the 19th century Netherlands and an able leader who exercised much influence in various areas of Dutch society. His contributions in the fields of education, politics, and Christianity are still visible not only in the Netherlands, but also in the U.S., Canada and South Africa.

The political philosophy and political achievements of Kuyper, the one-time prime minister of the Netherlands, may serve as a good reference for Korean Christians who are confronted with diverse problems arising from the unsettled relationship between the state and church.

As far as I know, there has never been such an exhibition as this outside the Netherlands. This was possible only through the dedicated efforts of Prof. Dr. S.K. Chung.

I sincerely thank him for this, and hope that the exhibition may provide much inspiration and stimulation to viewers.

Prof. Dr. Bong-Ho Son

Professor at Seoul National University

Many congratulations on the occasion of the Kuyper-exhibition which the Institute for Calvinistic Studies in Korea is organizing.

That Kuyper is still an important figure can be seen by the commemoration of his 150th birthday in October 1987 in the Netherlands; many publications about him appeared and various exhibitions and congresses were held.

It is gratifying to know that there is also interest in the life and work of Abraham Kuyper outside of the Netherlands in countries such as Korea, where your Institute has so strongly stimulated the study of his writings.

The *Historisch Documentatiecentrum voor het Nederlands Protestantisme* of the Free University in Amsterdam contributes therefore with great pleasure in the Kuyper-exhibition in Seoul. This cooperation is further evidence of the good relationship that exists between our institutions.

I sincerely hope that your exhibition will be a success and that it will provide a reflection of the Christian tradition which is championed by both the Institute for Calvinistic Studies and by the *Historisch Documentatiecentrum voor het Nederlands Protestantisme*.

Yours sincerely,

J.de Bruijn

Head of the *Historisch Documentatiecentrum*
voor het Nederlands Protestantisme

Dr. A. Kuyper was, after his great predecessor Mr. Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer (1801-1876), the pre-eminent leader and moulder of Reformed life in the Netherlands, together with a number of highly gifted fellow-Christians, a.o. H. Bavinck, D. P.D. Fabius, Th. Heemskerk, F.L. Rutgers, A.F. de Savornin Lohman and J. Woltjer.

They concentrated their activity not just in the church, but also and more specifically in politics, society, academic life and general culture. In this way the Reformed faith became a real spiritual power in the totality of the national life.

Kuyper has indeed moulded many, many spirits by his academic as well as popular writings. Moreover his work had a great influence in many parts of the world outside of the Netherlands. Kuyper was in a certain way a prophet. He broached many problems which are indeed still always of current interest.

Therefore I congratulate The Institute for Calvinistic Studies in Korea warmly with its initiative in the organization of the Dr. A. Kuyper-exhibition.

Prof. Dr. J.D. Dengerink

Former President of IARTA

Emeritus Professor of Utrecht University, Netherlands

I take great pleasure in sending hearty congratulations and best wishes on your Exhibition on Dr. Abraham Kuyper.

Kuyper was a great church-reformer. Succeeding the revival movement by Groen van Prinsterer and others, he battled with the modern liberal theology which had continued to have much influence on the *Hervormde Kerk*, in order for Dutch churches to return to a truly Reformed church true to the Scriptures and Reformed confessions. He and his fellows founded the *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland*.

Kuyper was also a great education-and-science-reformer. He battled with the principle of Synthesis --- whether it were Thomistic or Modern --- and established the principle of Antithesis and advocated two systems of science, one by the regenerate and the other by the unregenerate. He sought after establishing the Calvinistic system of sciences which started from the regenerate Christian heart. He founded the Free University in Amsterdam.

He strongly insisted on Christianity as a whole and Calvinism as an all- inclusive view of reality, namely as a *Weltanschauung*. He wanted to reform not only theology and science but also Christian daily life into a God-centered one. The whole life of a Christian should be performed in the divine Presence. He said, "There is not one inch of life about which Christ does not say, 'It is mine'."

I think the importance of all these things mentioned above is increasing in the midst of secularization today.

I hold Dr. S.K. Chung in high esteem, for he opened ICSK in order to encourage churches and students in Korea to study the life and thought of a great servant of God, Jean Calvin and of his followers.

And I was very glad to hear that the Exhibition on Calvin was very successful. I heartily hope that this Exhibition on Abraham Kuyper will also be successful and provide an excellent opportunity to introduce his life, thought and many-sided activities to your churches and students.

In May last year our Japan Calvinist Association held an annual meeting and gave open lectures in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Kuyper. We got much blessing from learning about his life and thought. I am very thankful to God for the fact that ICSK and JCA are serving a common purpose, supported by a common Reformed faith.

I pray that in the future also we shall have a good partnership for the common purpose to respond to the creational mandate and to seek for the advancement of the Kingdom of God. May God bless your Institute and this exhibition.

In cordial Christian love,

SumitoHaruna

Professor at Kansai University

Chairman of Japan Calvin Association

A Brief Sketch of Dr. Abraham Kuyper

By Dr. S.K. Chung

Dr. Abraham Kuyper, born in the Netherlands, was a great servant of God. If he had been born in a country where French or English was used, his reputation and thought would have been better known to Korea. However, his mother nation, the Netherlands, was a small and relatively weak country located among those then-superpowers such as Great Britain, Germany and France. The Dutch language was used by a limited number of people and the Netherlands was little known to the outside world.

But when Dr. Kuyper died in 1920, more than 120 newspapers around the world mourned the death of a “second Calvin.” They all paid tribute to his life which had been a total dedication to the sovereignty and kingship of God (*Pro Rege*) as a theologian, church reformer, statesman and journalist.

He was born in 1837. He studied literature and theology at the University of Leiden and received the doctor of theology degree at the age of 25. He became pastor at 26 and ministered many years at Utrecht Church and Amsterdam Reformed Church. He was such a many-gifted man that even those who were not on his side applauded him as “a man with ten heads and a hundred hands.” He firmly believed that all the spheres of human life on earth are under God’s sovereign rule. So, with unceasing passion, he tried to live for God’s glory throughout his lifetime, doing his utmost to build the Church which is the body of Christ and to expand the Kingdom of God.

A. Kuyper was an eloquent and passionate preacher. He was also a church administrator who established the Dutch Reformed Church in an effort to rescue the State Church from its liberal theology. He criticized the French Revolution because it was started from humanistic philosophy. He succeeded his “spiritual father” Dr. Groen van Prinsterer as President of the Anti-Revolutionary Party. He was a member of the Second and the First Parliament. During his tenure as Prime Minister, he endeavored to realize the Calvinistic ideals in state affairs.

He founded the Free University against the humanistic, atheistic academic movement of the State University and became the first President and a professor of Systematic Theology. In his address at the opening ceremony of the Free University, he propounded the idea of “Sphere Sovereignty.” Every Christian, he exhorted, should live for God’s glory in his daily life and humble himself before the Word of God. In 1898 he went to Princeton University, where he gave special lectures on “Calvinism” which greatly influenced the Presbyterian Church in America.

Moreover, he initiated the issue of a daily newspaper, *The Standard*, and a weekly, *The Herald*, and served as editor-in-chief for 45 years. He also devoted 50 years of his life as a Christian journalist for the expansion of God's sovereign rule in human life.

Ever since he first presented his doctorate treatise in 1862, he was an energetic writer throughout his lifetime. He wrote as many as 223 books on various fields such as theology, political and social science, literature, art, science and education.

He was convinced that the whole of human life should be changed through the Gospel. Though it is also important for us to have personal faith in Christ and attend Church regularly, it is far more important to live the Christian life in our daily lives. That is to say, we have to commit our whole life to God, knowing that we are living before Him (*Coram Deo*).

It is more than a hundred years since our Korean church first received the Gospel, and now the number of Christians has reached almost ten million. However, we must admit that we Christians do not lead a fully devoted life to God's glory. I sincerely pray that this Calvinistic life-system of Dr. Abraham Kuyper will make a fresh impact upon every one of us.

Abraham Kuyper's Idea of Sphere Sovereignty

by Dr. S.K. Chung

Abraham Kuyper has achieved much in diverse areas. He protected the Dutch Reformed Church from the 19th century liberal theology, established the Free University of Amsterdam, revived and strengthened the Dutch Christian Party so that it could form a cabinet under his time as Prime Minister and accomplished reformation in many fields including education. He was also a very creative thinker who promoted several influential ideas. Most known of them are the theories of general grace and sphere sovereignty.

The idea of sphere sovereignty (*souvereiniteit in eigenkring*) was first conceived by the 19th century Christian political thinker and Kuyper's mentor, Groen van Prinsterer. But it was Kuyper who developed the concept theoretically and put it into practice. On the 20th of October, 1860, at the opening of the Free University, which he established, Kuyper gave his dedication speech on the topic of sphere sovereignty.

The theory of sphere sovereignty, in brief, implies that the sole sovereignty of the universe belongs only to God, but when it is concretely exercised in the world through men, it should not be monopolized by one man or one institution but be distributed to diverse spheres of life. State, church, family, science, arts, industry, labor are some of the spheres he mentioned. Each sphere has its own sovereignty and no other sphere should control or interfere with the internal affairs of that sphere. God has allowed no person or institution except Christ to exercise overall power on the earth.

The idea has been criticized for lacking sufficient Biblical basis, but we cannot go into this question here. The intention behind the idea, however, both when it was conceived by Van Prinsterer or when worked out by Kuyper, was to prevent monopoly of power by the state, or idolization of the state, But at the same time, it implies that church should not interfere with the affairs properly belonging to the state or to the family. On the basis of this principle, he opened the Free University, the first private university in the Netherlands, and named it "Free University" in order to emphasize that the educational sphere should be free from the interferences either of the state or of the church.

He did not, however, ignore the fact that the state could exercise a special sort of power different from those exercised by other spheres. The state not only has the power proper to its own sphere with which the church, family, or academic and industrial world should not

interfere. But the state also has a unique authority to regulate among the different spheres so that there would be no encroachment of one sphere upon the sovereignty of others. The state regulations, however, should be limited to the external relations of spheres; they cannot infringe upon the internal affairs of other spheres. He, therefore, pushed through the parliament an educational law which prevented the state from having any say on the matter of what is lectured on in the Free University. Today, the two private universities and all other religious schools are entirely financed by the government, but the government has no right to influence in the matter of personnel appointments or the contents of education.

We do not need to take his theory of sphere sovereignty as a sort of religious doctrine. Associated with this idea are views which cannot be easily agreed upon by Christians and philosophers today, namely the organic view of the universe and the political conservatism of the 19th century Dutch Christians which rejected the legitimacy of the French Revolution. Kuyper rightly distinguished the government from the state, but by denying revolution, he has left no room for a radical solution to exorbitant misuses of power by the government.

On the other hand, his idea is quite persuasive to many Christians even today and, therefore, is effective in a certain measure for fighting the state's power monopoly or state idolatry. It should be evident to all Christians that God alone has authority over all the spheres of life, and no sinful human being or institution created by men can rule the entirety of our lives.

It is an undeniable fact today, however, that the state is becoming ever more powerful and is encroaching upon ever wider spheres of our life. Modern states have become, more than any other time in history, an economic entity representing the egoism of its citizens, and an efficient running of the state has a direct bearing on the economic interests of the people. This enhances its cohesiveness and strength.

The danger of state idolatry is greater today than in Kuyper's time and in Korea more than in the Netherlands. Korean Christians who aspire to do something in politics according to Christian principles today may get some valuable advice from this theory of sphere sovereignty.

Korean churches, whose strength has grown to a political factor in a relatively short time, should reflect very seriously upon the ways to confront with the ever growing power of the state. Kuyper's concept of sphere sovereignty may provide useful suggestions in this reflection as well.

The Institute for Calvinistic Studies in Korea

1. The purpose of the ICSK is to study in depth the thoughts and theology of John Calvin, to provide information and material to those who desire to study Calvinistic thought, to maintain the capability of carrying out our Calvinistic culture and mission, and to present the Calvinistic world view to the Korean people.
2. The activities of the ICSK include research, publication and education in Calvinistic thought; conducting an annual training and fellowship session; presenting one annual seminar and other special seminars; exchanging materials and mutually beneficial information with Calvinist groups of other nations; and proclaiming Calvinistic thought to Korea and other Asian nations.
3. Membership in the ICSK is open to all pastors or persons with an M.A. degree who agree with, and live by, John Calvin's thoughts and principles.
4. The ICSK was founded by Dr. S.K. Chung, former President of the Presbyterian General Assembly Theological Seminary of Korea. Dr. Chung served as President of G.A.T.S. for six years. He has studied at the Free University in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Dr. Chung has written many books and articles about John Calvin, Abraham Kuyper, Groen van Prinsterer and Calvinism. Dr. Chung's fledgling group is affiliated with the International Institute for Calvinistic Studies.
5. Our thinking is in the tradition of the historical Christian teaching of Augustine and John Calvin. According to historical Calvinistic faith, we believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the standard for our faith and life. All things were created for God's glory and Christ is our Savior. Therefore, all glory must be given to Him only. We believe God has given us both a responsibility to evangelize and to change our culture. We also believe God has all authority and, through that authority, controls the world. We cannot escape this world, so we must conquer it with the Gospel.
6. We believe that only a Christian faith which honors God can save the Korean church, society and people. We must be obedient to God's Word, whether we are to go as missionaries or to stay within our own culture. This Calvinistic movement has the responsibility to spread Calvinistic thought throughout Korea and the entire world.