Christ.” But now note, “And this I pray. . . .” You cannot make your
children love God. You cannot make that love abound. But you can
pray that God will give it, and that He will make it abound into the
knowledge and judgment. And having disciplined the child, we should
pray for a blessing upon it in the child’s presence. The child must see
that we take the matter to God in prayer.

And the fruit will be twofold. We will be cultivating thankfulness
in the children as God is pleased to use our work. And do not forget
that prayer is the chief part of thankfulness. But then we will also
go home with peace of mind. The day may have been a rough one.
Some children will resist and give us a rough time. But taking it to
God in prayer, and leaving the outcome to the almighty power of the
Holy Spirit, we can go home with peace of mind, and with thankful­
ness for the privilege of training His precious jewels in thankfulness.

Book Reviews

Calvin and the Anabaptist Radicals, by Willem Balke, translated
by William J. Heynen; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand
Rapids, MI, 338 pages, paper.
(Reviewed by P. VanDer Schaaf.)

What is the true church of
Christ in this world? How is she
to be recognized? How must she
live in the world, and what must
be her attitude toward the state
under whom she lives? How is the
Scripture rightly to be inter­
preted? These are not dead issues,
but lively questions which God’s
people in every age must answer
in faith. They are a concern of
Reformed Christians living in the
twentieth century. They are
questions which concerned God’s
people during the age of the
Reformation. Willem Balke’s
book, Calvin and the Anabaptist
Radicals shows how these ques­
tions were posed by the Anabap­
tists, who represented the radical
wing of the Reformation, and
how they were answered by John
Calvin.

The book examines the image
that Calvin had of the Anabaptists
and of their doctrines. The first
half of the book examines the
personal contact that Calvin had
with the Anabaptists beginning
with the time in which the first
edition of the *Institutes* appeared, through Calvin's stay in the city of Strassburg and the final period of his life in Geneva. The second half of the book is a systematic study of Calvin's views of Anabaptists' doctrines and of the doctrines that Calvin taught in opposition to the Anabaptists. The author contrasts the teachings of Calvin and the Anabaptists on the doctrines of the church, the relationship between the church and the world, hermeneutics and the proper understanding of Scripture, Christology, and eschatology.

The book has several things to commend it. It contains interesting narratives of personal contacts that Calvin and other Reformers had with Anabaptists. The author's fair and scholarly evaluation of Anabaptist teachings makes the book a valuable introduction to the major doctrines of the radical reformers. Most valuable is the author's vindication of Calvin over against the Anabaptists. So much of what is written on the great reformer of Geneva emphasizes the vitriolic style of his writing or the inflexibility of his personality. One often misses even the attempt to be fair with Calvin much less favorable to him. Balke's evaluations of Calvin's answers to the Anabaptist challenge show Calvin's insights to be as important to the Reformed churches in our day as they were to the church of the Reformation.

The book was originally published in Dutch and is the author's doctor's thesis. In places it reads like a doctor's thesis. Also, any reader well acquainted with Calvin's teachings will find much in the book that he already knows. Still, the book's value lies in the contrasts and comparisons that the author makes between two of the major wings of the Reformation. It is well worth reading for anyone who must teach the history of that era.

The *Wheels of Heaven* by David E. Lawrence. Crossway Books; Westchester, Illinois, $4.95, 139 pages, paper. (Reviewed by G. VanDer Schaaf.)

*The Wheels of Heaven* is a science-fiction novel. It employs a stock sci-fi plot: a scientist, Albert Blake, shrinks so that the secret workings of the subatomic world are revealed to him. What he learns is so astounding, so contrary to contemporary scientific canon, that he remains silent for almost 40 years before daring to tell his story to a skeptical world.

The "shrinking man" plot is standard sci-fi stuff. In his book, however, Lawrence presents it with a twist. What scientist Blake discovers is that each and every electron in the cosmos is directed by creatures (never identified) who are under the control of God. By this control of the building blocks of all matter, God works His sovereign will throughout the universe.
Lawrence is the chairman of the Science Department of Madison County High School in Madison, Virginia and is a member of a Baptist church in that city. The former explains why, perhaps, The Wheels of Heaven shows an unnatural, stilted style, reminding me of a scientific monograph rewritten for the general public. The latter accounts for the fundamentalist overtones in the book: a passing reference to a free will decision to serve the Creator and, throughout the book, the underlying assumption (shared by fundamentalist science texts) that scriptural accounts of creation can be profitably defended by appeals to science.

The Wheels of Heaven is a curious book, and I recommend it only at that level: a curiosity piece.

The Valiant Papers by Calvin Miller. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, $5.95, 155 pp., paper. (Reviewed by G. VanDer Schaaf.)

In C.S. Lewis’ The Screwtape Letters, a senior tempter corresponds with a junior devil. In The Valiant Papers, a guardian angel files his final report to the central office. If the premise of this type of literature is offensive to the reader, by all means stay away from this book.

Every Reformed reader has a standard by which he evaluates what he reads. That standard is the Word. This standard, always the same, is applied differently to different types of literature. When I read “Christian fiction,” I read with different expectations, different questions, different criteria of acceptability than when I read “secular fiction.” One of these criteria, or questions, is “How much bad theology can be present in a story before I can no longer enjoy it? What is the limit?” This limit will be different for each reader. My limit was reached in The Valiant Papers.

This is not to say that The Valiant Papers is a dull, uninteresting book. Calvin Miller is a wordsmith of considerable talent; he is in full command of the language, as the brief poems at the end of each chapter give evidence. Too, Mr. Miller has a clear eye regarding the problems and pitfalls of life in 20th century America. It is Miller’s opinions of what God wills for mankind and how God accomplishes—or fails to accomplish—that will, as voiced through angel Valiant, that spoil the story for me. Arminianism is everywhere, Universalism permeates every page, and what might have been an enjoyable book is finally only a disappointment.