

# PRO REGE

OR

THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST

BY

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PART ONE - THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST IN HIS HIGHNESS.

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## FOREWORD.

Pro Rege aims to abolish the separation, which in our consciousness, much more sharply than was good, has marked our life in the Church from our life outside the Church. The confession of Christ as our Redeemer is in the foreground of the Church's life, as it had to be. The Redeemer of himself sets up the opposition between our lostness in guilt and sin and the grace that stands in opposition to it, and it is precisely in the fluctuation between these two poles that church life must move. A church life that lapses into the observance of churchly duties disintegrates itself, and if it is primarily aimed at a walk in the path of virtue, it exchanges its deeply religious character for a superficially moral one. The result of which was, and always will be, that the spiritually inspired do not feel at home in their Church and, joining like-minded people in closer bonds, cause the sect to flourish.

Therefore, the Redeemership of Christ does not exclude His Kingship. On the contrary, it has always been acknowledged in the Church that the Church is lost without the holy protection of its King, and that it is not least in the Church that the Christ reigns royally in the midst of His people. This need for protection and for the regiment of her King, therefore, our Reformed Churches felt very strongly in its first emergence. These were times of bitter persecution and uncommon confusion in every area. Thus it could not be otherwise than that people passionately confessed that our King was watching over His Church, and in the hour of distress for salvation and protection they looked up to Him who, with all power in heaven and on earth, was seated at the right hand of the Father. And even when, after the break with Rome, the churches had to be rearranged and a higher authority was felt everywhere, people continued to honor in the Redeemer also His King, to Whose guidance they surrendered without reservation. But this changed when the persecution ceased, the public religion itself received the Reformed stamp, and the Reformed Churches gradually came into a more solid order.

Hence, the Kingship of Christ, although still professed, lost its high significance for life, and one hardly heard of the King anymore, but everyone almost single-handedly of the Savior and Redeemer.

This was accompanied by a 'change in life' in other areas as well. When the ecclesiastical conflict was settled, the Reformed peoples threw themselves into civil and social life. For them, life was divided into two parts, one in the Church and the other outside the Church, and the unity of the two was no longer appreciated. This rupture could only have been avoided if the confession of the

Kingship of Christ, which emanated from the Church, had been perceived by popular consciousness as the governing power for all of life. But this was not the case. Rather, the Kingship of Christ was increasingly overshadowed, and this in turn caused the contrast between church life and civil life to permeate the consciousness of the Reformed peoples in a most dangerous manner. In the end, it was as if one only had to do with Christ in the Church, and as if outside the Church one did not have to reckon with the majesty of Christ. This contradiction lasted well into the last century, and only then did it begin to give way to a better harmony in life. Thus we received our Christian press, our Christian science, our Christian art, our Christian literature, our Christian philanthropy, our Christian nationalism, our Christian professional organization, etc. In short, the realization that the Christ is the Son of God. In short, the realization that the Christ also lays hold of extra-Christian life has gradually become commonplace. At present we have come so far that none of us wants to do otherwise. However, the Christian character of these various expressions of life is still too much sought exclusively in the Christian principles, and the awareness is not yet sufficiently alive that it is the Christ Himself, as our King, who must leave this Christian mark on our expressions of life. Hence the need to awaken and strengthen this awareness. And it is to this need that Pro Rege is trying to satisfy.

From this enlivened awareness naturally flows a modified relationship toward those who, although professing the Kingship of Christ with us, nevertheless differ from us ecclesiastically.

In the field of the church, one must be one in sense and one in feeling, right down to the finest layers of faith, and therefore it was inevitable that the nations would have to split up into different churches. Thus arose the Roman, Greek, Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist and Independent churches, and no matter what efforts are made, it will not be possible to eliminate these differences in the church sphere. But these ecclesiastical differences have long threatened to divide Christians in the civil field as well. And against this danger a remedy can only be found in the all-sided confession of the Kingship of Christ, and this for the very reason that on the civilian terrain one does not have to deal with the finer layers of the faith. On the civil level, a common Christian action is possible with others, possibly even with all those who profess the Kingship of Christ, even if we are divided in the spiritual and therefore in the Church. With the deeper need now becoming apparent to unite all Christian elements in the struggle against infidelity and revolution, it was so urgent to place greater emphasis on the Kingship of Christ as the master of our

whole life. And also in this sense, a study such as Pro Rege offered, seemed for our time to be a requirement, if not indispensable.

Already now, since the articles Pro Rege appeared in the Herald, it was repeatedly noticeable how, in all kinds of areas, the honor of Christ as King was being paid much more than before. That this may continue is my silent prayer.

The Latin title Pro Rege is, as in the past, E Voto, half taken for brevity. Long titles are too difficult to quote. A short Pro Rege or E Voto easily establishes itself in the memory and immediately tells you which writing is meant. Pro Rege means: For our King!

After this first part both other parts will appear, as soon as possible. Like De Gemeene Gratie, this work will have three voluminous octavo volumes.

KUYPER.

The Hague, December 20, 1910.