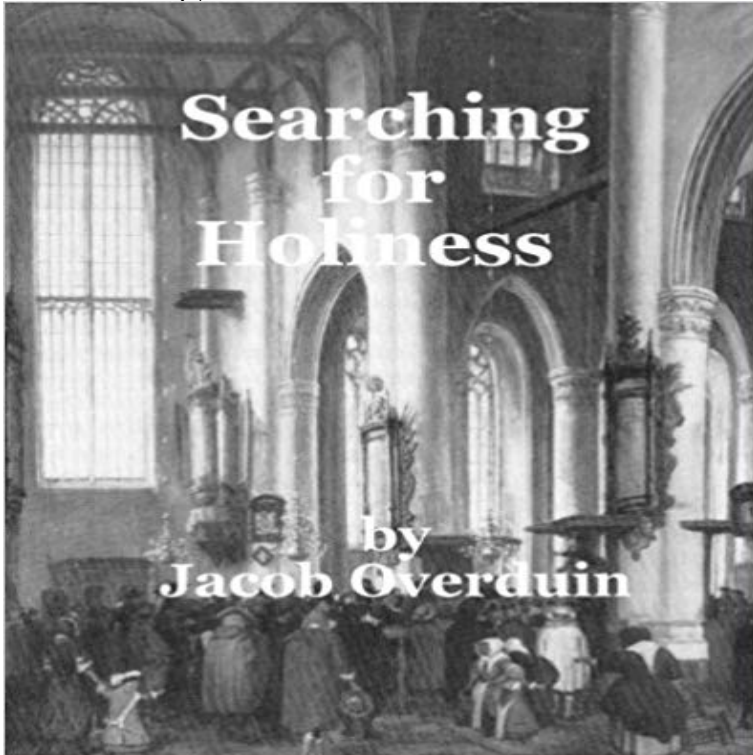


## Searching for Holiness



Most of the worlds religions have known an almost continuous stream of adherents who have longed for and sought after holiness of heart, however holiness of heart may be defined. This book focuses on an expression of this phenomenon within the Dutch Reformed Church, called the Further Reformation Movement, the Nadere Reformatie, which formed in the period in which controversy over the doctrine of election dominated the Dutch theological landscape. The controversy culminated in the Synod of Dort (1618-1619) and the issuance of its five sets of articles against Arminianism on April 23, 1619. The movement marked its formal arrival in 1627. The movement expired as a formal entity upon the death of Theodorus van der Groe (1705-1784). Van der Groe was admitted in 1730 to the ministry of preaching in the Reformed Church. He confessed that until his conversion, probably in 1735, 5 years after his installation as pastor in his first congregation, he had only worked with an imaginary Christ in his mind. Spokesman of the movement clearly articulated the concerns of an increasing number of Dutch Reformed clergy who, while they strongly supported the Calvinist anti-Arminian position of the Synod of Dort, reacted negatively to the idea that correct doctrine (leerheiligheid) is sufficient for holiness. They insisted on a further and deeper reformation, one which would move beyond pre-occupation with doctrinal formulation and orthodoxy, and in which careful attention is given to the daily life of the Christian, to godly practice (praktijk der godzaligheid), holy living (heiligheid des levens), and a personal relationship with God (persoonlijk verkeer). This book highlights the remarkable similarity of the experiential faith of these avid Dutch Calvinists with the Wesleyan search and answers for Sanctification. Yet, the dogmatic interpretation of their experience

as seen in de extensive Lexicon of the book, is vastly different. The book compares the understanding of holiness of this movement with the point of view developed by Wesleyanism, a movement coming to life in Britain and North America at the time the Nadere Reformatie was declining in the Netherlands. This book shows that the two movements thought along similar theological lines and exhibit similar characteristics. But it also shows, through the means of the extensive lexicon, that the two movements, even though aiming at the same Christian living and Christian love, come to quite different interpretations of their Christian experiences.

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