"In Thy Light Shall We See Light"

BEACON LIGHTS
FOR
YOUNG PROTESTANTS

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Editorials

Our Federation Paper

One of the weightiest matters to be presented before the next Convention of the Protestant Reformed Young People’s Federation is the matter of the Federation paper.

BEACON LIGHTS is here to stay. It has made its first appearance and has met with a hearty reception, far above our fondest expectations. By this time it has gained for itself a definite place in the society life of our Protestant Reformed youth, besides supplying them with edifying reading material. Yet, as was said at the outset, these first five issues were merely an experiment from every point of view.

The publication committee appointed by the last Convention received the mandate to find ways and means of calling into existence a Federation paper. This mandate has been carried out even to the extent that we now have our own periodical. From that aspect the work of the committee is finished, so that they are already busy preparing a report of their labors for the next Convention. That report will naturally raise the question: How are we to proceed in the future?

In order that all of our societies may be acquainted with this matter before it appears on the floor of the Convention, may give it some serious thought and may instruct their delegates accordingly, the committee deems it expedient to present some of its findings at this time. We would suggest that every society spend one after-recess period on the discussion of this important matter.

Fully conscious of the fact that an experiment of this kind must be marred with many imperfections, the committee has always had an open ear for criticisms and suggested improvements. More than likely the Federation can profit from these findings. To be frank, nothing escaped the critical eye of our ever ambitious youth. It has been a constant joy to the committee that our Federation paper critically and offer their suggestions. Repeated calls for criticisms and suggested improvements have been made concerning the name, the form, the contents and the administration, which we now gladly pass on to you for your consideration.

As you may know, the present committee did not decide on a permanent name for our periodical. Out of the various suggestions offered the committee centered its attention upon two, namely, “The Beacon” and “The Young Protestant”. The main objection raised against this name was, that it does not express the distinctive character of our paper. Possibly a name can be found that will fill this lack. So it remains the task of the next Convention to decide on a permanent name.

As to the form, the suggestion has been offered, that the dimensions of the paper be reduced one half and the number of pages be doubled. That would give us a paper of about four and one half by six inches, having 32 pages, and could readily be carried either in a coat pocket or in a large purse, especially convenient for those who like to take their copy with them to the society meetings.

A more weighty question will be the matter
of contents. As you will have noticed, the editor has deliberately made no serious effort to write editorials on important issues, timely topics and other weighty matters. The experimental nature of these first issues made this practically impossible. Yet that does not mean that the newly appointed editor in chief will not see himself faced with that task.

The discussion of the Sermon on the Mount is also finished in this issue, bringing the matter of the Bible Outlines for the next season very concretely before the assembly. The Federation Board would do well to give this their immediate attention in order to present the Convention with some very definite advice. It will be too late to look for a subject and for an editor of the Bible Outlines after the Convention, especially if there is to be no delay in the appearance of the first issue next fall.

There is still sufficient material available on the Canons, which Rev. Hoeksema so willingly supplied during the past months, but if this material is to be used, the necessary arrangements must first be made.

As to all the other editors, so also the editor of the Book Reviews considers his work finished at the appearance of this last issue.

Moreover, if the Convention should so desire, the present contributors will have to be continued, and possibly others added. In this connection it could be added, that we should have more contributors from among the young people themselves. Would it not be well to add some of our capable young people on the list? And we should have a public forum, a department in which our young people can air their views on important issues under the supervision of the publication committee. Our societies might even desire an outlet in the paper for their contributions.

Finally, the present publication committee suggests that in the future all the work of publication be placed in the hands of the Federation Board. There are many things to be said in favor of such a move. First of all, it would centralize the work in one representative body. Secondly, the Federation Board is located, at least always in part, in Grand Rapids, where they can readily contact the printers at all times. As anyone can understand, it is very essential for the publication committee and the printers to be able to contact each other, even on short notice. During the past months the Board was always ready to serve the publication committee and thereby stood us in good stead. If the Federation should so decide, the Board can henceforth have full control of the paper, even to the extent of appointing editors, determining the contents, choosing the serial story, and deciding on any other relative matters.

In the meantime an inquiry is being made by the present committee to determine how many subscriptions can be expected for the coming year. Need it be said that we anticipate an even better periodical for next year? And we also expect all the societies of our denomination to get behind this venture with a one hundred percent subscription. If the response of our societies is at all favorable we see no reason why the club rate for nine issues cannot be kept down to one dollar, and possibly even less. You can help by favoring the committee with an immediate response of your full co-operation. The cause of our Protestant Reformed youth needs your continued and whole-hearted support.

We take this occasion to thank all the editors who so willingly and faithfully gave their services during these past months. Also the contributors for their part in adding to the interest with their timely and edifying contributions. We are sorry that some contributions had to be withheld for a few months because of lack of space. And no less do we thank the subscribers who gave us their confidence and support. But above all, we thank our Covenant God for giving us this invaluable guide.

In conclusion, the publication committee expresses its sincere appreciation for having been able to serve you during the past months. Willingly we acknowledge the deficiencies which marred our work, but are happy in the assurance that we have not labored in vain. We can readily say, “the pleasure was all ours”. And hereby we take our leave.

May God’s blessing continue to rest upon our youth and may that blessing also be experienced at our coming Convention.

C. H.

Contact with the Western League

Is still another matter to be brought to the attention of the delegates at the next Convention. A committee was appointed last year to investigate ways and means of establishing such a contact. What this committee has done with this
matters I do not know, but we can rest assured that they will have a report ready.

In the meantime some preliminary steps could be taken. Since the Western League is directly involved in this matter, they might appreciate the opportunity of having something to say about it. Therefore they could decide, either through an invitation extended to them from the Federation Board or upon their own initiative, to send *friendly delegates* to our next Convention in Oaklawn. The expense would not be exorbitant for them, especially if the delegates were appointed on the basis of a proportionate representation. What I have in mind is this: A society of ten members or less is allowed one delegate, a society of twenty or less two delegates, of thirty or less three delegates, and all over thirty, four delegates. Two cars could readily accommodate these delegates, so that the expense involved would be no obstacle, while the establishment of a more intimate relationship would be of benefit to all. And Oaklawn assures all of its guests of a hearty reception.

In this connection it might be well to introduce a relative matter. The remark has been made that our present system of delegating four members from each society might not prove to be practical in the future. Mainly two objections are raised. The one, that a society of fifty members has no more representation than a society of ten; which means, that, while each member of a small society has the opportunity of attending the Convention every two or three years, the members of a larger society have that opportunity but once in about ten years. The second objection is, that this present arrangement may even be an obstacle for our Western churches in joining the Federation, just because of the expenses involved. For example, eight delegates from California, four from Manhattan, and twenty-four from northwest Iowa and Minnesota would entail quite an expense upon the Federation each year.

Two solutions are offered. The one is, that as soon as the majority of our Western churches are included in the Federation, the delegation be cut down to two delegates from each society. The other solution is, that the Federation consider the propriety and feasibility of *proportionate representation*, allowing one delegate for every ten members, but never more than four delegates from a society. The matter is worth considering. Let's think it over.

We are all agreed that our annual Conventions are of lasting benefit to all of our young people. We have a common, holy cause: we live in serious times, and just because our denomination is not large we have a special need for one another and must stand shoulder to shoulder. The benefits derived go, first of all, to the delegates. But they extend also to the societies. And can but prove invaluable for all of our churches even in the future. The youth of today are the emerging Church of tomorrow.

C. H.

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**Correspondence with those in Service**

In response to an editorial appearing in the March issue of *BEACON LIGHTS* concerning correspondence with our boys who are in service, the Federation Board immediately sprang into action and gave this matter their consideration.

They decided that "for the present we advise other societies to follow the procedure now in force in the Young Men's Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, which is as follows:

1. Each man in service is recipient of one letter written by a member of the society. The order is determined by the roll, each member taking his turn to write as his name appears there.

2. Beacon Lights is sent at the expense of the society.

3. Local church bulletins are also frequently included."

The Board realizes that the turn of events in the future may force alterations in this plan. Especially in a congregation where a number of boys are called to service too many letters would have to be written each week to make it practical. In that case the society might decide to send a form letter to each one of the boys, appointing one each week to compose the letter and another to take care of the typing or writing out of the letter.

We gladly pass this advice on and are assured that all of our societies are more than willing to follow it up.

C. H.
Bible Outlines

OUTLINE XVII

Prayer, and the Golden Rule

FIRST WEEK OF MAY

MATT. 7:7-12 — “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth: and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask a stone, will he give him a serpent? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”

I. PRAYER, Vss. 7:11:

A. Connection:

What connection, if any, is there between these verses about asking and receiving, and the preceding as well as the succeeding verses? In reply to this question, it seems that Christ means to imply that to judge aright (vss. 1-5) and to exercise discrimination in the ministration of holy things (vs. 6) is possible only in the way of prayer. To persevere and to grow in the exercise of love to the neighbour demands persevering prayer.

B. The Exhortation Itself:

1. Ask — Asking implies a twofold consciousness. A consciousness of need, and a consciousness that only God can fulfill that need.

2. Seek — Seeking is asking plus earnest endeavor. One certainly, for example, cannot and may not ask God to teach him wisdom, or to help him to deliver him from temptation and deliberately seek it.

3. Knock — Knocking denotes perseverance in asking and seeking. One keeps on knocking until the door is opened. Christians must persevere in their prayers.

C. The Promise:

1. Such asking, seeking and knocking is not in vain. God answers it. Notice Prayer's Cer. that “given”, “find” and “opened” correspond to the words “ask”, “seek” and “knock”. Vs. 8 once more repeats the certainty of answer to prayer. No one asks, seeks or knocks in vain.

2. In vss. 8-11 the Saviour further emphasizes the certainty of prayer’s answer by an argument from the lesser to the greater. If the earthly father, who after all is evil, will give good gifts (bread and fish were the two main foods in Palestine) to his children, certainly then the heavenly Father will give good gifts to them that ask him.

QUESTIONS: Why cannot one expect to receive growth in grace without diligent use of the means of grace? Is it possible to grow by the means of grace without using them prayerfully? Why do vss. 9 and 10 speak of bread and fish? Is there anything in vs. 11 that teaches the “total depravity” of the natural man? Why does vs. 11 say that the Father will give good things “to them that ask him”?: why not rather, “to His children”? Why are not all petitions granted of God?

II. THE GOLDEN RULE, Vs. 12, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”

A. Notice the word “therefore”. This suggests a conclusion from the preceding. Undoubtedly it represents a practical summary of the second table of the law, of your duty to the neighbour of which the first eleven verses are speaking.

Therefore, duty to the neighbour of which the

However, I believe we should, also, not fail to see the connection between this verse and the preceding. If we ask we receive and then we can love the neighbor. Besides, if God grants us who are unworthy what we ask of Him, then it is the Christian’s duty out of thankfulness to God to deal with others as he wishes to be dealt with. Gratitude, and a life of gratitude ought to follow such a free reception of grace.

B. The Exhortation Itself. Plainly it is a brief, practical summary of our duty toward our
fellow men. As we, as Christians, desire to be treated, so we are to treat others.

C. "For this is the law and the prophets". By the law and the prophets we are to understand the Scriptures, the Old Testament which was the only part of the Whole Law. Scriptures in existence when Jesus preached this Sermon on the Mount. Note that Christ did not say that this so-called Golden rule is the whole law and the prophets. It most certainly does not represent the whole duty of man. Man has a duty toward God as well as toward men.

QUESTIONS: Is it possible for the unregenerate to observe the Golden Rule? Why does Jesus say "all things"; why not merely "many things"? Is it proper to teach observance of the Golden Rule without teaching the doctrines of sin and grace, as the Modernists do? We would not like Hindu missionaries among us, is it then right for us to send missionaries to labor among the Hindu's in India?

OUTLINE XVIII

Exhortation: To enter the Strait Gate and to beware of False Prophets

SECOND WEEK OF MAY

MATT. 7:13-20—Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into a fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

With vs. 13 a new and final section of the Sermon on the Mount begins. The first main section, Matt. 5:3-16, contained a description of the citizens of the kingdom themselves, of their blessedness and of their position in the world. The second main section, Matt. 5:17 to Matt. 7:12 described the righteousness of the kingdom as demanded by the law, properly interpreted, both in relation to God and to man. The third main section begins with vs. 13 and continues through vs. 27; it contains a solemn exhortation to enter the kingdom, it warns against false prophets, it emphasizes that not every one that says "Lord, Lord" shall enter the kingdom, and it concludes with the illustration of the two builders.

1. Enter the Strait Gate and the Narrow Way, vss. 13, 14:

   A. The Two Gates stand at the beginning of the way and not at the end. They open up to the way. Hence, to enter must be The Gate, taken as the conscious entrance here in this life. To enter the strait gate is figurative language to describe repentance and conversion from sin and evil to the living God and the righteousness of the kingdom. Such conversion is the evidence and fruit of regeneration.

   B. The Way. Not only the gate is strait, demanding as it does sincere repentance and humility with trust in Christ, but also the way of life that follows is narrow. A Christian must travel up-stream, against the current: he must daily deny himself and take up his cross and follow Jesus. He cannot go arm in arm with the world, and walk the narrow way. There is sacrifice, continual sacrifice to be made.

   C. The End. The narrow way leads to life. Already here below (to live apart from God is death, to live in fellowship with Him is life), but especially hereafter. But the broad way leads to destruction.

   D. The Travelers. "Many" go in at the wide gate and walk the broad way; the Travelers, majority and mass of mankind walk the way of perdition. "Few", compared to the many that go lost, enter the narrow gate.

   E. In view of the end of the two ways, how imperative it is to enter only the strait gate and the narrow way!
QUESTIONS: Why does Jesus speak of two and only two gates? Who speak of only one gate, one way and one end for all? Does present-day Christendom sufficiently emphasize the narrowness of the way and gate? In what sense is the "broad" way "broad"? How do you harmonize that we are here taught that "few" are saved, while Rev. 7:9 speaks of "a great multitude"? Is "destruction" the same as "annihilation"?

II. BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS, vss. 15-20

There always have been, and always will be, unto the end of the world, false prophets who seek to lead the church of God astray. Matt. 24:11 emphasizes that one of the signs of the times is the increase of false prophets in the world. Already today their number is legion. Think of such people as the modernist preachers, Aimee Semple McPherson, Father Divine, etc. etc. Their pernicious literature floods the markets, and their siren calls come to you into your homes over the radio. Christ describes them, and shows how they may be recognized.

A. Their Description:

1. What they actually are:
   a. False Prophets. They are prophets, i.e., ministers, "evangelists", professors of theology, etc. They often write a string of letters after their names. But they

   Who They Are. are none the less false prophets. They were never truly called of God to preach and teach, neither do they bring the Word of God. When they do use Scripture, they twist and contort it to suit their convenience and to fit their wicked purpose.

   b. Ravening wolves. Wolves are predatory animals. By stealth and craft they plunder the shepherd's flock. So, too, these

   Ravening Wolves. men, they lead men astray; if it were possible they would lead the very elect astray. They may be earnest, but it is the earnestness of Satan. They only destroy, and mislead.

2. How they come:
   a. Notice that Christ's words imply that they do come to you. Wherever the church is, there next to the line of prophecy is the line of false prophecy. As in Israel of old. They come to us through their literature, over the radio, and if they can they climb your pulpits.

   b. But they come in sheep's clothing. That is, as innocent, harmless, attractive, appealing leaders. They come as though sent by Christ, they use the Bible, they act as

   In Sheep's Clothing. They speak piously. Just exactly for that reason it is so necessary to be able to penetrate the mask. If they came as they really are, they could not threaten: but now because they come as angels of light, while they are ravening wolves, it is so necessary to beware. Otherwise you will realize that they are false teachers, and before you know it they will have robbed you of God and His Christ, of the Scriptures and of faith, and carried you unknowingly on the broad way that leadeth to destruction.

   B. Their Recognition, vss. 16-20:

   Christ answers the question: How can these false teachers be recognized? The answer is simply. By their fruits.

   1. The example is from nature. A tree always brings forth fruit according to its kind. A fig tree does not bear thistles.

   Fruit After His Kind. A vine bears grapes. An apple tree bears apples. A good tree bears good fruit, an evil tree evil fruit.

   So too it is with men. If their fruits are evil, then their heart and inmost being is evil. If their fruits are good, then their hearts are regenerated. Wicked men only bear evil fruit: unbelief, enmity, hatred, malice, sin.

   2. But what are the fruits of the false teachers by which they may be known. There are three possibilities: (a) Their own personal life and action betrays them: (b) The fruit of their preaching upon the congregation betrays them, because the congregation departs from the fear of God under their leadership: (c) Their preaching itself is the fruit that is evil, since it departs from the Word of God. Which of these three is meant? Personally, I believe the emphasis falls upon the third. Their doctrine itself betrays them. Thus Scripture always conceives of false prophets as teaching a false doctrine. cf. II Peter 2:13; 1 Jno. 4:1-3, etc. However, it stands to reason that also their lives will demonstrate worldliness, as will also be the fruit of their preaching in the congregation where they labor.

   3. Hence, to recognize false prophets, it is necessary to be acquainted with the truth, posi-
tively and negatively. Only thus can we recognize their in their true character.

QUESTIONS: Is earnestness a safe test to discern the false prophet from the true? Why do the false prophets come in sheep's clothing? The Christian is a good tree, but does he bring forth only good fruit? Does the carnal man bring forth only bad fruit? Are Arminian preachers false prophets? How can you prove that Fosdick, Preston Bradley, and their brood, are false prophets? Are the elect ever led astray by false prophets, fully and finally? Can the elect for a time be led astray by false prophets?

OUTLINE XIX

The Pious Ungodly

THIRD WEEK OF MAY

MATT. 7:21-23—"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

If one takes the church institute as it appears in this world at face value, how many, many enter the kingdom. If you take the church in its broadest sense, including the Reformed, Many Church Members. Lutheran, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Eastern Orthodox, and all the rest—how many are on the rolls of the church and thereby claim to be entering the kingdom. Multitudes in this nation call themselves by the name of Christ, multitudes in Europe and Asia and Africa. Multitudes throughout the world claim to be seeking the kingdom.

Are there then "few" saved? The answer given in vss. 21-23 is clear. The day of judgment shall reveal that not every one that saith "Lord, Lord" shall enter. Many will hear, "I never knew you". There are countless numbers of those who may fittingly be called: The Pious Ungodly.

A. Their Pious Appearance:

1. Although those of whom the verses speak are ungodly, they seem to be very godly and pious:

   a. They say, "Lord, Lord". The term must undoubtedly be taken as a brief summary of faith, as in the case of "Abba, Father". I Cor. 13:2 states that no one can say that "Lord, Lord". Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost. On the lips of the true church "Lord, Lord" implies two things: (1) First of all that the believer recognizes Christ as the Lord of His Church, the sovereign Head of the church who rules over all. (2) Secondly, that the believer thereby expresses communion, fellowship, with that Christ—not our own, but Christ's. So viewed it is emphatically necessary to say "Lord! Lord". But not every one that saith "Lord, Lord" shall enter. Many make profession of faith and take this term upon their lips, without truly believing in Christ. They appear to be pious, but it is merely a matter of appearance. Their life and works deny the confession of their lips completely.

   b. The text, however, emphasizes that these pious ungodly even abound in works. They do works, many of them. They prophesy and teach i.e., they are ministers, professors, Sunday School teachers, lay-workers, etc. They even cast out devils. Not the Devil; but the devils of drink and social disease, of war and sickness. They clean up the slums and gambling dens. They do wonderful works, and seek to improve the world. Think of the Modernists and their efforts.

2. From all this it is evident that we must think:

   a. First of all of the false prophets spoken of in the preceding verses. They may speak of the cross and of the resurrection, but they mean something wholly different from Scripture. They are ravening wolves, spiritually considered.

   b. Secondly, of their followers. Multitudes follow them, and seek them as their teachers. Their churches count among their numbers rich and influential men. All these are eager to be known as benefactors of mankind. They support the "social gospel" of the false prophets.

   c. Thirdly, also of all those who by reason of an external confession belong to the church, even in a certain sense conform to the life of the church, but do not really belong to God's people.

B. Their Real Character:

1. They do not do the will of the Father:
a. The will of the Father is in brief to believe in Christ; to humble ourselves before God, to cleave to God's Will. Christ as our only righteousness, and to walk in all good works out of gratitude.

b. These pious ungodly do not do God's will. They say "Lord, Lord" but they do not repent, they do not set their hope on Christ and Him alone, they do not walk in good works before God.

2. Their true character is also brought out by what they are introduced as saying in the last day (the judgment day). Naturally, Jesus does not mean to say that they actually Why They Do Works? of judgment; the language is figurative, to bring out their true character in bold relief. They say, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?' This must not be confused with the works which the believers do in Christ's name, i.e., through His power and strength and to His glory. As a matter of fact the translation "in thy name" is misleading. The little word "in" is not at all in the original; neither is it necessary to insert it; as a matter of fact its insertion destroys the meaning. It is proper and better to translate "to thy name" or "for thy name", in the sense of "to thy advantage", "for thy sake". In other words, these pious ungodly imply that they were laboring to help Christ bring His kingdom, that they did so much for Him! Furthermore, on this they base their right to enter the kingdom. On that ground that they had worked hard, that they had helped their community, upon that basis they wished to enter. And that, of course, can never be the basis upon which we enter the kingdom of God. It is the basis of works, which is a denial of Christ's finished work.

3. Hence, also vs. 23 calls them workers of iniquity. Jesus does not laud them, or speak of the good sinners do, but He calls them by the name by which they should be called.

C. Their Final Confusion:
1. "In that Day". This can only mean the final judgment day. when the goats Their End. shall be separated from the sheep, and when the kingdom of God will be purified of all the workers of iniquity.
2. "I never knew you". This means, "I never loved you", "I never confessed you before my Father", "I never had fellowship with you".

3. "Depart from me". The righteous remain with Christ, but the wicked have no place with Christ. They must depart into the place prepared for the Devil and his angels.

QUESTIONS: What is meant by the saying, "Lord, Lord"? Is it necessary to say this? Is the mere saying enough? From what motive do the pious ungodly do their good works? Do they actually cast out "devils"? Is it too strong to call them "workers of iniquity"? Can one know whether he truly is a child of God, and if so how? Do you think that there are as many external professors in orthodox churches as there are in modernist churches? What does it mean to do the will of the Father?

OUTLINE XX

The Two Builders

FOURTH WEEK OF MAY

MATT. 7:24-29—Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

The "therefore" suggests that this illustration is a conclusion based on the foregoing. In a sense it is based on the verses treated in the previous outline: in a more general way upon the entire Sermon.

A. The Two Builders:
1. Notice they both represent "hearers" of the Word. Hence, Jesus speaks Both Hearers. of those who either have heard in the past or still hear in the present the preaching of the Word. They
are well acquainted with the way of salvation. Jesus is speaking about people in the church, who know the way.

2. All men are builders. Every thought we think, every deed we do is a stone in the edifice of life we are raising. Every man is building a house, and he must stand or fall with the house he builds. No hearer of the Word fails to build.

3. But all men are not wise builders. Wisdom is not ignorance, neither is knowledge virtue. It is not true that if men only know the way, they will walk in it. Not at all.

Either Wise or Foolish Builders.

Wisdom is the ability to co-ordinate and regulate things, to choose the best means with a view to the best end. The wise farmer plants on time, cultivates on time, harvests on time, sells on time. The foolish farmer fails to take all these matters into consideration. The spiritually wise man reckons with God, his law and his Christ. He takes into account the future, while the foolish man only lives for the present.

4. Notice that Jesus again divides the hearers of the Word into two, and only two classes. They are either wise or foolish. They are wise if they reckon with Christ’s words: foolish if they fail to do so.

5. Notice that all depends upon the foundation. The houses Christ had in mind were undoubtedly the frail houses that were wholly dependent upon the Foundation. foundation, especially in case of the storm. Although the foundation upon which men are to build is essentially Christ, in this connection it means the recognition and the doing of God’s will. doing the righteousness of the kingdom, through the strength of Christ.

B. What Becomes of the Two Houses:

1. Notice, both houses are put to the test by the storm. The righteous and the wicked both will be tested and tried in the day of Christ’s final return.

2. The storm is the day of Judgment. The day, elsewhere called in Scripture, the day of thick darkness.

3. The house of the fool falls, simply because it has no foundation. The other stands, because it has a foundation. Everything depends upon the foundation; and the foundation is the doing of God’s will in Christ.

C. Conclusion: Vss. 28, 29:

QUESTIONS: Prove that knowledge is not virtue. What two different kinds of hearers are there? Are Christians ever guilty of hearing the Word without doing it? If so, in what sense? Why was the fall of the foolish man’s house great? What difference did Jesus’ audience recognize between His preaching and that of the scribes?

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Prayer In The Modern World

A columnist in a Los Angeles paper writes a very descriptive column about social evils of our day. To me he seems to be Victor Hugo writing a “Les Misérables” of our modern world. A short time ago he praised a letter written from England by a nineteen year old girl, who wrote of the terrors of living through a night of bombing. His praise was for her attitude and religious expressions in the letter. Let me quote a few paragraphs from this article:

“But what impressed me most was the terror, the prayers, the eventual resignation to God’s will.

And I wondered how many persons in these United States went down on their knees and thanked God for all the good things He has bestowed on them that day, and how many thanked God every morning for seeing them through the night, and asked that His will, not theirs, be done that day.

Outside of the cities of Soviet Russia, London, before the war, had the smallest per capita church attendance of any major city in Europe. But now things are different. People have virtually rushed, in agony, into the arms of God, knowing death might come at any moment, death from engines of destruction
they invented out of their old, blind worship of science.

. . . And may she tell us, in lectures and articles, of praying through the night to God, and at dawn thanking God, practices not very general in America, and scarcely ever mentioned in polite circles, or in American literature. . . .

But, of course, bombs have not fallen here yet."

This calls to our attention the lack of prayer in our day of science. And it shows the effect terror has on a populace. Some rush to God, claims the writer we quoted.

Yet we must be cautious in evaluating the present-day religious sentiment of people in such cities as London. It may very well be that people rush to churches and pray to their gods. that is, to their own conception of a god. Such religious sentiments may be compared to the religious fervor of the heathen tribes. Also among false religions there is a lack of zeal for the political gods, and political notions, and people must be whipped back to zeal and devotion.

Nevertheless, such talk causes us to contemplate the subject of prayer in the modern world. In the modern world, from all human vantage points, it seems as if prayer is out of step with modern social movements, world power, and that which is back of it all, science. It is true, it was always so from our finite, sinful point of view: but today as never before, it has been impressed upon us everywhere, in shops, in newspapers, and in literature, the foolishness of prayer. Not uncommon is it that one reared in a Christian family who has been taught to pray, first of all fails to pray when he begins to disregard the Christian habits given him in home, church, and in Christian school training. Before any dropping off of Christian life, there is, of course, the absence of true life in his heart. But the first act is the disregard of prayer. A need for prayer is not experienced, and the only prayer that he partakes in are the public prayers.

Such a condition cannot be changed. It is the falling away of those who are only outwardly in God's covenant, the Esaus of the church, who reveal themselves as Esaus already in their adolescence. It is not the purpose of this article to speak to Esaus.

Another condition in the lives of all of us, and especially in the lives of young men and women of our faith needs the admonition and explanation of Scripture. There is a condition in which each soul asks itself a question when it comes to years of discretion and self-reflection in connection with God's Word. We all have asked the question about the need of prayer, and about how we must pray. When we stop to think of God's will and counsel which is as unchangeable as God Himself, we ask, why pray? God's nature moves with such set motions as God has determined for it, and history too, according to Scripture, though it moves along as a rolling stream, yet irrevocably does it proceed according to the course mapped out and determined by God from eternity. If we are sick, what does prayer effect? If war wages, what does prayer do to bring about peace? If all things are determined by God, how must we pray? We would ask with the disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray". If we do ask with them, we have the same answer of Christ to us in the Lord's Prayer. That prayer is the example of true prayer and answers all our questions about prayer and God's counsel.

Our answer, then, will not be, as is so commonly expressed and implied, "We must pray to obtain something from the Lord in the way of material things, or material changes in conditions." The admonition. Pray without ceasing, is probably so explained, that we may cause God to hearken to our petition and grant our request, which are only pet hobbies or desires for which we are striving. The Lord's admonition to ask, to seek, and to knock with the promise of certain receiving, finding, and admittance, is then applied to all things. If we firmly believe, not doubting, the Lord will give whatsoever we ask. This statement of the Lord is repeated to prove the point that we must pray for prosperity, peace, unity, harmony, a good life in this world, and as we continue to do so in faith, we shall receive.

If we would so understand the blessed promise of our Saviour, we would be no different in our attitude toward God than a Christian Scientist, or a heathen, who also first squares himself with the moral and religious code of his god and then continues to press his requests by incessant invocations. That is not prayer, true prayer.

In an attempt to speak of prayer and also to maintain the Reformed emphasis upon God's counsel and sovereignty, some have created a difficulty by separating the two, by explaining that we cannot harmonize these two, and excusing themselves from further discussion with the baffling word, "mystery". The difficulty is created because prayer is explained as arising in man's
natural heart and not in the regenerated heart. God's answering such a prayer is explained as depending upon His free, gracious will at the moment of prayer. Then the difficulty is created because both the prayer and the answer are divorced from God's counsel. The thinking young Christian is thus with such a negative answer left to wander out in the cold of doubt and misgiving, and in danger of the thought that either there is no use to pray because of irrevocable decrees, or that the God who listens to all the personal requests without any regard to His own wisdom and decree is no God at all.

For the thinking Christian who listens attentively to the Word of God, there can be and is no such difficulty. God's decrees and will are everlasting, and according to His wisdom and good pleasure. His will is as unchangeable as God Himself. But His will is moved according to His divine being, which is almighty, allwise, holy, and good. The true prayers of the children of God are all fruits, gifts of God's grace which He bestows according to His will and good pleasure. Therefore these very prayers cannot be contrary to God's will. The Holy Spirit, God in our hearts, prays with us, for we know not for what we ought to pray. He, the Third Person, accompanies our prayers with groanings which cannot be uttered.

If, then, our prayers are the good works which God has ordained that we should walk in them, why is it necessary to pray? There is a necessity because throughout the Word of God there are repeated admonitions to God's people to pray. Jesus admonishes His disciples to watch and pray that they enter not into temptation. Peter in his epistles voices the same admonition of God. True people of God are always praying people. And if we ask about prayer in the modern world, we can point to the admonition of Jesus that was given when He spoke the parable of the unjust judge. His purpose with that parable was to tell us that we should always pray and not faint. It was precisely during His discourse on the last times, our modern world, in which He taught the necessity of constant prayer. The description was that there should be wars and rumors of war, earthquakes in divers places, a forgetting of God and His Word. In such times we live, and must pray.

Prayer is necessary, for thereby are we in communion with God, who thereby causes us to love His will and way with us. We who are called according to His purpose are given grace to open our mouths in praise and prayer, are drawn into perfect inner harmony with His will. In Psalm 73, God's child speaks, "It is good to be near unto God". Being near to God, we see reality from God's point of view instead of from man's finite, sinful position.

In prosperity and adversity, in war and in peace, in democracy and in totalitarianism, in the old order, and in the "new world order", pray for the coming of Christ and His Kingdom.

We, as people of God, must be near to God when bombs are falling, when revolutions are fomenting, when the Antichrist and the false prophets are arising—near to Him in prayer, near to His will and word, filled with gratitude and hope for our final redemption. That is the prayer of the Bride, the Church.—"Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly".

That is the only prayer in the modern world.

Rev. L. Doezema.

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**Plans for the '41 Convention of the P.R.Y.P.S.**

*As Prepared by the Host Committee.*

The 1941 Convention is to be held in Oaklawn, Illinois, with the Oaklawn Young People's Society as the Host Committee. Tentative dates have been set for August 21 and 22, 1941.

The banquet has been discussed in detail and accommodations have been arranged. The banquet is to take place on the second evening of our Convention. Tickets are to be sold as in the past and a program with speakers is in the process of arrangement.

The first evening of our Convention is to feature the Inspirational Address by Rev. Hoeksema on the Convention Theme: "THOROUGHLY EQUIPPED". On the day following various speakers will develop this subject, each from his own aspect. The subjects upon which each speak-
in the fall.

We would urge all the societies to appoint your delegates as soon as possible and immediately inform us of your appointees, both the names of the delegates and of their alternatives.

Watch the Church News for information concerning further developments!

Margaret Regnerus, Sec'y.
9100 Ridgeland Ave.
Oaklawn, Illinois.

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Book Review

In this last issue of "Beacon Lights" appearing this season, I will not give a review of any of the books which I have received for that purpose. My space is limited, due to other material which our Editor-in-chief desires to place so that such material need not wait through the summer months for the first issue of our magazine in the fall. However I will give a short list of the books which I have received to review, and which I also hope to review in the fall, the Lord willing, though I will merely list them now. This will allow me time during the summer months to read and digest some of these books, in order to be better able to review them later. Here then follows the list:

"ABRAHAM TO ALLENBY" by G. Frederick Owen. Published by the Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing House of Grand Rapids, Michigan. A historical sketch of Palestine for the Bible Student. Price of the New Popular Edition is now $1.50.


REV. L. VERMEER.
The People That Walked In Darkness

The prophet Isaiah, speaking by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, prophesied of the day when the Gentiles would have a part in God's salvation in the words, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." To us who are of Dutch-American extraction, the history of the spread of the Gospel over Europe until it reached the land of our forefathers is well-known. However the history of the preaching of the Gospel to other races and nations is not generally known in our circles. Therefore in this article we desire to acquaint you with the progress of the Word of God among the members of the yellow race: we have in view particularly the Korean nation.

Our writing about the Korean nation is prompted by the fact that for the past year we have been rather intimately acquainted with two Korean converts who are now in America preparing themselves in American theological schools for service in the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Korea.

The Korean nation is often called a "hermit nation". The reason for this is that it is located on a large peninsula extending from the mainland of Asia into the Pacific Ocean, and consequently it enjoys a somewhat secluded position in relation to the main body of the yellow race such as the Chinese and Mongolians. This peninsula is located east of China and northwest of Japan; it lies well within the north temperate zone and its climate is very much the same as ours.

The Korean people have a very old civilization. Conservative historians generally agree that this nation has had its own culture for three thousand years. During that entire period, with the exception of the feeble efforts of the Roman Catholic Church, they have been a people who walked in darkness in the fullest sense of the word. For thirty centuries this section of the yellow race was enslaved to the most rampant forms of paganism. They "changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man". Buddha and Confucious were their gods.

At the beginning of the present century, the nation lost its freedom to the Japanese. Previous to this time this proud people had never known the iron heel of the conqueror but had enjoyed their own government under a Korean emperor. The domination of Korea by Japan was not welcomed by the people. Even today, after almost thirty years of Nipponese rule, the nation is constantly seeking to remove the yoke which was placed upon them against their will.

The first missionary effort took place in 1832. It was through the efforts of the Netherlands Missionary Society that the Gospel was first brought to this country. The Netherlands Missionary Society sent a Prussian by the name of Charles Gutzlaf. His work was not very extensive. He was only able to stay in Korea secretly for two months. During this time, he confined his labors solely to the distribution of Bibles and tracts. There was no recognizable fruit upon these labors, nevertheless. Gutzlaf, a man of faith, expressed the confidence when he left Korea that God would use these feeble efforts to the establishment of His Church.

After the visit of Gutzlaf, no other Protestant missionary visited Korea for thirty-three years. This long silence was broken by the voice of Rev. R. J. Thomas, a Scotchman who was appointed by the London Missionary Society. He came to the Orient with his wife but when they reached Shanghai, he suffered the loss of Mrs. Thomas through death. He continued on to Korea alone and began his labors. After a short time he was forced to return to Shanghai but he later returned to Korea and it was upon his return that he became the first martyr for the Gospel in that land. Rev. Thomas was the victim of the murderous hatred of heathen cutthroats. Such is always the case with God's cause: it is through the blood of the cross that God redeemed His people and it also often pleases God by the blood of martyrs to establish His Church. So it was also with Rev. Thomas. Today, on the site of the murder of Rev. Thomas, Korean Christians have erected a church to the memory of this faithful witness.

The preaching of the Gospel in Korea was greatly expedited by a treaty made between the United States and Korea in 1882. While this treaty was mainly a commercial trade agreement, nevertheless it contained provisions for the preservation of the safety of American Missionaries in that land. It was after this treaty was signed that there was a considerable influx of American
Missionaries into the "hermit nation". The two most prominent organizations sponsoring this work were the boards of the Methodist Church (North) and the Presbyterian Church (North). These two groups of people co-operated and together translated and published the first Korean Bible. At that time there was a marked tendency to discard doctrinal principles.

It was the Presbyterians who were destined to win the majority of the new converts. The Word of God was proclaimed boldly and the work was not without the fruit of the Spirit. The number of converts increased steadily and in the year 1904 the number of converts increased on a scale comparable to the converts to the Jerusalem Church following Pentecost. Even as the establishment of the Church and the preaching of the Word brought severe persecution to the saints of the early Christian Church, so also the Korean Christians were often called upon to make great sacrifices. The Koreans have a practice of worshipping their ancestors and the introduction of Christianity caused many violent family disruptions because the converts would no longer indulge in ancestor worship.

The methods used by the pioneer missionaries were very good and very much in harmony with Scripture. First of all, they themselves were faithful, evangelical gentlemen. They were imbued with a spirit of sacrifice and a circumspect walk of life. This, of course, did much to impress the hearers of the Word with the seriousness of the Truth. Secondly, the missionaries emphasized the necessity of the newly established churches to be self-governed and self-supporting. The result has been that the Korean Church has developed its own spiritual leaders. All the churches established by various Presbyterian mission societies have united into one organization which is officially known as the Presbyterian Church of Korea. This church has its own theological seminary having 120 students who are preparing themselves for the ministry of the Word. In spite of the large number of students, there is a great dearth of ministers. The growth of the churches has far outstripped the ability to produce pastors. There are now almost 3500 Presbyterian Churches and they outnumber all the other Protestant Churches combined in the proportion of two to one. The largest single church includes some 3500 individual members.

The doctrinal basis of these churches is very similar to that of our churches. Their creeds are the Westminster Confession and the Westminster Catechism. These standards are generally acknowledged as being one of the best expressions of the truths taught by John Calvin. Due to the fact that the Korean churches are all very young, they have not had sufficient time as yet to develop in the field of Reformed truth. Notwithstanding they are keenly aware that sound doctrine is needed now to combat the forces of Modernism, Barthianism and Arminianism. In many ways the Korean leaders are instructing the new converts in the warfare which the children of light must wage in behalf of the truth of the Word of God.

The churches of Korea are facing a crisis at the present time. Since 1910 Korea has been under Japanese rule. The Japanese government considers its emperor to be divine and they have erected shrines throughout the land at which they have decreed the Koreans must worship the emperor. Quite naturally, this decree finds strong opposition in the Korean church. As a whole, the Christian Koreans are convinced that worship of the emperor is nothing less than blasphemy and idolatry and consequently they refuse to heed the demands of the Nipponese authorities. The government has taken strong measures to curb this opposition. For one thing the theological seminary mentioned above has been closed now for two years. In addition those who openly oppose this shrine worship in sermons or otherwise are cruelly persecuted and placed in jeopardy of their lives. Many Korean pastors have been forced to the shrine-worship by the Japanese. Those who refuse to bow the knee are placed in prison and prohibited from doing their customary pastoral work. The situation is very similar to the Nazi oppression of the Netherlands.

This persecution however has not been without a good effect. When churches enjoy such a rapid growth as that of the Korean churches in the past thirty years, there is always some chaff mixed with the wheat. The Lord is using the Japanese shrine-worship crisis as a fan to purge His floor. But we should not forget that we have a very definite responsibility in this matter. We must include these matters in our prayers. We must pray for the Korean brethren that they remain steadfast and unmoveable, that they shall receive the grace necessary to persevere unto the end, knowing that no one can take their crown. This in brief is the history of the people who walked in darkness but now have seen a great light.

Homer G. Kuiper.
It was a day late in April. A really beautiful day. Everyone remarked about the unusual weather Michigan was enjoying this Spring. It was wonderful to be alive on a day like this. One's heart would almost skip a beat with excitement and joy. And that refreshing breeze! A breeze that gently rustled through the trees as if it would arouse each branch individually to its task of re-clothing its bare limbs with leaves and blossoms. A breeze that brought to one's nostrils the sweet smells of earth, spaded and hoed in the anticipation of blooming American Beauties and delicate blue and white Morning Glories. A breeze that just tilted women's hats to an awkward angle and caused men to run for theirs with outstretched arms and embarrassed glances all around.

But this breeze did even more. Without the slightest sign of guilt this gentle April wind brought snatches of the most interesting conversation. Stirring tales that wind did tell and what could I do but listen!

The deep tones of men's voices mingled with those of cheerful little children's, reached my ears.

"But we have Christian Schools that teach our children Bible Stories every day. Why do we need a school of our own?" asked one, a bit impatiently.

"Need a school of our own?" I heard another male voice exclaim. "Why, my good man, don't you think it is necessary that our children are taught the truth in their most impressive years?"

"What do you mean, the 'truth', you mean doctrine?" responded the first voice, "What do children understand about doctrine anyway."

"To you the word doctrine probably means cold theological theories. But, doctrine really has a very practical meaning. Sound doctrine gives all glory to God and our children must learn that from the very beginning of their school years. When they open their History books they must see in it the unfolding of God's plan and how the cup of iniquity is gradually being filled, how God uses men as His tools for the salvation of the elect. And not only in their studies but in the extra curricula that takes such a large place in the educational system of today. That must be distinct from that of the other school systems."

"Songs like, 'Oh my Goodness, Gracious Rachael, what a grand world this would be', and so on, shall not be taught to children in our school", spoke a familiar voice which might belong to an aspirant to the new teaching staff, he spoke with such emphasis. "And no silly movies and comedies and plays that turn the children's heads.

And then another voice, "But think of the money it will take!"

"That surely can be no objection. Is not the Spiritual well-being of our children more important than anything else in life."

Suddenly the wind shifted. It turned a bit cooler, perhaps to counteract the words it bore which sanged with anger and indignation.

"I tell you, it is maddening to think that one man is upsetting the lives of everyone," it was the voice of a young man speaking.

"War is a horrible thing," answered another, who from his tone of voice, exercised a little better self-control, perhaps due to the fact that he hadn't received his "questionnaire" as yet.

"Horrible." remarked the first, "Think of the millions that are killed, think of the wounded and suffering, think of the starvation and sickness, the breaking up of homes and families. Things surely look miserable across the seas. And it won't be long before we are in it too. America is just walking around with a chip on its shoulder waiting for someone to knock it off. What do you think the draft is for? Why do you think she wants a standing army?"

A few moments of silence followed. I thought they had finished conversing. But, no, the voice of the first young man again reached my ear. But he continued in an entirely different tone, like a kettle that had boiled over and then subsided. It was the same voice, the same young man, but a different inner self that spoke.

"It may look dark, but there is a Light. There is a way out of this cave of darkness and misery. Only we don't always see it so clearly. After all, the 'red horse' is not running wild!"

I heard no more. Again the wind had
shifted. And, oh, what a heedless wind, it cared not where it eavesdropped. What now!

"Have you heard," exclaimed a rather flippant young feminine voice, "someone has started a Marriage Bureau on the East End."

"How ridiculous," retorted another.

"I think it is a splendid idea," remarked a third. I surmised she must be over thirty-five.

"How do you go about it?" asked another interested party.

"Well, it is also to be an employment service. You merely put in your request for whatever you want, a carpenter, a stenographer, a husband or a wife. And its to be run by a minister!"

And that was all of that. I shuddered at the thought. Fancy a Dorothy Dix column in the Beacon Lights! Ah! The wind was at it again. It brought me the mellow ring of a church bell, the sorrowful note of a funeral dirge. One minute it seemed to laugh, the next it groaned in agony.

There are so many things in the air, thought I, so many disturbing things. Sorrow and sadness, pleasure and pain all seem mingled together. Problems of all sizes and shapes loom up before us constantly. War and bloodshed rages all around us and in the midst of it all, the Love-Lorn always have their age old difficulties to solve.

I stood still for a moment, and listened:

The Wind! It was whistling its own tune now. A joyful song of gratitude. It cleared my mind and filled my heart with thanksgiving. Was there any problem too great to be solved, any fear too terrifying to be stilled by the words:

"In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the World."

Alice Reitsma.

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**Announcing....**

THE THIRD ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUNG PEOPLE'S FEDERATION.

**When?** —
AUGUST 21-22.

**Where?** —
OAK LAWN, ILLINOIS.

**Who?** —
ALL PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUNG PEOPLE.

**Topic....**
KEY-NOTING SPEECH BY REV. H. HOEKSEMA ON THE THEME:
"THOROUGHLY EQUIPPED"

**Activities....**
THE HOST COMMITTEE OF OAK LAWN HAS ARRANGED A FINE PROGRAM INCLUDING AN INSPIRATIONAL MEETING AND AN OUTDOOR RALLY.

*Watch the Church News For Further Developments*