Post Convention Issue

"Time what is time? answer me, what is time?"

OCTOBER - 1949
BEACON LIGHTS

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All material for publication should be addressed to Mr. Albert Heemstra, 956 Baxter St., S. E., Grand Rapids 6, Michigan.

All subscribers outside of Grand Rapids are asked to send their subscription dues to Miss Mae Bylsma, 729 Delaware S. E., Grand Rapids 7, Michigan.

All subscribers living in Grand Rapids are asked to send their subscription dues to Thelma Jonker, 1210 Wealthy St., S. E., Grand Rapids 6, Michigan.

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CONVENTION ADDRESS

Redeeming The Time - It's Meaning

REV. H. HOEKSEMA
Grand Rapids, Mich.

At the Inspirational Mass meeting, the first meeting of our recent Convention held in Iowa, we were privileged to have the Rev. H. Hoeksema speak to us briefly on the theme “Redeeming the Time—Its Meaning”. He began with these words: “Mr. chairman, my dear young people of the Convention, and friends who have gathered with us tonight, I must first of all make a confession and the confession is that the last few days, and already for some time, I did not feel as if I could speak tonight. But when I see you here, I cannot but take courage, and I believe, that the Lord will sustain and help me to say what I have to say in connection with the theme of our Convention.”

Rev. Hoeksema then pointed out that the words of our theme have been taken from Eph. 5:14-18, where the apostle Paul admonishes the people of God to work not as fools, but as wise men, and adds, “re redeeming the time for the days are evil”. We must notice that the word redeeming may also be translated, “to buy out.” We must buy out the time, for the days are evil. The ungodly also buy out the time. They buy out the time in worldly amusements and the lusts of the flesh. However, the Christian meaning of buying out the time is that we serve the living God with all our heart, and soul, and strength in the fulness of every moment. Rev. Hoeksema then spoke to us on “Serving God In Time,” and we noticed in the first place the meaning of serving the Lord; in the second place, to serve the Lord and time; and finally to serve the Lord in time.

We can only serve the Lord officially. It is only when He appoints us to serve Him; when He gives us the privilege to serve him; when He enables us to serve Him by His grace; when He gives the delight to serve Him, that we can fulfill the obligation of serving the Lord. By serving the Lord officially, we serve Him
as prophets to glorify Him, even as He gives us the knowledge; as priests to love Him with all our heart, soul and strength; and as kings to rule over all things subject to His hand in His name. To broaden out this idea, we must notice that to serve the Lord implies four things: the MAY, the CAN, the WILL, and the MUST.

It is only the people of God who may serve the living God. Through sin we lost the right to serve God. It is only in Christ that the people of God have the privilege to serve the living God. The ungodly do not have the right to serve God. We must look upon that serving of God in all our life as a privilege. But that isn't all. The official service of God also implies the can—the ability to serve God. The ungodly sinner not only may not serve God, but he cannot. Just as in Christ we have the may so in Christ we have the can. In Christ and through the Spirit of Christ, we are regenerated—made willing to serve the living God. The official service of God also implies the delight to serve Him, and of course, the must. It is certainly true of all men that they are obliged to serve the living God. In Christ, for the people of God, the must becomes a delight so that we love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and strength. We have here the covenant conception, so that God is the friend of His people whom He has chosen and He makes them His friends by the power of His grace. That covenant relation God establishes, absolutely unconditionally. This the baptism form makes very plain where it says: "God the Father makes an eternal covenant of grace with us and adopts us for His children and heirs, and therefore, will avert all evil or turn it to our profit." We as natural moral creatures have no part in establishing the covenant. We merely receive the covenant of God and then forsake the world, crucify our old nature and walk in a new and holy life in the service of God. As was pointed out by the speaker in his first point, the meaning of redeeming the time is to serve the living God with all our heart, soul, and strength, because He makes us His friends in Jesus Christ our Lord, and bestows upon us the MAY, the CAN, and the WILL.

What does time have to do with the service of the living God? Time is a very great mystery. A certain poet, after being blind for a long time, when he received his sight, broke out with these
words: “Time—what is time? Highest of the heaven, deepest of the sea—answer me, what is time?” Suppose for a moment that it were possible to have everything stop moving all of a sudden. That would be the end of time. Death, then, is the end of time. Time is change. Therefore, there is no time in God. God is unchangeable. According to Ecclesiastes 3 there is a time for everything: “For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted: a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak: a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.”

Youth is a peculiar time. The time of youth is the time of hope in every respect. You hope to do this and you hope to do that. Youth is the God-given time to choose whom you will serve—“Choose you this day whom ye will serve.” Youth is also a time of reflection. In our childhood days we are led by father and mother. When we become young men and young women we begin to reflect what we have been taught. Our reflection must be guided. That is a good reason why we should have our societies to study the Word of God. The time of youth is also a time of temptation. The devil doesn’t care much about old people. Youth is, therefore, the temptation of the world. Shall we then dilly-dally around with the time God has given us in youth? God forbid! Shall we perhaps divide the time so we can be in the movies during the week and try to serve the living God on the Sabbath day? Or shall we buy out the time as the world does? God forbid! Buying out the time for our Protestant Reformed young people means that we use all our strength and power to flee from the temptations and serve the living God.

“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, before the evil days come. and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.”—Ecclesiastes 12:1.

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**In This Issue . . . .**

for your reading pleasure and spiritual enjoyment.

Summaries of Convention Speeches
 Essays and Debates

Convention Highlights, Reports and Impressions

Bible Outlines, Book Review, Important Announcements

“REDEEM THE TIME”
Reformation Day

The end of the month of October is distinguished, among other things, for the observance by churches with Reformed or Lutheran backgrounds of Reformation Day, a day marking the attack of Luther upon the evils of the Romish church. The history made by Luther and the Protestant churches is well known to every school boy and girl and the profound consequences of the Reformation are recognized by the believer and unbeliever alike.

On Reformation Day it is often customary to recall the difficulties that confronted the Reformers, the tremendous power of a carnally minded apostate church and the subsequent events which clearly showed how God deals with His people and keeps and preserves His cause. Indeed the history of the Reformation is soul stirring to every child of God and a reminder of the events of the past can very well serve as a guide and source of assurance for the future.

We believe, however, that it would indeed be a sad thing if we were to conceive of the Reformation as something confined to the dim past, as something which took place about four hundred years ago, and is no longer of importance for this day and age. People of sound Reformed background look at this matter differently. We should really view the reformation of the church as a continuous process and that in a sense Reformation Day is always at hand for the church of Jesus Christ.

H. G. K.

A Change

Each season of the publication of Beacon Lights usually sees some changes in our staff and contributors. We are sorry to say that the department “Christian Living” will no longer be supplied by Rev. R. Veldman. Due to increased responsibilities in other phases of our church life, Rev. Veldman asked to be released from the Beacon Lights staff.

We cannot as yet announce a successor to Rev. Veldman but we want to acknowledge his work in Beacon Lights for the past several years and thank him for his many interesting and timely contributions to the welfare of Protestant Reformed youth.

We are happy to announce that we have an additional assistant editor, Mr. Al Heemstra of Grand Rapids, Mich. We consider him an asset to the staff. We are certain his energy, creative thinking and enthusiasm will have a beneficial effect on the publication of Beacon Lights.

H. G. K.
Take A Bow
PELLA and OSKALOOSA

Herewith we present in tribute to you, our Hosts for 1949, brief but representative impressions which have come to us from those who attended the 9th Annual P. R. Y. P. Convention which was held in your fair State. Along with the Tall corn and gold-plated Capital Dome we'll always remember Iowa as the place that uses a jumbo-size Welcome mat.

To all Pella and Oskaloosa Society members we extend our sincere appreciation for your thoughtfulness and your energetic efforts which helped so much to give us a truly outstanding time of fellowship and inspiration.

* * *

The program was well arranged and carried out ... much spiritual gain from our timely theme.—K. K.
David Society, Fuller Ave.

* * *

Truly profitable addresses ... the best convention we ever attended.
Randolph Junior Bible League.

* * *

Timely and inspiring essays ....
—D. M.
Y. M.'s, Fuller Ave.

* * *

I came spiritually enriched ...—M. K.
Hope, Grand Rapids.

Really worthwhile ... we were spurred on to greater zeal ... enjoyed Rev. Kok's pictures of the Netherlands.—E. K.
Second Church. Grand Rapids.

* * *

A well worked-out theme ...—H. I.
Oak Lawn. Ill.

* * *

The finest convention we've ever attended ... Iowa hospitality was excellent.—C. D. H.
Ruth Society. Fourth Church.
Grand Rapids.

* * *

The trip was fun ... the devotional periods were very proper and beneficial.
—M. V. W.
David Society, Fuller Ave.

* * *

Young Men's Society. Fuller Ave.
The convention gave new pep to smaller societies ...—P.D.B.
Edgerton, Minn.

* * *

Pella and Oskaloosa did a wonderful job ... the convention was a big success.—E. R.
Y. P. S. Oak Lawn, Ill.
The Convention Story In Pictures

Registration — every delegate and visitor needs a badge — Emily works her typewriter — Welcome — Welcome — old friends meet — Is that Ernie with his finger in his cheek?

7:00 A.M. — every seat taken — laughter — happy-hearted young folk — time for devotional singing — Chicago — Mississippi River — "Iowa Bound!"

Lunch time on the lawn — some ministers rate three buns — sociability . . .
time out
for a breath of air.
Montana meets Sioux Center

Wedne day. 4:00 P.M.—room
for a few more?
Outing — Wiener Roast —
Swimming — Games — Dis-
cussion Groups . . .

My Word sheds light upon my
truth . . . Four-part singing—
director, Al Heemstra.
Chairman, Rev. Kok . . . .
Higher Education... Yes—
Time... No—impossible in
godless institutions...

Oskaloosa Church auditorium
—filled to capacity — When.
brethren in the Lord...

Legitimate amusements... can we? — and Redeem the
Time?...
Kletzing College... gather on college steps—cameras—
Click!... line up, boys—
Dinner is being served!...

Banquet Hall...
Chicken ala Corn...
Bones for Rev. Howerzy!—
Apple Pie...
Thank You's for the Ladies!

Singing—Musical numbers—
Speech—Introduction of new Federation Board...
Redeeming The Time - The Manner

Rev. A. Petter — Orange City, Iowa

The manner of redeeming the time is to buy out our opportunities. What is our calling? We must honor and glorify God. We must serve God according to our nature. A tree and a bird glorify God. We are different. We have a calling to honor and glorify God as servants and children. The son understands the father because he is like him. There is the sympathy and participation of sonship. That is why Christ is the perfect Servant. We must love God and express to Him that He is our all in all. In everything we do or say we must show what the Father is like.

The Bible tells us that in order to be a perfect son we must put on the Lord Jesus Christ. We must put off the old man in which we are born, sin and disobedience, and draw on, over the creature frame, the Christ. He makes us partakers. We must always be found in Him—not in ourselves. People should say when they have talked with us, "I have seen the Christ". In Acts 4:13 it is said of Peter and John that the Sanhedrin took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Paul's great goal was that he would be found in Christ. He does not want us to say anything about Paul, but that we have met with a reflection of Christ.

Sometimes we meet people who are on fire for the Lord. We can learn from them. They want to bring to the foreground that the Lord is so good. We see this often in old people. The ideal is that this attitude begins earlier, that it is seen in the natural expression of life. It must not become self-righteousness. The world is full of doing good. It boasts about its good works and material gifts. But we must bring Christ. Love is wise. It does not boast or act unseemly. But carefully and in a retiring way we must prize the testimony of Christ.

How can young people do this? We must buy out our opportunities. Time is a carrier belt that carries the bargains. The picture is always moving—not standing still. God is endless and His virtues are endless. It takes a variety of people to display them. God has spread His church over all the world. For these different kinds of people He has millions.
of tasks to perform. God has prepared the works for us. We must pick them out and display them. We are so awkward—not grabbing opportunities quickly. It is not possible for us to do this in ourselves, so we must put on the Lord Jesus Christ. We are created unto good works that God has ordained, and we must be ready by His power. The Bible gives us the prescription. It implies that we live in prayer. How can we start a day without asking God for eyes to understand? From-seeking, carnal creatures, we must become like Christ.

For young people it means that we must not first think how we can make the most money, but that we want to be found in Christ. We must know what kind of buying we can do best. God has given us the natural gifts. The main motivation must be to be a spiritual bargain hunter. We begin with nothing. We have no gifts in ourselves. Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world. The times are ours! They are lengthened or shortened for the elect's sake.

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BEACON LIGHTS FUND

Oak Lawn Y. P. Society ..................$ 9.50
Ladies Aid (Bellflower, Calif.) ...... 10.00
Miscellaneous ............................. 1.00

Send your gift or donation to Thelma Jonker. 1210 Wealthy St., S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan.

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THE RIGHT TIME

A wealthy man had a collection of 40 sundials. He kept them on the walls and in cabinets in his study. All were perfect, but none could tell the right time. They were out of the sunshine. Your life will tell the right time if it is basking in the light of the Son of Righteousness. Don't be a specimen of what can be. Be shining tellers of what is.

—The Church Herald.

— o —

Calvin's great enemy, Arminius, said of him, "He excels beyond comparison in the interpretation of Scripture, and his commentaries ought to be more highly valued than all that is handed down to us by the Library of the Fathers.

—Missionary Monthly.

— o —

Carry an appetite to God's house and you will be fed. A notable preacher said: "The hearer sometimes complains, 'there was no food for my soul,' when the truth is, there was no soul for the food."

— o —

God put the church in the world, and Satan seeks to put the world in the church.

— o —

"Great opportunities come to those who make use of small ones."
The Convention Steering Committee Writes

The 1949 Convention is over. We feel we have accomplished a big event in the lives of all our young people, especially those of us who were charged with the responsibility of being Hosts to so many of our friends and acquaintances from all parts of the country.

We feel the Convention was a big success, and we may perhaps be justifiably proud of this. for this was the first convention of our Federation ever held in Iowa. We very much enjoyed our work as hosts to all of you. The details and work connected with this sort of thing take time and effort to be sure. Fran Dykstra referred to us as ‘busy-bees’ and we certainly were.

We recall the notice published in Beacon Lights stating that Montana would not be the site of our convention this year. The announcement also carried the statement ‘. . . have courage, maybe Iowa will invite us’. This little suggestion was enough to excite us and set us to wondering.

On March 27 it became definite that Pella and Oskaloosa could arrange to act as joint hosts and by the second week in April plans were well under way. A combined meeting of our two societies had been held earlier and the convention theme decided upon. Now the Steering Committee, consisting of five members from Pella and five members from Oskaloosa, were ready to carry out the details, many of them still unknown at that time. It took six committee meetings and four combined society meetings to arrange and plan for everything from lodging to meals, from books to badges.

We were certainly amazed to see so many young people get off that bus Monday night. It seemed for a time that there were many more than we had planned for, but after some confusion everyone was settled in their lodgings in either Pella or Oskaloosa and the Convention was at last ready to get under way.

Convention time is always a time for renewing old acquaintances and of making new friends. The debates, round-table discussions and convention speeches are now history. Our prayer is that the Lord our God will enable us by His grace to "Redeem the Time" in the way made plain to us in our Convention of 1949.

We wish to say again that the pleasure was all ours in being able to act as hosts to our Federation friends. We thank our God for giving us the opportunity and the willingness to serve Him in this way.

The Steering Committee,
Emily Langstraat, Sec’y.

A SOCIAL PROBLEM YOU WOULD LIKE DISCUSSED?

Send It To:

SCHU L E R: —
c-o Doorn Printing Co.
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Grand Rapids, Mich.
Redeeming The Time - The Urgency

Rev. J. Van Weelden — Sioux Center, Iowa

Rev. J. Van Weelden introduced his subject by reviewing the manner in which we redeem the time as found in Rom. 12:1, 2. We as youth do not always realize the seriousness of this calling, and it is not easy for us as youth to find the right and best way. Over against this, we must live only out of faith.

The speaker developed his topic in this manner:

WHY IS IT URGENT THAT WE REDEEM THE TIME?

1. The Urgency For Redeeming The Time.
2. The Reasons Why We Must Hasten.
3. What Our Attitude Should Be Over Against The Calling To Redeem The Time.

1. Urgency implies a need for haste. A great haste. No time for tarrying in any way. It is necessary and highly important that we strain ourselves to the utmost to grasp all the opportunities; that we strive with all that is in us to buy out the time in every way that is possible. For we have a great fight against the powers of sin who seek to destroy the kingdom of God.

God has called us to this fight. It is a matter of heaven or hell, life or death. We have an absolute must to redeem the time. Yet we need not worry about Satan. God is sovereign and Satan but a tool in God's hand. God will not let His cause be lost. Our church stands firm in this belief. But we still have an urgency and responsibility. God's sovereignty accentuates man's responsibility. We must never use God's sovereignty as an excuse for laziness. We should not be careless, but should diligently obey God's command to buy out the time with haste.

In this we must be co-laborers with God. We also have something to do. God works in us to will and to do His good pleasure, but we work out our own salvation. We have no license to be lazy because God's sovereignty itself demands of us that we do work out our own salvation. When God commands us to do something, we must obey and obey immediately. As young people we should not feel we can wait till we are older. Also in the days of our youth we must redeem the time.

2. Why must we hasten to redeem the time? The answer is clearly found in Eph. 5:16, “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” We must not be misled. The day in itself is good. The Psalmist teaches that the day is good. Therefore the day can only be evil thus: the world's oppression against the church. When Paul wrote the epistle to the Ephesians, the church was suffering great persecution. Satan had the children of men in bondage. Now also the days are evil. Satan again holds sway. Evil and wickedness are rampant. Satan is using
every means at his command to destroy the Word of God. The development of sin is faster than ever. The cup of iniquity is filling fast. God's revelation has reached almost the entire world, but the church is smaller than ever before. We must never underestimate the power of the devil.

This wickedness naturally effects the church because the church is still in the world. It effects youth more because youth has no settled and stable ideas.

But we as youth must not look at others but at ourselves. We also are guilty of attending the movie, of making some sports our god. We are also guilty of materialism. Satan puts a desire in us to constantly want more of earthly things and less of God.

Persecution has already started in some places, and it is not impossible that the world will very shortly turn against us too. The time may not be too far off that we might be compelled to make the choice of the union or starvation, of the mark of the beast or the consequences of refusing it. The times are evil and wickedness is increasing. We live in that world and therefore it is urgent to buy out the time with haste.

3. We should therefore live a life of sanctification. We should put off the old man of sin, and put on the armour of God to resist the attacks of Satan.

We have a battle to fight, a race to win. We should not lay down our cross, but be sober and vigilant. The world should know that we are fighting the battle of Christ. The world should see in us that we are running the race of God.

Yet we cannot do this of ourselves. We must receive power from God and have dependence on him. In order to have this power, we must spend much time in communion with God. Only by prayer will we receive strength to win the race, to be victorious over our foes in the battle, to raise our cross to God and say, "By thy grace have we conquered". And even now we have that blessed assurance that we are more than conquerors.

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WANT LIGHT ON SOME SCRIPTURAL PASSAGE?
Get an answer NOW!
Write to:
QUESTION BOX
A regular Beacon Lights Feature!
LESSON 1.

"Jesus Creates the Setting of Lazarus' Resurrection"

(John 11:1-17)

General conditions at this time.

Radical changes have taken place during the last few months. The multitudes that first followed Jesus gradually leave Him. The reason for this is that the Word of God, Jesus Christ, is always displeasing to the flesh. In words and parables Jesus had uttered stinging rebukes and terrible condemnations. But things didn't stand still. Instead of a following He is now beginning to meet opposition. Many begin to hate Him. Therefore they reject Him in Jerusalem according to John 5 and in Galilee according to John 6. They even send men to catch Him in His words, come with difficult and tricky questions that they may expose Him in the eyes of the public and be able to accuse Him before Pilate or according to their own law. Think of the questions in re tribute money, the rich young man, re divorce, the authority of cleansing the temple. But, according to man's calculations, if no more would happen, things might still turn out all right. No doubt this was the hope of the disciples. But Jesus, they think, is asking for trouble. He deliberately goes to Jerusalem again, at every occasion condemns sin and sinners, and never in any way assumes an attitude of compromise. And the result of it all? He must die. To this conclusion the Jews come after Lazarus has been raised. And so in the eyes of His followers this act must have seemed foolish, or at least the miracle that spelled His doom. If only it hadn't happened.

But Jesus has no failures. Jesus' transfiguration explains it. "And His face was set towards Jerusalem", Luke 9:51. This means that now Jesus will go the way of the cross, and even prepare all conditions for it. Therefore He is never the victim of circumstances, no, He controls all things. But before He will go the way of the cross it must become thoroughly plain to all that He is the Son of God, the living One. Therefore Lazarus must be raised. But on account of it and therefore through it His own believe, but the Jew's hatred is brought to a climax, seeing that they are losing the battle with Jesus, when more people follow Him. So now He must be killed. Hence, through this miracle Jesus is also preparing the Jews to crucify Him. He always controls all things. In this light we must read John 11. This miracle certainly is the climax of all His wonders. Not only because of the time in which it is performed, but also the miracle itself. First of all it was a resurrection from the dead, but
notice that Jairus’ daughter was still in the home, the Widow’s son on the way to the grave, but Lazarus’ body is already decaying in the grave.

Jesus waits until Lazarus is dead: vs. 1-6.

The first verses tell us about the characters involved, also that they were friends of Jesus, in fact intimate friends. No wonder that they go to Jesus when their beloved brother is ill. ‘He whom thou lovest is sick”. Notice the approach. But this sickness is not unto death, says Jesus, i.e., its final result and outcome is not death. That is true of our sicknesses. They bring us into that permanent state of death. Lazarus must die that the Lord may perform this mighty wonder.

Vs. 5 speaks of Jesus’ attitude toward them. He loved them. And yet He abode there for two more days. Love, we should remember, is not merely interested in another’s temporal and physical welfare. But true love is first of all interested in one’s eternal, spiritual welfare. If we love each other we are interested first of all in each other’s salvation. Jesus delays out of love.

Questions: Is it all right for a minister to have special friends, since Jesus also had them? How can we gather from vs. 3 that their conception of Jesus’ love for them is still superficial? Was this request in itself wrong?

The Disciples Protest: vss. 7-17.

No wonder that they do. They see the situation only with a physical eye. And according to that Jesus is making a big mistake. It seems so foolish to them. Isn’t he looking for trouble? They are dreadfully afraid. Hence, they deliver a protest. But it is the devil who so tries to detain Him, tempting Him. However, Christ is complete master of the situation and the devil can again leave in utter defeat. The Son of God must be glorified, through the raising of Lazarus and the awful cross.

Questions: How can Jesus say that Lazarus, though dead, is sleeping? What is the theory of soul-sleep? Where do you suppose Lazarus’ soul was during these few days? What do you think of Thomas?

* * * * *

LESSON II

“The Immediate Purpose of Raising Lazarus”

(John 11:18-32)

The Bereaved Sisters; vss. 18-21 & 28-32.

First we are told that the home of the sisters was the scene of many Jews who came from Jerusalem to pay visits of sympathy and condolence. Such lasted seven days. The fact that many Jews from the capital felt constrained (for they must have known that Martha, etc. were intimate friends of Jesus whom they hated) to pay these visits to the sisters in Bethany is evidence of the prominence of the family.

How Martha knows that Jesus is near we are not told. Jesus surely didn’t make a public entrance, with His disciples.
Perhaps Martha is told by someone that Jesus has come. Mary, not knowing about this, remains in the house. But both as soon as they hear that the beloved Master has come hasten to see Him. And both speak the same language: “O if only He had been there before, their brother would not have died. How anxious those days must have been and how they must have looked for Him and expected Him time and again. Had He not cured thousands of others? Surely He would have done the same with one whom He loved. But all was in vain and their brother died. And now he was in the grave already for four days. With the process of decay having set in he surely could not be raised now anymore. It’s too late now. This is the proper setting for the miracle.

They almost accuse Jesus of having been unfaithful, failing to understand that they had been unfaithful and even now fail to understand Him. A Saviour with a dead brother means so little to them, but a Saviour restoring an ill brother to health would mean everything to them. In other words they seek a Saviour, and “have one” only for this life. But now this means nothing to them. No wonder, for so it will always be. The only thing that troubles them is the death of their brother, while they miss the one thing that is really necessary, and that one thing is the Christ.

Questions: Why was the thought of a resurrection now far from their minds? Are Mary’s and Martha’s ideas characteristic of the common conception of an earthly kingdom of Christ? What does I Cor. 15:19 mean? How do we still find the same ideas prevalent in our day?

Jesus Is the Resurrection and the Life: vss. 22-27.

In heart and mind the sisters were at the grave of their beloved brother, not with Jesus. To be sure, Martha believes that some day he shall arise, and also that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God. But this truth was at present nothing more than a doctrinal confession. Sure some day there shall be a resurrection. But for today they have nothing to be comforted with. Their comfort lay on a distant shore, far out of reach of their present need.

Therefore Jesus will teach them this very important lesson. “I am the resurrection”. He is not merely able to resurrect, but He is such. It means that Christ and the resurrection are identical. Therefore, if one has Christ then in principle he is already raised. Now, today, you have the victory over death and the grave, and you live. “He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” He will die physically, but never as the wicked do, suffering eternal, spiritual death in hell fire. Even his physical death is different, it is but a phase of death. It is but a returning to dust of this old body in order that it may also be raised again in the final day. For him that believes in Christ this death is but a passing through, from this life into that one. He never dies, for believing in Christ he lives now, today, and unto eternity. Consequently Martha and Mary can now, by believing in Christ have life, and with it
peace and joy and comfort. Their thoughts and hearts must be focused on the Christ and on nothing else.

Questions: How are we, too, often guilty of doing the same things Mary and Martha did? Why do we do such?

* * * * *

LESSON III

"Lazarus Raised From The Dead"

(John 11:33-44)

Satirical Jews and a Weeping Jesus: vss. 33-38.

The word for crying, used here, denotes loud, audible weeping. So Mary cries, being overwhelmed with sorrow at the grave of her brother. But also the Jews who have come to console her and her sister. Thereupon we read that Jesus groans in the spirit and is troubled. Further that He weeps. With this statement of John 11:35 we are all acquainted. But what does it mean? Why did Jesus cry? Undoubtedly this action of Jesus is and has been grossly misinterpreted. Commonly people appeal to this passage to show what a loving and sympathetic man Jesus is. Such a loving Saviour we have. But this certainly is not the meaning of this passage, the very opposite is true, for Jesus is filled with holy anger. Others explain that here He sees before Him the curse of Paradise, and therefore cries. For the correct interpretation let us notice the following: 1. That the one purpose of this miracle is to show the glory of God, vss. 4, 20 in and through Him as the Son of God. 2. That Jesus groaned in the spirit and was troubled, which literally reads that He was indignant in the spirit and shook Himself. That He shook Himself means that He restrained His indignation, and the only outward sign was the shaking. 3. That this He does when He sees Mary sobbing and the Jews (who were very hostile towards Him, see the previous and the subsequent words) with her. Also when they ask, vs. 37, whether Jesus could not have prevented Lazarus' death. And the implication is that He couldn't have. 4. That Jesus could not have been filled with holy anger over against Mary, even though she doesn't believe in Him now as the resurrection and the life. No, when He sees these unbelieving and hostile Jews weeping (audibly) with her, He groans in the spirit. 5. And this they do in the presence of Him who says that He is the resurrection and the life, the very Son of God. 6. Hence, it is devilish satire on their part, pure mockery. And Jesus is filled with holy anger, so that He trembles. And this emotional stir causes Him to weep, i.e. a few tears trickle down His cheeks, just like extreme joy or sorrow can make us cry.

Questions: Where else do we read that Jesus weeps? Was it possible for Jesus to weep like we do? Being the Man of sorrows do you think Jesus ever laughed?

The Raising: vss. 39-44.

Now Jesus approaches the tomb. It was very likely a chamber hewn into a rise of rock. In some of these tombs,
very common in that rocky country, the floor is level with the outside, in others it is lower, a step or two leading down to it. Upon orders the stone is taken away, undoubtedly by a few men. The thought of seeing the already decomposed body of her brother caused Martha to shudder. They must leave him there. But the command is obeyed and all eyes are strained on Jesus to see what He will now do.

First He thanks God. He lifts His eyes upward. He prays, not for Himself, for as the faithful Son of God He is always heard, but for the multitude with Him. They must see the glory of God in Him, and therefore also know that God sent Him. Why does Jesus shout with a loud voice? Surely not to have Lazarus hear Him, for this would be possible with a whisper. Possibly Jesus wants the people to know the power of His words (John 5:25) in the realm of the spiritual, by speaking loudly to Lazarus. And Lazarus comes forth. Without a struggle death gives up its prey. More John does not say about it. Imagine what a big story man would build around such a "phenomenon". Standing there bound, hand and foot, and his face bound with a sweatcloth, no one approaches him. Very likely all were struck with amazement. So Jesus gives the command.

Thus all have seen the glory of God, and all must know that God has sent Him and is with Him. And they do, wicked as well as righteous.

Questions: Is Jesus ever frustrated in His purpose? Why not? Why must these people see the glory of God in Jesus? Why do we in prayer close our eyes, while Jesus here and elsewhere lifts them up, keeping them open?

DEPENDENCY

LESSON IV.

"The Effect of the Miracle"

(John 11:45-57)

The Sanhedrin Convenes: vss. 45-52.

This effect is of great importance. Many of these obstinate Jews believed. The glory of the Son of God was overwhelming to them. But others are hardened. They report the miracle to the Pharisees and with it that many more believed on Him. Notice that many believed, but only some of them went to the Pharisees.

The result is an immediate convocation of this "august" body. It was composed of some 70 members, and was the ruling body in Israel as the "church". It also exercised many political powers. What do we, they ask. This means that they are doing nothing regarding this "fellow". But Jesus is doing many things and gaining followers, at least admirers. Notice, too, that no effort is made to deny the reality of the miracle, when they meet by themselves, something which they had done in the past and would do again in the future. Now it can certainly be said that seeing they see not and hearing they hear not, nor understand. But this they know, He is doing so much and they are
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doing nothing. As if this was necessary; they had to believe in the doings of Jesus, no more. But to them it is a mighty struggle for supremacy between Jesus and themselves. They, too, without reason expect that Jesus will seek earthly glory and power, becoming a king. And then what will the Romans do? The Israelites will be wiped out as a nation. In reality however, they are seeking their own power and glory. Did not the Scriptures speak of the Messiah who would be great in glory and power? But now under a guise they will keep the nation, not realizing that by this very hatred and later crucifixion of Jesus the wrath of God did bring the nation to naught.

Then Caiaphas speaks, as the High Priest. He calls his fellow members a group of ignoramuses. Ye know nothing at all. The problem is very simple. Let us simply get rid of Jesus, regardless of law or ethics. This is simply an old trick to present two extreme alternatives in order to force acceptance of the one he desires, as though no third possibility exists. Here either one man dies, or the whole nation is destroyed. And so Jesus would die in stead of the nation. He must be deliberately killed to save the nation. What diabolic!

Once for all, that is God's scheme of redemption, and the Sanhedrin's plan of saving Israel. Both speak the same words, but with a world of difference in interpretation. God will so save His people by a vicarious atonement, and the Jews will save Israel (and themselves) by getting rid of Jesus. Before God Jesus is the head of the body, and therefore indispensable, in the minds of the Jews He is but a cancerous sore which must be removed to save the body. And this they will do. They will slay Jesus for their purpose, but God will have them do so according to His counsel for His purpose. Unwittingly and inadvertently Caiaphas is here a means of revelation, but also of executing God's counsel. By his own actions he denies Himself as high priest, making room for Christ. So God controls the speech and doings of men.

Questions: Can you mention examples of other men, who, though wicked, were instruments of Divine revelation? Why does the Lord use such men? How can this be explained? Does vs. 52 teach universal atonement? What does it teach?

The Decision: vss. 53-57.

The die has been cast. Jesus must die. Imagine, this the "church" does. "From that day" marks that as the decisive day. This means that they also decided on the ways and means of killing Him. Yet despite all their counselling they themselves never found a way. Judas had to show them the way. No, He would go the way the Lord had determined before the foundations of the world.

The people evidently also know about this tremendous decision? They don't expect Him to come to the feast. Such is the idea of their questions. Jesus retreated to Ephraim, to wait until the time had come, God's time, the time of the Passover. In the meantime orders
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are given to arrest Him, and a general alarm is sounded throughout the regions: when seen, report to headquarters. In our day the search would have been made by the radio, short wave, and the daily newspaper.

All this has been brought about by this miracle. Would it not have been better that Jesus had never performed this mighty miracle? No, Jesus not only knew what the effects would be, but determined that through this miracle many would believe in Him as the glorious Son of God, but others hardened, and so prepared with extreme hatred to crucify Him. His face was set towards Jerusalem.

* * * * *

LESSON V.

“The Anointing At Bethany”
(John 12:1-11)


How long Jesus was in the territory of Ephraim (look up on map) we do not know, but it very likely was only a short time. There He spoke some parables, such as the parable of the ten pounds, the laborers in the Vineyard, etc. All speak of the end of the Son of God, being killed, etc. Now He and the disciples join the crowd that is going to Jerusalem to the Passover feast. Jesus, however, with the twelve will spend the next Sabbath in Bethany. Here a supper is prepared for Him, a special feast in His honor. Since we read in the other Gospel narratives that this took place in the house of Simon it may be that Martha served in his house and Mary and Lazarus were guests there.

It is here that the anointing takes place. Notice, too, that the costly oil (for all the writers emphasize this) was poured over Jesus head, which evidently ran down His body, even on His feet. And Mary uses her hair to wipe His feet. This certainly expresses great humiliation. all the more so for them because the unbinding and loosening of hair of a woman in the presence of outsiders was considered an indecent act.

Even though perhaps not seen by all, this act becomes known by the aroma that fills the house. And Judas is quick to respond. According to him the price of the ointment was in our money approximately $40 to $50. To Judas it was a question of Jesus or the poor, and then naturally Jesus was the loser, for he sought himself, and neither of the other two. In his words Jesus certainly was also accused, since Jesus did not reprimand her for this action. And the devil always has followers. Notice that Jesus really answers twofold. First in re the motive of Mary, and secondly in re the poor.

This accusation of Judas was another reproach and temptation of the devil. And Jesus certainly was aware of it. But again, He suffered silently, not reviling again. Instead he took up the cause of righteousness as always. He describes the deed of Mary. She did it unto His burial. What does this mean? Can it possibly be that Mary expected Jesus to
die soon and that she already now considered it impossible to anoint his body at the time, as was customary with burial? This is very well possible. Even though the disciples still failed to realize the time on God's clock, Mary may have sensed a little of the dangers ahead. Notice what Jesus spoke in Galilee, Matt. 16:21; what He told His disciples so plainly on His last journey, Matt. 20:17, Mark 10:32-33, Luke 18:31-34, and what He told His enemies in Jerusalem. John 7:33; 8:21-23, etc., was very likely also known to Mary. Also, she must have known about the search the Sanhedrin was supposedly making for Him.

Therefore it may have been that she sensed a little of the dangers ahead. And now she would manifest a deed of love, and what a deed it was. It was a manifestation of greatest admiration and most sincere devotion. It was a love that will bring the costliest thing she can lay hold of. Therefore Jesus says that this deed will be told wherever the Gospel shall be brought in times to come. The aroma of Mary's ointment fills the world. And why must it be so? Men must know about this marvelous love for the Lord Jesus Christ. "Only what's done for Christ will last."

But what about the poor? Surely they, too, must be remembered, but Jesus first. He is Lord. Didn't Elijah demand food for himself first before the widow could eat with her son? Then the poor, but only in that way. Only where men do seek Christ first do men also remember the poor.

Questions: Was this costly oil indicative of Mary's wealth or perhaps of a giving of all she had? Jesus says: The poor you have always with you. Is this also true today? Why are they always with us?

Lazarus Sentenced to Die: vss. 9-11.

The great multitude mentioned here very likely consisted of pilgrims who came for the Passover Feast. The account regarding Lazarus had spread and so crowds flocked to Bethany to see him. This, of course, made matters still worse for the Jews, for in the resurrected Lazarus they saw the mighty work of Jesus. So he, too, must die. Against this the Jews have no scruples, if only they can attain their end. And the servant is not greater than his Lord; if He suffers His servants must suffer for and on account of Him.

Reformation Day
Mass Meeting
Grand Rapids Area

NOVEMBER 1, 1949

HUDSONVILLE CHURCH

Rev. J. Blankespoor will lead the Bible Discussion from the Gospel of John.

Timely Address will be given by the Rev. J. A. Heys.

Community Singing . . . .

Special Numbers
Convention Debates

"Resolved that higher education is conducive to redeeming the time."

The first affirmative, Ena Dykstra, Hull, Iowa, defined higher education to include high school training as well as college. She asserted that education was a means of buying out the time; that it was a solution to the question: what can be done to redeem the time.

The first negative speaker, John Hoffman (Fuller Young Men’s Society), however, claimed that the accepted meaning of higher education in our day was the modern university and that this most ungodly institution in our land can not possibly be conducive to buying out the time. He pointed out that no university in our land relates its subject matter to God, but rather that their teachings are all evolutionistic. Their teachings inevitably inflate the ego, the idea of self rises, and childlike faith in God is replaced by faith in self.

The second affirmative, Lois Holstein, Edgerton, pointed out that Moses had received higher education and yet was the great teacher and also an educated man. She pointed out that Gamaliel was a great teacher and also an educated man, as were John Calvin and Martin Luther. A big question with which we must cope today is: how are young people to spend their leisure time? One very profitable way is to increase one’s knowledge and the systematic way of doing this is to take advantage of the institutions of higher learning.

The second speaker for the negation, Gerald Kok, Holland, reasserted that in the institutions of our land we merely invite the training by pagan teachers and that under their influence it would be impossible to redeem the time.

* * *

This is a debatable subject. However, the resolution leaves so much room for debate that the affirmative and the negative never squarely faced the same issue. The negative flatly refused to accept their opponent’s definition of the term “higher education” and so the debate proceeded with each side holding its own interpretation of the question. Nevertheless, it was interesting and profitable, so much so that the debate continued with little groups on the lawn at lunch time and at the outing in the evening.

A. R.

Round Table Discussion

“How we can Redeem the Time by engaging in legitimate amusements.”

Participants: Talitha, Hope, Creston, David Societies

This discussion was carried on entirely without rehearsal. It proved to be interesting throughout. Each participant asked and answered questions and even the audience joined in the discussion at the close.

First of all a definition of legitimate amusements was sought for and in so doing the Round Table spent considerable time in talking about sports, movies and card playing. If these things are legiti-
mate, how are they conducive to redeeming the time? The general opinion did not favor card playing because of the element of chance involved. Professional sports and Hollywood movie productions were of course condemned, but sports as such, and moving pictures were considered proper in so far as they could be used to the honor and glory of God. By this was meant that they may be used as a form of relaxation, recreation from our daily labors. It was brought out that the Movie of our present day theatre portrays the lie. Also, that by attending professional sports we place ourselves in a corrupt environment and support a worldly cause.

In the final analysis it is not so much a matter of what I may do and what I may not do, but for the sincere Christian it must be a matter of fear and trembling before God. Our Christian dynamic faith must drive us on to an ever closer positive walk with God.

A. R.

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We wish to thank Fenna Flikkema, Montana, and Agatha Lubbers, Randolph, for their summaries of this Round Table discussion.

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**Summary of the Essay**

"Twenty-Five Years Away From 1924, and Its Significance For Our Youth"

Garret Flikkema, Montana

This very well worked out essay began by stating that we of course were not present at the procedures of 1924, and for that reason the task of holding fast that great heritage given our fathers becomes that much the greater for us, in fact, by nature impossible.

That twenty-five years have already elapsed since 1924, its significance for this generation has a tendency to decline in value. This of course is not a good sign. If we forget 1924, we can only receive the idea that this great heritage was brought about through our own power, but if we look back at 1924 we can certainly see that it was God's almighty hand alone, that restored the faith which we have today.

The essay then brought out that we must not only hold fast that heritage, but that we pass it on to the coming generation. Certainly no one can deny that we carry a great responsibility. To maintain a good confession in the midst of this evil world has always been difficult for the church of Jesus Christ. Today this is even more difficult than ever before, and as Scripture teaches it will become more difficult even unto the end of time. Therefore may God give us His grace in a very rich measure, that we may redeem the time, see and carry diligently this great responsibility in the years which are before us.

It was also made clear before our minds that we refrain from compromising. This definitely called us to be on our guard, for it is one of the devil's sliest ways which he uses to try and destroy the church of Christ in this world. Therefore we should be very careful in taking other denominations in with ours. Naturally, we would like to see our small
denomination grow in numbers, but we know too that God does not often work that way. Let us then beware that we do not compromise the truth with the lie, only to make our church great in this world, and maintain our stand against the heretical view of winning the world for Christ.

Then, too, we must be diligent to learn to know what we stand for, keeping fresh in our memories the happenings of 1924, and be capable, girded around about with the girdle of truth, to impress to the generations to come with its fullest meaning.

Finally, it was brought out that while expressing the truth, we should also condemn the lie. Certainly in this we must be careful, that we do not look upon them with scorn, who teach and maintain that which is repugnant to the Word of God, and boastfully say in our hearts that we have earned this glorious heritage. God forbid! Rather let all our boasting be in Him, our Covenant God. For Scripture states in Rom. 9:16, “So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.”

May God then grant us to grow in grace, that we may stand steadfast in the battle, holding fast that which we have, and say that we have run the race, and fought the good fight for that which is laid up for us, the crown of righteousness, which the Lord shall give unto all that love his appearing.

BACK TO THE BIBLE AND ITS DOCTRINES: —

One of the best antidotes to modernism and liberalism today is an earnest return to theology, to a study of the cardinal doctrines of the Bible, to an honest and candid examination of our faith. If we are plagued today with an over-abundance of the green-house variety of Christianity, which is little more than wishful thinking and kindergarten goodness, we have ourselves to blame in part. There is too little endoctrination. We read our Bibles and do not know what it means. We talk glibly about great doctrines and have only the slightest idea of what they teach. If more of our covenant children and more Sunday School pupils would take a good course in catechism, and do it year after year, they would not so soon think that all churches show people the way to heaven, or that one church is as good as another, nor would they entertain ideas which do not have the least Biblical foundation.

By Rev. Bert Brower.

In Sunday School Guide
MISSIONARY MONTHLY.
In assigning this subject it was correctly assumed that there should be pre-marital instruction. It should not be neglected, and it indicates a very sad situation when the question has to be asked: By whom should pre-marital instruction be given? For primarily it suggests that it is being neglected, and there seems to be some doubt as to who should do it. From that point of view it is too bad that we have to discuss it.

Various answers are given to this question. Some answer: the parents, of course. Others figure that it is easier if strangers will do it and hence suggest that the school or church shall give this instruction. Others say it is unnecessary.

That the instruction of the child is the responsibility and obligation of its parents is a precept which every Christian should immediately know. Reformed people have insisted on this, all the way through, as is plain from the fact that parents have built and maintained their own schools to teach their children according to their convictions.

This principle is based on Scripture. The text from Proverbs 22:6 comes to our mind. "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." In Israel the fathers were to make known to their children the works of God, Deut. 4:9, 6:7, and 31:13. The Lord visited the house of Eli with judgments, "because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not."

Certainly, when parents are duty bound to instruct their children in the laws of the Lord, does it not follow that they shall instruct their children concerning the sex-relationship? For does not the Lord give commandment concerning the body and the service of the body? Consider that, surpassed only by the desire to preserve himself, the sex instinct is the most powerful in man. The marriage-relationship is perhaps the greatest relationship upon the earth, amongst men. For through it family-life comes into existence, and the family-life is the heart of society. The rearing and training of children is the highest and most responsible calling ever given. That young people should be instructed in this is not only highly desirable therefore, but it is highly necessary.

The idea of instructing young people with a view to the marriage relationship has, among many conservative people, seemed immodest and indecent. If this type of people ever had any desire to instruct their children in the sex-relationships, they were simply lacking in courage to do so.

The reason for this attitude in the past has undoubtedly been caused by a misunderstanding of the marriage relationship, together with the corruption of
marriage by sin. There has been a shame attached to the sex-relationship, which became evident immediately after the fall, when our parents, having sinned, were aware of their nakedness and became ashamed. Our clothing today remains the symbol of our shame, for we fell by sin and became naked before God.

However, though the sex-relationship in Paradise was perfect and honorable since God had made man male and female, also after the fall the marriage relation has been sanctified. The promise of Redemption should be fulfilled through the marriage relationship. The women among Israel were blessed in bringing forth children. Paul tells us that marriage is honorable. In fact, it is not good that man should be alone. So God has spoken. Furthermore, he has commanded man to multiply and fill the earth and that is only possible by the marriage relationship. Since God made the two sexes it is perfectly normal for young men and women to desire to be married.

One of the most important subjects is the question: How shall parents deal with their children in educating them in regard to the seventh commandment. Must parents also instruct their children in regard to the manner of birth, the significance of sexual life, and concerning danger on this steep path? Interesting questions. Why, because people might doubt whether parents have to warn their children against dangers? Oh, no, such a view would never be upheld in society. Yet people find it unfitting that parents should speak to their children and instruct them about such “intimate” things.

People find it unheard of and irresponsible when the veil is removed from such secrecy. People fear realism.

Understand, of course, that tender subjects should be treated also with utmost tenderness. He who treats the subject indecently with his children makes a big mistake. On the other hand, those who withhold from their children the important information about their sexual lives have departed from the proper path. Children must be instructed in these things, and not be left to grope about picking up half-truths and distorted facts, or be left to gather venomous ideas from corrupted playmates, vile literature, obscene pictures, and vulgar novels. It is certain that children are going to learn about these things and is it not a great deal better that they should receive their first knowledge from their parents whom they love and trust rather than to be left to find out from some older boy or girl whose mind has already been defiled by a wrong conception of sexual matters?

If left to remain ignorant, the child will go to older boys and girls for information and come to look upon his admission into this world as an act of sin on the part of the parents of which they are ashamed. It is by all means important for our lives that in the days of our youth we do not remain ignorant of the wonderful “mechanics” of our own bodies, with which we were endowed by the Creator. He has made man and woman. He has thus made the sexual organs, and these organs must be used aright to the glory of God, and not to fulfill our lusts and carnal desires.
What reason is there that the sexual impulses should be treated with such secrecy? Why should they be treated as something low and beastly? The sex instinct is sacred, for it is ordained by God for the propagation of the human race. If there is anything evil about the subject, the evil is in our minds.

Concerning the question of the origin of life, just imagine, if possible, the many lies parents will be compelled to account for at the judgment-bar of God! Instead of telling the beautiful story of life and thus gaining their children’s confidence forever, parents turn them away with an absolute lie.

We read in Matt. 12:36, “But I say unto you that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.” Are parents keeping this text in mind when they tell their children the stork-myth or the cabbage-head myth?

The question of sex is not unclean, shameful, or sinful. When properly understood, what could be more noble or purer than the sexual instinct? The sexual instincts are divine commands of God and are made sinful when turned into lusts, that is, unlawful desires.

Paul made this plain in his letter to Titus, “Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.” (1:15).

While it is a fact well known to all that the majority of parents find it difficult to talk to their children about sexual matters, yet that in no way lessens their responsibility. As we have seen, it is first of all the responsibility of the parents to give pre-marital instruction. It is a God-given duty. However, we all know that it is often neglected by them. If this is the case, the Church and our Christian schools are called to admonish and instruct their youth in the truths of God’s Word and in the way of life. * * *

IN MEMORIAM

The Young People’s Society of Manhattan, Montana, wishes to express its sincere sympathy to one of its members, Richard Heys, in the loss of his mother, MRS. DICK HEYS

May the Lord in His tender mercy comfort and sustain the sorrowing relatives.

Rev. P. Vis, ’pres.
Ethel Kimm, Sec’y.

BEACON LIGHTS

Singspiration

OCTOBER 16, 1949

Fuller Ave. Church

Attend this first Fall meeting of praise and worship in song and message.

Carry on the Convention Theme: —

“Redeem the Time”
Wasting Time

When we speak of wasting time we are speaking of a matter which concerns us all. Who is there that is not guilty? We were created to serve God all the time. We were made in the image of God which means we once knew God, were righteous as God created us, and we were holy. We once were capable of serving God and in that state we did not waste time. Now that man has fallen and has lost that image he cannot serve God perfectly. Nevertheless, as the catechism also points out, God demands perfect obedience. Therefore we all waste time when we do not serve God.

When we seek ourselves, our pleasure, our treasure or whatever it may be apart from serving God, we are wasting our time. We must, with every breath we breathe, every step we walk, serve God. In our work, in our play, awake or asleep, it is our calling always to serve God. We are faced with the question, in what way can we best serve God seeing we are wholly corrupt? My answer is that we should read and study the Word of God. God has seen to it that His Word was not only given but that it was also preserved through all the ages. And we do well to read it, to study it and meditate upon it. May we say and experience with the psalmist of old, “Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light unto my path”. May it guide us, and it surely will if we use it, as we travel through this weary land. As children of God we are strangers and pilgrims in this world.

In coming here to Iowa from Michigan we often glanced at the road map because we did not know the way, but when we followed the map we had little trouble. And so it is if we use God’s Word while traveling from the cradle to the grave.

Many of us are guilty of thinking we know the way. We leave our road map on the shelf. This, to my mind, is a waste of time which we should all try to change.

When we consider time we find it to be a gift of God which He gives to us—as creatures of time—to not only use but to use entirely in the way of honor and glory to Him.

God uses time to teach us—who are but creatures of a day—that we may know our weaknesses and our frailty. (See Psalm 39).

One way we waste time is the manner in which we live, as though we can do just as we please. We should always remember that God has given us time and if we do anything else than seek His glory we are wasting time. We also waste time if, instead of reading the Word of God at home or wherever it may be, we read other material (which in itself may be all right) but which has no abiding value like the Word of God. We read novels and magazines and much other secular literature but the Word of God, which shows us the way of life, we think we can leave alone until we are older. Who can know whether he or she will get older? And even if we could know, this is poor reasoning.

Let us read God’s Word much more!
Let us appreciate the fact that today we are still privileged to read it! Many Christians in other lands can not freely worship and read about God.

We would do well to read our Church papers and forget about some of the magazines. Let's read material that will build us up spiritually. There is a time coming, and very likely quite soon, that will be a test for you and me. In this connection we might notice the fact that many of us are not as yet confessing members of the church and are still attending catechism. This means we should study our lessons. Our neglect here is another way we can waste our time.

If we are out too many nights and fail to get sufficient rest for our bodies we also waste our time. And we can become so interested in sports—playing ball, fishing, skating, hunting or many other sports which in themselves may be good—that we neglect more important things. And if we overdo these things they may become sinful, especially when it leaves little or no time for more important things in life. Here again we can waste our time.

I know of some who in the summer have hardly enough time to listen to God's Word being read at the supper table because they are going to a ball game. This should not be for we should seek first things first. If we do not do this we are wasting our time.

May God also cause this gathering together in convention to make us more hungry for His Word that we may Redeem the Time, knowing that the days are evil.

** Regional Mass Meetings **

** IN OBSERVANCE OF **

** REFORMATION DAY **

Plans are now being made to hold mass meetings the week of October 31 in all localities where we have member societies.

SEE YOUR LOCAL CHURCH NEWS FOR FURTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

** * * *

Reports will follow in our next Issue
Convention business in brief

The business meetings of the Convention were very well attended; 59 delegates were present, besides many visitors. Discussions were lively, this due perhaps in part to the fact that at the beginning of the meetings a decision was made giving all visitors permission to participate in the discussions, although voting of course remained the privilege of delegates only.

We are happy to report that another one of our societies joined the Federation; namely, Hull, and nine of their members were present at the Convention. This leaves only four societies who are not as yet members of the Federation, and they are: Rock Valley, Sioux Center, Redlands, and Hamilton, and we are looking forward to the time when these societies, too, may join us.

Concerning the Oaklawn proposal, one item was adopted for use at future Conventions, and that is a "get-acquainted-hour."

It has been decided that we continue circulating "Round Robin Letters" and we would suggest that all societies answer their letters promptly and so keep them moving. Every society by this time has received at least one "Round Robin."

Oskaloosa and Pella societies came with a proposal that delegates should in the future pay for their banquet tickets, and that the speakers to the Convention should receive their traveling expenses, and this proposal was adopted by the Delegate Board.

The publication of Beacon Lights has been placed in the hands of a publication committee, which consists of the Editorial Staff of Beacon Lights and the Executive Board. This publication committee has had its first meeting, and we believe this new system will operate more efficiently than the old system. The Executive Board continues to appoint the members of the Editorial Staff of Beacon Lights.

The Host Society for future Conventions must choose the theme of the Convention with its sub-divisions before the first of the year and publish this information in Beacon Lights, so that the various societies may begin preparing themselves for the Convention well in advance and we may have ever more worth while meetings.

The following new officers were elected to serve on the Executive Board for two years: John Hofman, vice-president; Albert Heemstra, treasurer; and Francis Dykstra was re-elected as assistant-secretary-treasurer. The officers who will serve for one more year are Rev. Kok, president, and Tillie Nobel, Secretary. Our advisors are Rev. Vos, one more year, and Rev. Blankespoor, two years. At the first Board Meeting of the season it has been decided to have Beacon Lights Singspirations in the Grand Rapids vicinity once every month, and plans are also under way for Reformation Day Mass Meetings in all localities where we have member societies.

Tillie Nobel, Sec'y.
Book Review....

TITLE: — A Land I Will Show Thee.
AUTHOR: — Marian Schoolland.
PUBLISHER: — Wm. Eerdmans Co.

This is a story of faith and courage: faith in the sovereign God Who guides His people according to His purpose, and courage to follow in the way that He leads. It is the story of the pioneers who left their fatherland under the leadership of their beloved pastor and friend, Albertus Van Raalte, and came to the forests of Michigan to make their home on the shores of Black Lake. Economic stress heightened by religious persecution and a simultaneous widespread urge for emigration to the New World caused many of the Seceders who had left the Groote Kerk because they felt that it had forsaken the doctrines of the Bible, to feel that God was leading them to forsake their fatherland to establish a church in the New World and witness for Him there.

The plot centers around the simple but entrancing romance of Anton Berghuis and Anna Faber. Anton leaves his homeland with his family and the promise that he may send for Anna when he can provide a home there for her that is "as good as the one she is used to". The story of their heartaches and loneliness and of their long-postponed reunion in the "colony" is a fascinating and stirring tale.

But there is much more in this book that holds the interest of the reader. The simple, trusting faith of these common people as they tore themselves from their homes and loved ones in the Netherlands and followed God's leading into a new country with hardships, poverty, sickness and death awaiting them; the courageous faith of Albertus Van Raalte as he fed his flock from God's Word and encouraged and comforted them; the dreams and ambitions, hopes and aspirations of these people and their leader that God saw fit to bring into reality: these grip the heart of the reader and leave a lasting impression on his mind.

In her introduction to this story of the Dutch emigrants Miss Schoolland writes: "Many of the people who walk its pages are fictitious, but Van Raalte, Brummelkamp, the Americans who so nobly aided the colonists, were men who grappled with the problems of a hundred years ago and helped make the history of our company. And the events of my story are, almost without exception, based upon the records of these pioneer days."

In concluding her story, Miss Schoolland gives us a glimpse of the present, picturing what God has given to the descendants of these noble pioneers. I think that in closing this book the reader who cherishes the Reformed truths will not only feel that he has read a beautiful story but he will experience a flood of thankfulness for what God hath wrought in preserving the true interpretation of His Word. It is simply written, easily read, and worthy of recommendation to our young people.
Mr. John Zanistra, Jr.
182nd St.
South Holland, Ill.