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"Good to Hear From You!"
Dear Friends:

It feels like the "morning after the night before." The project to which we have been looking forward for an entire year is history. And, by the grace of God, another Protestant Reformed Young People's Convention has been held.

Kalamazoo will not soon forget these days...of planning and activity, of work and pleasure...pleasure in having so many young people, representing so many of our churches, in Kalamazoo as our guests, pleasure too, in making possible the transaction of the Federation business. We enjoyed the pleasant Christian contacts in the unity of a common confession.

But there were disappointments too...perhaps some regulation of the conduct of our young people attending conventions is necessary.

More and more the activities of the Federation, and especially the Convention, forms a necessary and vital part of our church life. More and more we must realize, at the same time, that it is the expression of our spiritual life and must remain such.

We are looking forward to meeting all our friends in Hull, Iowa next year and enjoying the work of others.

Sincerely yours,

Young People's Society
Kalamazoo, Michigan
REMINISCING

ROGER FABER
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Another convention is over—but the memories remain. Those who had the privilege of attending the Kalamazoo convention can testify that the grace of God was richly manifest in the three-days proceedings. The speeches, the discussions, the program in general all were keyed to the central theme of the last hour.

There is something about a convention that inspires. Through the year we meet each with his own local group and we see little of our fellow societies. But each August when we unite in three days of fellowship and Christian communion, the sudden thought strikes us that we are all members of a larger group, God’s church, united in a common struggle against the world and our flesh, united in the common goal of the glory of God and united as members of the body of Christ. It’s a wonderful feeling, one which we would do well to remember.

This spirit was present in full measure throughout the Kalamazoo convention. It was present in the inspirational meeting Tuesday night. It was present in the succeeding days filled with business outings, speeches and entertainment, during which the last hour theme was more fully developed. It reached a fitting climax in those memorable last few minutes when the audience at the banquet rose to their feet and sang with full hearts, “God be with you ’till we meet again.”

It’s all over now, but the memories remain. So, to the memory of the 1951 Protestant Reformed Young People’s Convention, Beacon Lights humbly and gratefully dedicates this issue.

The following 15 pages are devoted to the 1951 Convention.
CONVENTION ADDRESSES

The Signs of the Last Hour
Resume of Rev. H. Hoeksema’s Address Prepared by Miss Jane Schipper

You understand that logically I cannot speak on the Signs of the Last Hour without speaking at least briefly on the Last Hour itself. Therefore, speaking of the signs of the Last Hour, I am going to call your attention to that Hour. Secondly, to the special significance of that Hour, and finally to the signs of the Last Hour, both general and special.

In general, I may say that in Scripture the term hour refers to a definite period in which God accomplishes something particular for the development of his covenant and kingdom. In that development of the covenant you can distinguish certain hours, that is, periods in which God, as it were, changes something and brings something new in the history of His kingdom. From that point of view, you may speak of several hours on the clock. And now Scripture says, “Children, it is the last hour.” That has been the message to the church from the time of John to the present time. It will be the last hour until Christ comes. This means, of course, that there will be no more hours after this dispensation; no hour of the liberated, no hour of the millenium.

What is the chief characteristic of the last hour? It is the antichrist. The term means the one that is opposed to Christ. You know that the time will come when antichrist shall be great and there will be no room for the people of God. You must expect that. You must not fear. For, don’t you forget, antichrist has his purpose in Christ. Therefore, when Scripture says that the chief characteristic of the last hour is antichrist, I must add to that, that nevertheless the positive characteristic of the last hour is Christ’s coming. His coming will be revealed when His work shall be finished. Christ is coming. Not antichrist.

Scripture speaks of many signs. The most positive sign of his coming is the preaching of the Gospel. Christ is not coming tomorrow. He is coming, oh yes, but you must look for him first as he reveals his coming in the light of the
elect from age to age, even in this present time. That is the most positive sign of the last hour. Together with the preaching of the gospel, you must expect apostacy. Also, in your own church, and the Prot. Ref. churches are by no means excused from the rule. The more we determine to stand on the faith head of the gospel, the more we must expect apostacy. That is why I admonish you, our covenant people, that you stand and not depart one inch from the very heart and center of the Prot. Ref. truth.

There are many other signs mentioned in Scripture, such as wars and rumors of wars. They are necessary. Why? To serve the church. We have nothing to be afraid of. Christ is King, not antichrist, but CHRIST, and he told you, "Behold, I have foretold these things before they come to pass, so that when they come to pass, you may believe." Believe what? That Christ is coming.

There will be special signs, that the sun will become darkened, the moon will change into blood. Stars will fall from the heavens. The last sign of all will be the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. All shall see Christ coming on the clouds of heaven, as the glorious Lord of All. That will be the last sign.

In conclusion, I want to call your attention to the main thing, which is: That the signs of the Last Hour want to say one central theme—Living in the world, love the Lord your God, with all your heart and soul and strength, and you shall never be ashamed.

Well He knows that affliction is needed;  
He has a wise purpose in view,  
And in the dark valley He whispers—  
"Hereafter you'll know what I do."

So we'll follow wherever He leadeth,  
Let the path be dreary or bright;  
For we've proved that our God can give comfort,  
Our God can give "songs in the night."
MARY SINGS

JOKES IN THE PROGRAM?
LINE-UP

IS THAT MOTIO
SECONDED?

BULL SESSION

FRAN’S
PHOTOGRAPHY
SUTHERLAND PAPER MILLS

UPJOHN MODEL ROOM

PILLS, PILLS, PILLS...

PILL PLANT
The Significance Of The Last Hour

Resume Of Rev. J. Howerzy Howerzyl's Address Prepared By Gise Van Baren

Rev. Howerzy Howerzyl, as second convention speaker, developed further the convention theme with his speech on “The Significance of the Last Hour.”

He began by reminding us that youth think of the present. It is for old age to think of the past and future.

Young people must live the convention theme. They must rid themselves of that idea that life is “to get ahead in the world.” They must not be as the Pharisees who could read the weather but could not see the signs of the times. Young people should have their expectations in the world to come. They must know that the significance of the last hour is that the end is coming.

The speaker then proceeded to discuss the significance of the last hour in general. This last hour is no different than any of the previous hours except that it is the culmination of all the preceding hours. During the entire last hour there are signs which increase in intensity as the end approaches. This end means the culmination of all things. The world has developed to its fulness. The grace of God has been fully revealed. All things have been given to Christ—power in heaven and on earth. Creation also is groaning in the hope of this time.

Secondly, the speaker pointed out the significance of the last time for the world which passes away. In this world we live and against which we continually fight. Also for the world the significance of the last hour is that the end is coming. Compare our days with those before the flood. The world is play-crazy and pleasure mad with its Hollywood, radios, television, and theaters. Like in Noah’s day we have much leisure. Science and industry has developed to such an extent so as to make the world beautiful to live in, as also was the case in the days before the flood. Only antichrist is needed to establish the universal peace. When everything seems so beautiful, then the end comes.

In the middle of this world stands the church. For the church the times become darker as the end approaches. Apostasy in the church increases. Many sons of the church marry daughters of
the world. Always the church is the minority, despised, poor, and weak. For the church this is a time of faith. The church must not look at the world as her ideal, but must see in the end the time when Christ is coming. That means that the church will be willing to live and suffer in the last hour. They will stick to the Word of God and exercise their faith.

We, too, as members of the church living in the world must bear in mind the significance of the last hour for us. The world only favors those who go along with it. This means that if we are faithful, it will become more difficult to obtain jobs and to earn a living. We will meet antichrists and worldly seductions but they must be denied as they are not the true reality. We must be willing to suffer for Christ. We must learn to say, "It's the last hour; Christ is coming." We must live in a tent. By faith we must walk as pilgrims and strangers. We must live in the hope of that last hour. Christ is coming.

You Tell On Yourself

You tell on yourself by the friends you seek,
By the very manner in which you speak,
By the way you employ your leisure time,
By the use you make of dollar and dime

You tell what you are by the things you wear,
By the spirit in which your burdens bear,
By the kind of things at which you laugh,
By the records you play on the phonograph.

You tell what you are by the way you walk,
By the things of which you delight to talk,
By the manner in which you bear defeat,
By so simple a thing as how you eat.

By the books you choose from the well-filled shelf:
In these ways and more, you tell on yourself;
So there's really no particle of sense
In an effort to keep up false pretense.

From "The Lighted Pathway"
Our Calling With Respect To The Last Hour

Resume Of Rev. L. Doezena's Address Prepared By Rev. L. Doezena

In these last days we are more than ever concerned about our calling. We ask ourselves, what is our calling? What is the relation of sin to our calling? And how can we fulfill our calling and expect to see the fruit of our labors?

No one can deny that we have a calling and that it is the old commandment that we had from the beginning, as the apostle John speaks of it. This is the law to love God in all our life. The moral law is inseparably connected with the cultural mandate. There can be no fulfillment of the command to multiply and subdue the earth without the fear of God.

All men receive a place in this world to work with creation. They are given the resources and the powers and talents to produce.

The question is, what effect does sin have upon the one who still has the calling of God to serve Him with all that is given? Some attempt to explain that man can still perform the cultural mandate in a way that is pleasing to God and that this accomplishment has some positive value for the kingdom of God.

It is considered that man can please God ethically and morally in a measure when he plants and builds.

We must understand that sin has taken from man much of his ability to fulfill the cultural command in a natural sense. There are only glimmerings of natural light. In the second place there is no ability to perform the law of God, to love him, and therefore man cannot keep the cultural mandate and all his labor is vain.

Although the accomplishments of man are viewed with awe and the word culture given to this sum total of all man's achievement, even in this we must give praise to the Creator and not to man. From the aspect of the value, and of the reward, the work of man suffers the just judgments of God and man himself is turned to the dust.

Now the Christian finds himself in the same world under the same judgments of God, in the same space and time moving rapidly with the human race to the end time. He also has the same old commandment. He must toil and sweat with the work assigned. Chil-
dren must be born, cared for and educated. The calling does not change and the Christian must be the good Samaritan to his neighbor. In all these things that we are busy with every day we must expect that it shall be so also when Christ comes again. Two shall be grinding, one shall be taken and the other left. Whatever the Christian finds to do, whether it is to sweep the streets, or administer care to the sick, that he must do with all that is in him.

What is the value of it for himself? If there is the wrath of God upon it all, if death comes by sin, and if we also pine and die under the wrath of God, what is the significance of it for us?

Some fatalistic Calvinists maintain that there is no use to work with the material at all. Let us sell out and only concern ourselves with the patient waiting for the coming of Christ in that wrong sense of the word. A humanistic Calvinism on the other hand seeks to find hope in this world and takes pleasure in the things themselves. Somehow the wrath of God is denied in a measure and the grace of God is seen in the things themselves.

Although we often may be inclined in our moods to such positions we must know that all our work has significance and is not in vain in the Lord. Everything we do takes on new significance for ourselves. In all our life, we live and die by faith. Christian living is holy living and holy dying. We cannot see the result here in this life. That shall be revealed in the last day, when it shall be made known how much was our work of sin to be burned as straw, and how much was a work of faith in Christ. Our works shall follow us. Now we work by faith and are given patience, and hope, as fruits of our labors. We are led on in life and in it all drawn closer to God.

Now we believe in Christ who has fulfilled the moral law for us, and who shall make all things new for us, the new heavens and earth where righteousness shall dwell. Redeemed finally from this body and this old world we shall then see the fulfillment of the cultural mandate. With that in mind we may say we have a better reason to work. We have a new commandment now as John speaks of it, which is the same as the old but fulfilled in Christ and in us.

Finally in the last hour as the day of Christ approaches and as the ungodly world seeks to draw us away from the path of life by making the things of this present time so attractive for us the negative part of the calling must be stressed again and again. That is, love not the world neither the things that are in the world. We must not fail in love with our life here, our possessions and all the things that we see, for these pass away. We must not lose ourselves in the refinements and luxuries of culture by itself. Rather must we choose the part of Mary, the better part, the seeking first of the kingdom of God and its righteousness.

In all this our calling is fulfilled with respect to the reprobate also. We give testimony in our daily living of the everlasting Gospel in Jesus Christ. We testify in our confession and walk that we are tenting and look for the eternal.
A Godly Attitude

Resume Of Clarine Kooiker's Essay Prepared By Gertrude De Vries

We as Christian young people should always be striving for one goal. That goal is a more godly attitude. A godly attitude toward the church and most of all to God himself. In striving for that goal we cannot serve God and mammon. The Bible says that is impossible. It is also impossible to remain neutral and sway to and fro with the whims and fancies of this world. But we as Christian young people must forsake the world and all those who love sin and darkness and those who do all in their power to work against God.

There is definitely a sharp dividing line. On one side the Christian stands alone, and on the other side the devil and his hosts. There is no in between. The Christian has a difficult time to stand his position. So often he is tempted by that old nature which is always present, causes wrong desires to arise in our minds and some, which to our disgrace, are carried out. Take for example when we join the church for carnal reason or do not join at all.

Our attitude toward the church should be clearly manifested in us. In that we as Protestant Reformed Youth have a special task to perform. We must show ourselves as a distinct people in this world which is corrupt to the very core. In order to perform that task we must love the Lord our God with all our heart. It is our calling to watch and pray. If we do that we will be developing that godly attitude.

Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Debate

Resolved That The Premillennial View Of The Last Hour Is Scriptural

First Affirmative Speaker:

The speaker made clear first of all that the affirmative side was only going to prove that the Premillennial view is scriptural. Premillennialism was then
defined as a thousand year reign of Christ on this earth. This view is divided into eight main tenets of which the first speaker explained three.

The first point explained was “The Rapture.” The Rapture is the coming of Jesus on the clouds of the heavens to gather His people on this earth into the clouds with Him. I Thessalonians 4:16-17 and Matthew 24:29-31 were used to support this.

The second tenet explained was “The Great Tribulation” as is described in Matthew 24. It is stated there that those left on this earth shall go through wars and suffer great tribulation.

Next in the theology of the Premillennialist came “The Resurrection of the Saints.” Ezekiel 47:1-14 where we have the prophecy of the dry bones which was used to support this.

First Negative Speaker:

The speaker first defined Premillennialism by breaking the word into its parts with pre meaning before and millenium meaning one thousand years making the word to mean the coming again of Christ to reign, one thousand years on this earth.

The speaker then proceeded to explain Revelations 20, a passage often used by the Premillennialists. The period of one thousand years in this passage was explained to be symbolical of completeness, being ten times ten times ten. The first resurrection was explained as the awakening of the saints in glory and it was maintained that the righteous and wicked are called to judgment in the same hour.

The speaker concluded by stating that scripture teaches the righteous shall suffer tribulation but that the Premillennialists deny this.

Second Affirmative Speaker:

The second positive speaker explained the last five tenets of the Premillennialists, starting with the “Personal Visible Appearance.” Based on Acts 1:11 it was claimed that Christ shall come again to this earth in the body, visibly.

From this follow the next tenet, “The Millenium.” According to Genesis 17:8 it was claimed that God’s people would have the land of Canaan as their possession and that this promise was not fulfilled as yet. Then according to Amos 9:14-15 it was stated that God promised to bring His people back from captivity. Revelations 20:2 was then used to prove that this coming period was to be one thousand years.

Next “The Resurrection of the Ungodly” was explained. Revelations 20:5 and St. John 5:28-29 were used to support the belief that this resurrection followed the millenium.

The next step to be explained in this theory was “The Final Judgment,” where according to II Corinthians 5:10 all will receive their reward.

The final tenent of this view to be developed was “The Final Destruction” which is taught throughout Scripture.

This speaker finished by challenging the negative side to prove that they had not supported their view by scripture.
Second Negative Speaker:

This speaker accused the affirmative of interpreting visions and symbolical passages literally.

By using Revelations 20:13 and St. John 5:28-29 the speaker proved that there was a simultaneous resurrection of the righteous and wicked unto judgment.

The speaker then charged that the Premillennialist deceived by teaching people not to be afraid of tribulations while Scripture teaches that even the elect would perish if the days were not shortened.

In concluding, the speaker asserted that Premillennialism was not scriptural, not even logical.

Rebuttals:

In the first rebuttal the second negative speaker claimed that the negative side had treated all that had to do with Premillennialism, while their opponents only treated that which they thought could be proved by Scripture.

In the second rebuttal the second positive speaker asserted that their opponents had based their whole argument on Revelations 20 while the affirmative side had only used this passage to prove that the millenium was one thousand years.

The first negative speaker returned in the third rebuttal to state that Revelations 20 was not the only passage used and went on to prove by I Thessalonians 4:13 that the hope of life of the living as well as the dead was in heaven and speaker maintained that the positive side had used Scripture as it was written and had not used other texts to explain a text as the negative side had done.

The judges gave the decision to the negative side.

Report of this debate prepared by Marvin Van Der Wal

The perfect righteousness of God
Is witnessed in the Saviour's blood;
'Tis in the cross of Christ we trace
His righteousness, yet wondrous grace.

God could not pass the sinner by,
His sin demands that he must die;
But in the cross of Christ we see
How God can save, yet righteous be.

The sin alights on Jesus' head,
'Tis in His blood sin's debt is paid;
Stern justice can demand no more,
And Mercy can dispense her store.

The sinner who believes is free,
Can say, "The Saviour died for me:"
Can point to the atoning blood,
And say "This made my peace with God"
Convention Impressions

I can honestly say that I enjoyed the convention very much. I don’t think the convention would of been complete without the inspirational speeches delivered by our ministers.

The banquet supper was simply supreme.

Dale M.

Dear Friends:

As a delegate from the Bellflower society, I enjoyed the convention immensely.

I’m sure when I write that I was greatly inspired, I’m not saying this by myself. There are, I’m sure, many who will agree with me.

I look forward to attending the next convention in Hull.

Sincerely,

Tillie Bekendam

As with other conventions the banquet was again the highlight. It seems as though all the spirit, all the funs, all the serious thoughts come to a climax around the banquet tables. When we think back we see men with loaded trays following their wives, plates piled high with ham, young people leaning back with satisfied looks, and moments of concentrated thought on the speech and music. And now we look forward in expectation to the next convention.

Herm Hanko

Manhattan, Sept. 19, 1951

Having had the priviledge of attending the 11th Convention as one of the delegates from Manhattan, I would like to express my impression of the convention.

I enjoyed every part of the convention from the business meeting to the speeches through the tour and ending with the banquet which was very delicious. Everything was well arranged so as to give everyone an enjoyable time of friendship with one another.

I think our convention gives the young people of our Churches an opportunity to become better acquainted and also gives us an opportunity to hear speeches by some of our ministers whom we might not have heard before.

Jeanette Flikkema, Manhattan.

Hope, like the gleaming taper’s light, Adorns and cheers our way; And still, as darker grows the night, Emits a brighter ray.

—Oliver Goldsmith
TRADITION OR CONVICTION (?)

The sphere of the church on the earth, nominally speaking, is comprised of people who live either "by tradition" or "out of conviction." Christian living, as we view it with our humanly fallible and very limited vision, sees many of us doing pretty much the same thing but the different reasons and motivations that lie behind every action remain hidden. We maintain, to be sure, a real distinction between ourselves and the world at large; we engage in our ecclesiastical affairs quite regularly; we contribute to the church; we assist various Christian Institutions; we listen to the Word preached; we eat and drink at the Lord's Table; we read the Bible daily; etc. . . . But, well may we pause a moment and recast a glance deeper into our hearts and ask, "Why all this?" lest we rumble on in the rut of Phariseeism.

Is it "by tradition" or "out of conviction"?

With a vast majority of professing Christians it is unquestionably the former that rules. Many indeed there are in every generation who say, "Lord, Lord," but they do not enter the Kingdom. The reason simply is that their would-be Christian (?) life is motivated only by "tradition." Because their ancestors of generations back belonged to "a church," it is only natural that this custom be preserved. And "what church" to them makes little difference for as someone said to me just the other day, "I'm Lutheran now. I used to be Presbyterian but I don't think it makes any difference as it is all Protestantism." These "traditional Christians" (?) learn to stay away from 'shows' and other 'bad places' just because it isn't the "way of Christian people" (although many have even departed from this tradition) and they learn to adjust themselves to live within a narrower circle than their ungodly neighbor. Especially during the winter season they are quite occupied because they are somewhat "traditionally compelled" to go to catechism, society, etc.

All "by tradition" . . .

In itself it is not wrong to live "by tradition." Paul enjoins the Thessalonians to "hold the traditions which they had been taught" and further to break off fellowship with anyone that did not "walk after the traditions received of the apostles." (II Thess. 2:15, 3:6) It is also true that we have received a priceless "Reformed" tradition both with respect to doctrine and life and we must constantly guard that we do not depart from it. A "traditional" walk is not necessarily an "evil life."
"Legalism" and "Formalism" are the kinds of "traditionalism" that are detrimental. We must depart from the common habit of formally molding our lives into a rut with the stereotyped "do this" and "don't do that" for this mechanical living is not "Christian" but Phariseeistic.' From such "traditions" the disciples of the Lord did not hesitate to depart. (Matt. 15, Mark 7). And the Lord said that those who walk in such ways are people "who honor God with their lips but whose heart is far from Him." These kind "reject the commandment of God in order to abide in their own "tradition"." Following the letter of the law is not Christian Living but is "spiritually killing."

Let's have less of that traditionalism. And more living "out of conviction"!

To live out of conviction is to do the things that we do because we know that we must do them. Let me add that this "must" is not one of human force but is a 'necessity growing out of our faith.' Conviction is faith. Faith is knowledge. Knowledge is understanding the will and desire of God as revealed in His Word and joyously, willingly, and constantly applying that will to all of our deeds in any sphere of life. Living "out of conviction" means that we do what we do because we know that that is what God desires of us. Conviction says, "I do this because God requires it of me" where 'tradition' says, 'I do this because others do it and it's the accepted thing'. Conviction says, "I refrain from this because I know God abhors it" where 'tradition' says, "I abstain because I'll be criticized if I don't."

Conviction "demands" that we "prove all things and keep what is good" (I Thess. 5:21).

This "requires" a thorough study and re-study of God's Word. Only by knowing the truth will we experience "freedom in the truth." Only by knowing "right" will we be able to retain "what is good." That season is again here when in most of the churches the full schedule of activities will soon begin. No doubt you all will be among the active participants in the various spiritual exercises of church and society.

However, will you reap the spiritual blessings from your activity?

That depends: Will you engage "BY TRADITION" or "OUT OF CONVICTI-ON?"

Your presence in the society is not enough. Too many find their places and listen in to the discussion and go along with the society by the "power of tradition." Don't YOU be one of those!!

Rather "exercise yourself unto godliness." Be active in your society and be living in your church and "follow the traditions of the fathers out of conviction" and then NO ONE will benefit as much as YOU!

"As you sow . . . so you shall also reap!"
BIBLE OUTLINE

REV. MARINUS SCHIPPER
South Holland, Illinois

THE HEART AND CORE

Once again we find ourselves at the threshold of a new society year. What it will mean to you—the benefits and blessings you will receive from meeting together from week to week with brethren of the same household of faith will be to a great extent determined by you. May God give us all grace to apply ourselves diligently to the tasks which lie ahead. May the fruit of this season be that we have truly grown in truth and grace and that we have been better equipped to fight the good fight of faith to the end that God's church might be gathered and that His name might be glorified.

In order that this end may be attained we must all realize that the heart and core of society life is the study of the Word of God. This study, moreover, must be more than a mere analysis of Scripture—more than a cold intellectual debate of various “plausible” interpretations of certain texts. It must be rather a humble searching after the precious riches of the Word of God. Upon returning home we must feel that we have talked with God—that we have heard Him speak to us.

It was with these thoughts in mind that Beacon Lights was organized some years ago. The main purpose of our magazine then was to supply our societies with Bible outlines which would help in the study of the Word. That purpose has not changed. The heart and core of Beacon Lights is and must be the Bible Outlines.

In the past various portions of Scripture have been outlined for us by our pastors. This task has not been an easy one. It has required much time and intensive study. Our pastors, realizing the extreme importance of this work, have given freely and joyfully of their time and talents.

This year the Board has asked the Rev. M. Schipper of South Holland, Illinois to supply the material for this department. We were happy to learn that he has granted our request and will treat for us in the coming year the first Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians. We are confident that we have in the Rev. Schipper an able scholar and we wish him the Lord's blessing in this endeavor. Together with him let us study this Epistle that we might hear what the Spirit hath to say unto the churches.

JOHN HOFMAN, JR.

OUTLINE I

A. HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

1. City of Corinth.

In 146 B. C. the Roman general Mummius squelched the hope of Greek independence by the complete destruction of the city of Corinth. For a hundred years the city lay in ruins until Julius Caesar sent a delegation to rebuild the city. In due time a new Corinth arose from the old ruins that far surpassed the old city in material grandeur and strategic importance as a commercial metropolis.

Corinth is situated on an isthmus connecting the lower peninsula of Greece with the mainland, and could boast of two worthy sea-ports, Cenchreæ which opened into the Aegean and Mediterranean on the East, and Lechaenum, which opened into the Adriatic on the West. Its situation therefore was adapted well to shipping and trade, which fac-
tor to a great extent determined its character. Naturally this condition invited a large and mixed population. At the time when the Epistle was written Corinth may have been a city of six or seven hundred thousand, and composed of several different colonies: Roman, Egyptian, Jew, and Greek. We may conclude also that Corinth, though materially great and prosperous, was also a wicked city. Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans most likely from this place, and we may conclude that when he penned that awful picture of human depravity in the first Chapter, he didn’t have to look far to see it.

2. The founding of the Church there.

Concerning the founding of the Church in Corinth you may read in Acts 18. Paul came to Corinth for the first time on his second missionary journey toward the close of the year 51. He abode there the greater part of a year and a half. His first point of contact was the home of Aquila and Priscilla, who were Jewish believers lately come from Rome because the Emperor had commanded all Jews to depart. With these the apostle made his home, while together they plied their trade as tentmakers.

According to the account in Acts 18, (which you should read carefully) Paul first preached in the synagogue, and when the Jews rejected the Gospel, the apostle turned to the Gentiles, and many of the Corinthians believed. In Acts 18:10, we read of the vision Paul received of the Lord in which it was revealed to him that the Lord had much people in this city. When we consider that Timothy and Apollos and later Titus were the first ministers in this congregation, we may believe that the saints there were thoroughly indoctrinated.

B. THE EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

1. The occasion for it.

Paul evidently wrote this first letter to the Corinthians while he tarried in Ephesus. From the contents of this first epistle it may be determined that the letter was occasioned by certain conditions in the congregation at Corinth which had been revealed to the Apostle by certain of the house of Chloe (1:11), and through an informative letter directed to the Apostle by the Church itself in which was described the prevalent conditions as well as questions asked as to how to cope with them. This letter of the congregation to Paul was evidently brought by a delegation of three (16:17) who also were empowered to speak for the congregation to the enlightenment of the apostle.

It is not impossible to conclude from 5:9 that the apostle had written a previous letter to this Church which has not been preserved and included in the Canon. So that the apostle, it appears, had much information as to the unholy conditions in this Church. And when the Church itself, perhaps in answer to this extinct letter of the apostle, began to ask questions concerning the rectification of these conditions, the apostle is compelled to write the Epistle we are about to study.

It also appears from this Epistle that besides the delegations which would return with the Epistle to the congrega-
tion, Paul also was sending Timothy who would help to correct these conditions and to inform the congregation more perfectly as to the mind of the apostle. The apostle is aware however of the fact that since Timothy would stop at other places before his arrival in Corinth, his Epistle would reach the congregation before Timothy's arrival. He therefore exhorts the congregation to receive this youthful servant and not to intimidate him because of his youth.

2. The purpose and contents.

From what we have already noted as to the occasion for this Epistle, it may also be gathered what is its expressed purpose. That purpose is to treat the various problems which arose in the Church at Corinth.

This of necessity regulates and determines also the contents of the Epistle. We would offer the following as a division of its contents:

Chapter 1:1-3 The greeting. Chapter 1:4-9 The expression of thanks to God for His grace revealed to the Church and of the assurance that God will confirm the Church unto the end. Chapter 1:10-17 The exhortation to unity. Chapter 1:18 to 4:21 Preachers and preaching. Chapters 5 and 6 Purging out moral evils. Chapter 7 Regarding marriage. Chapters 8 to 11 Christian liberty and worship. Chapter 12 to 14 Spiritual gifts and their use. Chapter 15 The doctrine of the resurrection. Chapter 16 Admonitions and salutations.

Questions for Discussion:

1. How long should a minister or missionary labor in a community where his preaching is rejected?

2. From what may we conclude in Acts 18 that Paul was led by the Spirit to Corinth?

3. Is it true that the contents of the message of the missionary will have to be different when spoken to heathen in distinction from those acquainted with the Word of God?

4. What determines the preaching of the Gospel in a certain community, the fact that God has His chosen people there, or the command of Christ in Matt. 28:19, 20 or both?

5. What is the difference if any between the relation of the apostle to the Church of Corinth and that of say a Timothy or a Titus?

6. Do local conditions in a congregation regulate the approach in the preaching of the Gospel?

OUTLINE 2

THE GREETING
I Corinthians 1:1-3.

1. The form of this greeting.

It is interesting and instructive to note the various greetings the apostle uses in his Epistles. The difference in form is not without significance and effect. In this case the form is quite regular. You will notice that it contains the usual three elements: the writer's name, the addressee, and the words of greeting. As is generally true the greeting foreshadows what is coming in the rest of the Epistle, especially with a view to the partisanship and corruption reportedly in this Church.

2. The significance of the various elements in the greeting.

a. “Paul a called apostle . . . and Sosthenes.” You will notice that the words “to be” in vs. 1 are in italics.
They have been supplied therefore by the translator, and are not found in the original text. Literally the text reads: “Paul a called apostle of Christ Jesus, etc.” With two or three exceptions Paul always designates himself the apostle. Sometimes, and we believe it the case also here, the addition is made because the authority of the apostle was denied or in question. Paul would let it be known that he too like the rest of the apostles was one set apart and clothed with the office of apostleship and sent out by Christ. That he is a called apostle does not therefore mean that he is known by others to be such and thus given the name of apostle; but rather, he is one who is called of Christ Jesus, and that too “through the will of God.” The intermediate agent between Paul’s not being Christ’s apostle and becoming such was God’s will, something willed by God, i.e., by God’s command. He is therefore Christ’s apostle, under Christ’s supervision, Christ’s possession, by the decree of God’s will.

That the apostle adds “and Sosthenes,” does not necessarily mean that the latter was co-writer of the Epistle. Rather, we believe him to be a companion of the apostle and one well known also to the Church at Corinth. It is not impossible that this Sosthenes is the same as spoken of in Acts 18:17. If so, his experience before the judgment seat must have done him good, for he is now a follower of Christ and the apostle. He may have been compelled by the Jews to leave Corinth when he became Christ’s. He may have taken Paul’s dictation of this letter, but for this there is no proof.

You will also notice that the word “our” in vs. 1 is in italics. Literally the text says: “and Sosthenes the brother.” We have no objection to the commentary however for it is undoubtedly the apostle’s purpose to show that Sosthenes is indeed the brother of both the apostle and the Church at Corinth.

b. “To the Church of God . . . in Corinth.” That the apostle calls it the Church of God is significant in the light of what is coming relative to various factions in the Church. The Church does not belong to any individual or faction. Her sole Proprietor is God, and of Him she has her being and existence.

The phrases which follow, namely, “to the sanctified in Christ Jesus,” and, “to the called saints,” stand in opposition to the opening phrase “to the Church of God,” and are further descriptive of that Church. The Church is constituted of those sanctified in Christ and of called saints. These always constitute the Church of God as she is essentially. Of course this does not mean that every member of the Church as she becomes institutionally manifest in the world is a sanctified and called saint. While the apostle addresses a visible manifestation of the Church, he always addresses her according to her essential and spiritual nature. From this it must not be concluded that the Epistle addressed to Corinth was to be read to a select group in the Church. No, the letter is addressed to the entire Church as she historically existed at that time, and was to be read in the hearing of also those who were not “sanctified in Christ Jesus.” This is
very plain when you get a little farther into the letter.

"With all who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, etc." This, of course, connects the Church of Corinth with all the saints everywhere. The Lord Jesus Christ is not limited to a local congregation. He is their Lord and ours.

We call your attention here to the continual occurrence of the words "the Lord Jesus Christ." It appears not less than six times in the first ten verses. This also is undoubtedly because of partisanship in the congregation.

c. "Grace to you and peace." The greeting itself is like that of other letters of Paul. Grace is the principle term in this greeting and must be understood in all such greetings to include all the spiritual benefits given to the Church by the Spirit of Christ. Peace is the fruit of this grace in as far as it relates to the relation of the Church of God and therefore to all things. The Church knows herself to be righteous before God and reconciled to Him. She has therefore peace with God, standing in a harmonious relation to Him. She has peace with His will, counsel, and all His work. Therefore she lives in peace even in the midst of strife. This grace and peace have their source in God the Father, i.e., the Triune God, Who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. But grace and peace come to the Church through Christ as her Head and Mediator.

Questions for Discussion:
1. Which are the requirements for apostleship? and how do these apply to Paul?
2. How can the Church be said to be sanctified in Christ? Does this refer to her actual holiness, or to her physical separation from the world?
3. Does the last part of verse 2 indicate that the letter of Paul was designed for more than the Church at Corinth?
4. Is the greeting of the apostle a mere wish, or a statement of fact?

OUTLINE 3

THE APOSTLE GIVES THANKS
1 Corinthians 1:4-9

1. Common practice on the part of the apostle.

A comparison of the various Epistles will show that with few exceptions the apostle introduces his letters in the same manner. (See: Rom. 1:8; Eph. 1:16; Phil. 1:3; Col. 1:3; I Thess. 1:2; II Thess. 1:3). It is the way the apostle has of introducing the main thrust of the Epistle and of preparing the congregation for what is to follow. This must not be interpreted in the sense that the apostle uses a stereotyped method of being polite. For a study of each case will show that the apostle has a particular purpose in expressing himself thus respecting the particular congregations.

However it should also be borne in mind that in each case that the apostle gives thanks for the Church he earnestly desires to acknowledge that Church as the product of the grace of God. This in spite of the fact that in the present case he is well aware of moral decadence in the Church. The apostle when he looks at the ore sees first the sparkling gold, and then the dirt in which that gold is embedded. He appraises the
Church according to her true worth, and on that basis exhorts and treats her according to her sins and short-comings. We would do well to follow his example also in our relation to the Church and her members.

2. Thanks to God for His grace in Jesus Christ.

It is noticeable here that the apostle makes no attempt whatever to praise the Church for anything she has done or was doing. Fact of the matter is that as far as the Church herself was concerned there is little cause for praise and thanks, and much room for criticism and complaint.

No, the thanks is directed to God alone. The word which is translated “thanks” here is a very beautiful word, and full of meaning. In the Greek it is a combination of the main word “grace” and the prefix meaning: well, or good. The meaning then is: to be well graced; to assume the position of one who is well graced in respect to God. And this position is on one’s knees, a position of praise and thanksgiving. Some manuscripts omit the word “my” and simply read: I thank God. We see no reason to omit this personal touch in which the apostle is speaking about his prayer-life respecting the congregation. One is indeed well graced who is able to see and acknowledge the grace of God which He has given the Church in Christ Jesus. Notice, too, the apostle, though mindful of the needs of this congregation, does not pray immediately for the fulfillment of these needs. Rather he extols God for the supply already given.

The grace here is the same as in the greeting (vs. 3), the comprehension of all the benefits of grace residing in Christ and given to the Church. That the apostle speaks of this grace as given in the past, does not mean that the Church no longer possessed it. Rather the apostle implies that this grace given remains in the Church and is the very basis for his right presently to exhort her. How foolish it would be for the apostle to expect amendment of life where no grace resides.

The Church is in possession of Jesus Christ and in Him also of the grace of God. It would be better to translate “in Christ Jesus” rather than “by Jesus Christ.” Though it is true that the grace of God is channeled to the Church through Christ and He is the Mediator through Whom the Church receives grace, the apostle means rather to show that the Church is the recipient of grace as she stands in the sphere of Christ.

3. The contents of this grace.

While grace as here used is all comprehensive and really includes all of God’s gifts to the Church, the apostle is thinking of this grace specifically. Hence he adds: “that in everything ye were enriched in Him (i.e., in Christ) in all utterance (or speech) and all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you; so that ye came behind in no gift, waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The Church had been made rich, i.e., had been richly furnished in all that is in Christ. She had the testimony of Christ in the preaching of the Word
(utterance) and the fruit of this was a rich knowledge of Christ, the God of her salvation. Accordingly she had been established in Christ. The Church therefore did not lack anything that would hinder her in the hope of Christ's coming, in which she would attain to the fulness of Christ and the blessing of God. God had therefore done no less for the Church of Corinth than He had done in other Churches.

4. Assurance of confirmation to the end. (vss. 8, 9)

There are two things to be borne in mind here. The first and important thing is that the apostle would have the Church know and believe that the good work which the Lord had begun in her He would also finish it to the end, in order that this Church also might appear blameless in the day of Christ. The other is that the apostle himself holds this conviction relative to the faithfulness of God re His Church, and therefore is encouraged to presently admonish the Church to a walk of sanctification that she may appear blameless in Christ's day. God is faithful even when the Church is not. And once having called us to the blessed fellowship of Christ His Son, and therefore to His own fellowship and covenant, He will not let us go, but establish us perfectly unto the day which is all Christ's.

Questions for Discussion:
1. Is there another grace of God which is not in Jesus Christ and given to men?
2. What is the relation between the knowledge of God and revelation?
3. How is the testimony of Christ confirmed in us?
4. Why do you think the apostle brings in the day of Christ in this connection?
5. Is this passage a good argument against those who believe not in the perseverance of saints?

OUTLINE 4

THE EXHORTATION TO UNITY
1 Corinthians 1:10-17

A. I Corinthians 1:10. The Exhortation as such.

1. Idea of exhortation.
   a. In general. The English versions which translate "I beseech" may mislead, for the Greek word used here does not mean "I beg," but rather "I call upon" you, "I summon," "I admonish" you. The word is found in the New Testament over a hundred times, and means literally: to call to one's side. The idea then being to counsel, to speak confidentially together.

   b. In particular here. The apostle uses this word very tactfully and brotherly. He does not desire to assume the position of a beggar, while on the other hand he does not desire to scare away with impelling force though not for a moment does he lose out of sight the fact that he is an apostle of Jesus Christ 'The authority he would exercise is the same whether it speaks softly or finds itself compelled to speak sternly.' That the apostle exhorts and admonishes in a gentle manner is indicative in the addition "brethren." The congregation must feel that it is not Paul's enemy.
2. The instrument of appeal.
   a. The instrument as such. "The name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Notice again the full name of our Mediator. In it we have brought to mind all of His saving power and grace. The "Name" refers not merely to an outward designation of Christ, but as it is used throughout Scripture, it signifies all that is implied in Christ. It directs us to all that is revealed concerning Christ, by which Christ makes Himself known to us, and by which we know Him.

   b. The appeal here. 'All that Paul intends to write in his admonition he will use Christ's name or revelation both to enlighten and to move. No saving or cleansing power exists apart from this name.'

3. The contents of the exhortation.
   a. The contents is both positive and negative. The negative is expressed in the clause "that there be no divisions among you." The positive is expressed in the words "that ye all speak the same thing," and, "that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

   b. Significance. There should be no divisions, literally, no schisms in the Church. He is referring of course to factions, parties, in the Church. Because the body of Christ is one, therefore, all division is the attempt to destroy this unity. "All should speak the same thing." Yes, all should keep on speaking, but be sure that all say the same thing.

   But before one can speak he must have a thought, and speech is only the vehicle of the thoughts and intents of the heart and mind.

   Therefore the apostle adds: "that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." There was apparently at this moment no actual rending apart of the congregation, for they still came together to the Holy Supper, but their hearts were not any longer one, and it would not take long before the Church would be split apart.

   The Church is the gathering of believers in one place. Christ brings all the elect and calls them together with their seed as a shepherd herds together his sheep. Therefore the Corinthian Church must hold together, be united like the members of a living body. She must be one in thought, one in purpose, must speak the same thing, and mean the same thing. Her frame or state of mind must be alike in all, and her judgment, i.e., opinion or sentiment (which is the outcome of the state of mind) must be the same. It is the latter which will cause them to pursue the same thing.

Questions for Discussions:

1. What is the only basis for the unity on which the Church may be established and continue?
2. What does the Form for the Lord's Supper have to say about schismatics?
The Military Mail Bag

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. A. Peters.n of our Grand Haven church for the following information; and the picture:

Ralph C. Vander Lee has a tremendous job on his hands. He has been selected to learn the Russian language and by Christmas time has to memorize and maintain a vocabulary of 1000 Russian words. At present we learn he is maintaining his schedule.

Fred Peterson has just arrived in Northern Japan after having had an 18 day delay-en-route spent at his home. He has written of his stormy trip across and also of the interesting things he has seen thus far in Japan.

Ralph De Young has recently acquired his certificate in the art of cooking. At this writing he is spending his 10 day furlough with his wife and family, and during August is scheduled to leave with his unit for Germany.

On Sunday, May 20th, it was a joy of our Grand Haven congregation to have all three of its servicemen with us in a group. As you can see by the picture, the fellows are, from left to right, Ralph De Young, Ralph Vander Lee, and Fred Peterson.

We've also received the following letter from Ralph De Young, written with the supervision of Verne Casemier:

We are writing this letter on a special occasion, at least it is a special occasion for both of us, because we just met this morning, here in the chapel at Camp Wilmer, New Jersey. By the way, our names are Pvt. Laverne Casemier and Pfc. Ralph De Young. I am writing this letter while Laverne is reading the last issue of the Beacon Lights, which I received, because he did not receive it. And also he is supervising the job of writing this letter. We are writing two letters in one because we are in the army and we want to be different, also we are too lazy to write two (we are just kidding, of course). But also we are very happy, because this is the first time either of us met a boy from the Prot. Ref. church, during our army life. I have been in 9 months, and Laverne has been in 4 ½ months. It sure is wonderful how God does these things to embrace his children just at the right time. We both were very lonesome as we just left home about a week ago, until we went to chapel this morning. As I sat there, Laverne walked in, and I could hardly wait until the services were over so I could talk to him. When the services were over, I walked out the door and waited for him to come out. When he came out, I walked up to
him, grabbed his hand, and said, Hi, Verne, and he was so stunned he hardly knew what to say, and we both had tears in our eyes.

Now for a little bit of history of our army life. I was drafted into the army Dec. 13, and was sent to Camp McCoy, Wis., where I took my basic training in some of the coldest weather I ever experienced. I stood guard one night when the temperature dropped to 54 degrees below zero. When I finished my basic, I became a cook. Then they sent me to school in Ft. Sheridan, Ill., which was nice because I could get home every weekend. And now that I have left McCoy, I have changed from a cook to a baker, which will be my job when I get to Europe.

Now for some of Laverne's experiences. When he was in Ft. Jackson, S. C., Verne had 4 months of basic in some of the hottest weather he ever experienced, it was from 94 to 125 degrees above all the time. He spent some of his time in a regimental Choir doing a lot of solo work which brought him closer to the church. Verne will be assigned to a light infantry division when he gets overseas.

Before closing this letter we would like to make a few remarks about the life of a Christian amongst the world. The chapel services are empty because there are only a few stories told and a few songs sung. To all you young fellows at home who think they would like to be in the service, because they could get out of going to society and studying the Word of God, and being away from Mother and Father, you'd better change your mind before Uncle Sam does get you. Because, if you don't, it will be too late, and that will be something. Us guys out here wish we could be back there doing these things. The army can do one of two things, either take you further away from God and your loved ones, or bring you closer to God, and loved ones at home.

Laverne was just saying how much he enjoyed reading the Beacon Lights, and that goes for me, too. It sure strengthens our soul when we can read articles written by our own people. Well, it is time that we close this letter now, and we enjoyed writing it very much. So if you find time drop us a few lines.

Sincerely yours,

Pfc. Ralph De Young, Grand Haven, Mich.

Inasmuch as Verne is going to send his address later, we'll give you the addresses of the other three from Grand Haven.

We'd like to thank Ralph and Verne for writing and also for the pictures.
Verne is on the left side and Ralph on the right.

* * *

Again a Manhattanite in the foreground, this time Garret Flikkema:

It has been in my mind to write to Beacon Lights for quite some time. I received a letter from the Federation a good while ago, so I’d better get busy. The last you heard of me was in May when our reporter from Manhattan wrote in Beacon Lights giving the highlights of us fellows in the service from our church. I’m still in Camp Stewart, Ga. Up until this past week (July 23), I have been serving with the anti-aircraft artillery. Now I am with the Camp Dental Clinic, and am a dentist’s assistant. I like my new position much better. Of course, I am looking for the time when we can all go home again. There’s nothing like home. I have been in the army 5 months the 21st of July, and am looking forward to my first furlough. I attend the Camp chapels, and also have had the privilege to attend the Lutheran Church in Savannah with my buddy. He has his car here, and belongs to that particular church in Le Mars, Iowa. I like that much better than Camp chapels, but still it isn’t like church at home. I received word the other day that Andy Leep is now in Camp Gordon, Ga. My buddy and I plan to look him up on a week-end in the near future. Andy is also from Manhattan. I receive Beacon Lights, Concordia, and radio talks from Iowa and Grand Rapids. I certainly enjoy them, and receive much spiritual food through reading them. We are also greatly in need of that food, in the wicked environment which it pleased God to place us in. I’ll close now, and may all Beacon Lights readers remember us in the service, in your prayers, for we are surrounded by temptations.

Yours in Christ,

Pvt. Garret Flikkema, US 56112290
Dental Detachment, 3444 A. S. U.
Camp Stewart, Georgia.
From First Church, we find that Paul Dykema has arrived in Germany, and is in a town called Babenhausen, about 20 miles south of Frankfort. He is feeling well and not complaining. Seems pretty well satisfied, and he appreciates receiving the church papers. The picture of

Paul was taken while at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Why not drop us a line Paul, and let us in on some of the things you see?

Pvt. Paul Dykema, US 55070937
B. Btry, 18th F. A. Bn.
APO 162, c/o PM, New York, New York

* * * * 

Our last bit of news for this issue comes from our Holland church, and it’s about Jerry Kok. Jerry is now with the 12th Air Force at Wiesbaden, Germany. He sailed from New York the 9th of August and arrived in Germany the 19th.

Just before sailing he sent the following letter to his folks:

“Dear Folks:

Well I’m on my last lap before I leave the grand old land that I love. Yes, many years (19 in fact) I have lived in this home of my fathers. Soon I shall go to distant shores so that we may keep this land free and independent from all evil forces which prevail. I go as a stranger into a foreign land knowing not what my fate may be, but trusting the Lord that all things will be well. This thought will and can be my only comfort. Great is our responsibility now that we are going across. We are not only ambassadors of the United States, but also ambassadors for Christ. We as Christian airmen have a twofold purpose in mind, namely to fight for freedom, but also to spread and teach in our way the true reli-
gion, by God’s grace, to the best of our ability. I have had 19 years of preparation for this, and now as I look back I thank God for every minute of it. I am leaving the 9th of August on the General Patch U.S.N. This is a rather large ship, and I hope it won’t be too rough. Well from now on I won’t pull any more details. Have to go to dinner now; so I’m signing off with my love.

Your son and brother,

W. S. Gerald Kok.

Pfc. Gerald W. Kok, A.F. 16346116 7150 Medical Squadron APO 633 c/o Postmaster, New York, New York

* * * *

We’ll be looking forward to more mail for the column, so until next time, how about some of you people dropping our servicemen a line? We’re sure they would appreciate it.

After reading Burnie’s letter in the last issue, maybe some of you are wondering what he looks like, so here’s the picture we promised you.

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He Giveth More Grace

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater,  
He sendeth more strength when the labors increase;  
To added affliction He addeth His mercy,  
To multiplied trials His multiplied peace.

When we have exhausted our store of endurance;  
When our strength has failed ere the day is half done;  
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources;  
Our Father’s full giving is only begun.

His love has no limit, His grace has no measure,  
His power no boundary known unto men;  
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus  
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.
REFORMATION DAY
Mass Meeting

REV. R. VELDMAN
SPEAKER

INSPIRATIONAL ADDRESS
CARL REITSMA

SECOND CHURCH
OCTOBER 30

L E T S A L L B E T H E R E

FIRST SINGSPIRATION
Oct. 28 — 9 o'clock at
FOURTH CHURCH

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