BEACON LIGHTS
FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

GOD'S HANDIWORK:
The Earth Is the Lord's and the Fullness Thereof, the World and They That Dwell Therein.
Ps. 24:1

NOVEMBER
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I was asked to write the Thanksgiving Day feature article for this "Beacon Lights" under the title "Thanksgiving Day, 100 Years Ago." As I was looking around through the library for suitable material to write such an article, I came upon six sermons delivered by several outstanding pastors in the Episcopal Church delivered to their congregations on Thanksgiving Day. They were delivered in the years 1862-1865, which, if you will recall your American History, were the days of the Civil War. If we may take these sermons as a sample of the thought of that time, I think it will be profitable to compare their thanksgiving with ours. And since the times of the Civil War can in a few ways be compared with our own times, it might give us a few interesting sidelights on our Thanksgiving Day.

Four of the six sermons were delivered by the Rev. A. H. Vinton, D.D., Rector of the St. Marks Church in New York. These sermons covered the four war years. The other two were delivered by Phillip Brooks to the Holy Trinity Church in Philadelphia in 1863, and by Rev. R. D. Hitchcock, D.D., in the Plymouth Church in Brooklyn in 1864.

1862 was a year when the fate of the Union was in doubt. The North had suffered nothing but defeats, and there were many who believed that the South would surely succeed in her attempt to sever herself. What did the Church give thanks for? Many times throughout the world free thinking Christian people have risen up in the defense of free government and a free gospel. When tyranny or trouble threatened, the prophecy of Ezekiel was fulfilled which says, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more . . ." This was exactly what happened to the Jews. And now it was happening in America. Because of her conceit and self pride that she had the best government in the world, God was "overturning" her so that she would be humbled and thus learn the lessons of brotherly love and freedom for all. And whether the cause of the Union would fail or succeed, the result would be a return to the blessings
of democracy and another step in the direction of freedom for every one in the world in a realm of brotherhood. Therefore the church should give thanks for the humility which God was sending them. They should give thanks for the wonderful demonstration given by the people of their capacity for self government. They should be thankful for the war that begets beautiful forms of character and angelic graces of better life. And if the Union should be divided, they should give thanks for the blessings of the past unity.

But in 1863 things began to look a little better. The battle of Gettysburg had been fought and won, and the South had reached its farthest point in the conquest of the North and was now slowly being repulsed. Sermons took on a little different note. It is true that the battlefields were strewn with the bodies of the dead and dying, but the people were admonished to turn the sorrow into joy, for the evils of war would result in a better manhood. The people could be thankful for the prosperity of the war, for the privileges that the war has brought about such as the death of slavery, (the Emancipation Proclamation freeing the slaves had been written) and for the victories at Corinth and Gettysburg. There was now some hope of a victory for the North. People might even be thankful for the war itself because it brought the negro to its proper place in society.

And in 1864 the Union had carried the war into the heart of the South with victories at Mobile and Atlanta. It was also just prior to Thanksgiving Day that Lincoln was re-elected and special stress was laid on the election as the major cause of Thanksgiving for that year. The election had proved that the people were united in loyalty for the cause of the Union, and had expressed their desire that in spite of talks of armistice, they were determined to carry the war to its final conclusion so that the South could not again rise up as it had. It was being clearly shown that God was on the side of the North in this righteous war and that it behooved every man to give humble thanks for this year of untold blessings. There was no more doubt as to the outcome of the war.

1865 marked the close of the war. The Union was saved. It was conclusively shown again that the people's will was sovereign. It was the end of three years of thanksgiving that carried with it note of sadness. Now the people could raise their voices in true notes of praise and thanks to God who had given them the victory and brought the war to a speedy close. And in the thanks offered to God the thanks should also be given to those who had given their lives to maintain unity, brotherly love, equality and harmony in the world. All the thanksgiving of the past terrible years could be culminated in final thanksgiving that all is again peace.

There are several ways in which our times can be compared with those days of the Civil War. There is again a war raging. It is true that it is not within our own country, nor is it as intense, but the hand of war is felt in many homes even now. Again democracy has reached a point where it must put forth effor
Izurvive. And just as in the latter years of the Civil War our armies are in a measure successful.

But do we find these words of thanksgiving on the lips of our people? Do we give thanks that the spirit of brotherhood is carried on if—someone should prove that it is? Do we give thanks that people have the capacity of self-government—if this were ever shown? Do we give thanks because war results in noble character—if someone could show that it did? Do we give thanks for victories and elections and prosperity of whatever sort that may be? We see immediately the emptiness, the shallowness, the vainness of it all. Our thanksgiving goes much deeper. It is easy to give thanks as they gave thanks, but it is very difficult to give thanks as we must give thanks. Our thanks should go beyond earthly things, beyond the time limit of one day. Our thanksgiving is to God for the blessing we receive of His hand. It is in the nature of praise and adoration because He has chosen us as His people and therefore gives us everything that we have, and does everything that happens to us. Our thanks should be from the heart with the belief that everything in this world that occurs, no matter how difficult to understand, is good for us. If any one event in our lives did not happen we could not go to heaven. So we do not give thanks for one day, but all the time. We do not limit our thanks for events that occur as we would like to have them occur, but for all events.

And to those who are now serving in the armed forces, we are especially thinking of you and how humanly im-

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possible it is for you to utter true thanks even for the fact that you are far from home, and we give you our prayers that you too may offer true heartfelt thanksgiving.
Concerning the term: Sacraments. (I)

I am quite certain, that ninety five percent of our young readers are able to answer the question in the Heidelberg Catechism, which reads as follows: How many Sacraments has Christ instituted in the New Covenant or Testament? The answer would immediately be forthcoming, and our readers would say: Two, namely, Holy Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

However, I am not so certain, that all would be able to give an interpretation of the meaning of the term “Sacrament.” It is wholly possible that some of our readers never gave any thought to the question, why this term “Sacrament” simply does not occur in Scripture. Did you know this, youthful reader?

Will you do me the pleasure and yourself the benefit of reading these lines carefully? Agreed, huh?

In this life we receive nothing, except we pay the price for it, that it is worth. Thus we generally pay the amount that is needed to buy a given car. And truly that is the way also in God’s church. The price that we all must pay to understand the Truth is the effort of learning. We should not be like the Scotchman, who would not send his boy to school because the latter had to pay attention! You smile, but don’t forget, that, underneath all humor in this life, there is a world of tragedy! God simply does not teach us without demanding of us the obedience of effort.

I wrote the former paragraph in view of the fact, that, shall I tell you something about the meaning of the term “Sacrament”, I will have to take you back many centuries on the calendar of human history, in your thoughts. I refer, of course, to usage of the Latin term “Sacramentum” among the Romans, who lived already before the birth of Christ. These Romans were not men who knew the Holy Scriptures, nor did the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ lead them into all truth. They were outside of the promises and the covenants and the commonwealth of Israel, and they were without God and without hope in the world. God suffered them to walk in their own chosen ways. Eph. 2:11, 12; Acts 14:16.

These men could not possibly mean with the term “Sacramentum” what we as the believers in Christ understand to be the meaning of the term. They were not men taught of God; they were men, who, while they were estranged from the life of God, could not seek out God. They kept the truth of God down in unrighteousness. Canons of Dort, III, IV, 1-6. Let us keep this truth before our eyes as the very beacon light of the
Word of God.

When the Romans used the term "Sacramentum" they simply spoke of the term as representing an act, a solemn rite between men and men. It never rose to the height of the relationship of God to man. It did not, neither could it.

What did the term stand for with the Romans?

In general we can say, that it referred to a gift brought by man in any covenantal agreement or act.

Thus in the language of the lawyers of that day, a Sacramentum was a sum of money, which the two parties in a suit at law both first deposited, but which afterward became bound with the heads of the government (tresviri Capitales). This money thus deposited, by the losing party at law, was used for religious purposes in the heathen shrines. It was a gift of good faith connected with the oath and dedicated to the gods. It was a pledge of good faith concerning their cause. This is the usage of the term Sacramentum among the Romans.

In military usage the term Sacramentum referred to the oath of promised faithfulness, given by newly enlisted troops from foreign lands. This Sacramentum of the Romans was properly the Ceremony connected with the giving of the oath by the men who enlisted in the Roman Army.

And in Civil life, among the Romans, the term Sacramentum was an oath by which a solemn obligation in public life was assumed.

Now what is peculiar about the usage of the term amongst the Romans? We would point out the following:

1. That the term is used in the legal, military and civil life in the official sense of the term. It is connected with a solemn rite. But in this solemn rite God as the Savior of man is not in all their thoughts. The entire usage has nothing of the promise of the Gospel in it.

2. That it's usage is wholly something that man must bring to show good faith. Here is nothing of the glad speech of the Gospel, which proclaims God's love in Christ.

3. It may be that there was a element of "mysteries" connected with these solemn rites; there was, no doubt, much superstition mingled with this all as this is the outgrowth of unbelief and folly. However, there was nothing in this all of the Mystery of Godliness that is great. It knows nothing of the Mystery, that God is revealed in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. I Tim. 3:16.

There are two questions here that suggest themselves:

The first is, if such is the humanistic-paganistic meaning of the term Sacramentum, how is it that the Church has seen fit to use this term to designate Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper? The second is: how did the church fathers come to employ this term; what are the steps followed in the reasoning of the fathers to come to use this term?

Shall we keep this question for our next issue of Beacon Lights?
The Military Mail Bag

We find that two of our servicemen have recently been discharged, namely John Bekendam from Redlands, and Carl Idema from First Church. Our first news item comes from Ernie Van Weelden from our Oskaloosa church, and he writes that he received his first copy of Beacon Lights since being overseas and that he enjoys it very much. Thanks for writing us Ernie, and we'll look forward to receiving a letter when you have time.

We received a letter from Bill Faber from First Church, and we'd like to thank him for taking time out:

"I thought it was about time I dropped a line to let you know how I'm doing. I want to thank the staff first of all for sending the Beacon Lights. It really is appreciated, it brings us closer together with our own people, and I think all the boys will agree to that.

"So far I have been in the Army over 8 months and have been very fortunate. I was stationed at Ft. Sheridan for 7 months in the M P.'s. Now I am on detached service in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I have a clerks job in the Military Police Office. We have a detachment of about 38 men who ride trains and see that all Military Personnel are kept out of trouble, and also men who are AWOL (absent without leave) are picked up. It is surprising how many men go AWOL and it’s usually those men who are the ones who get into trouble. Just the other day we picked up a man who was a deserter since 1943.

"I don't know how long I will be stationed up here. My orders read for an indefinite period of time. In the Army you don’t know what will happen from one minute to the next, you just have to follow orders. But we were called for a reason, and we must make the best of it. They say 'You will find a home in the Army,’ but I never did yet. A Christian can't be at home in the midst of worldly people. It surely will be sw
to be amongst the Prot. Ref. people again. Until later.

Your Christian Friend,
Pvt. William Faber, U.S. 55074021
Hotel Dyckman
Minneapolis, Minnesota.

* * * *

Another letter comes from a Manhat-tenite, Al Visser. He’s one fellow we can really count on, so keep up the good work, Al.

“I came back from Chapel services a short while ago. Now that I haven’t too much to do, I figured I might as well drop you a line and let you know the new address. We drifted over the pond, finally, and arrived here in Germany. After leaving the ship, they took us to this place close to Mannheim. We have swell quarters here, wonderful barracks. I am enjoying my stay here so far. I’ve been out on a pass just once, but they are holding tight to the passes.

That is it for now, so I’ll sign off, and I’ll send along a picture of myself for Beacon Lights.

Sincerely,
Pfc. Albert P. Visser, U.S. 56092529
Btry. “B” 95th AAA Gun Bn.
APO 46, c/o Postmaster
New York, New York.

* * * *

Seems as if only fellows from Mau-hatten have time to write this month, as we have received a letter from Harold Moss, “somewhere in Germany.”

“Well, It’s high time I write you once more, as it has been quite some time since I wrote to you. Since the last time, a lot of things have happened and I have gone far out across the ocean blue to a really beautiful land. As I write, it is Saturday morning, and we are out on maneuvers, or otherwise known as simulated war action. Our job for the present is to give anti-aircraft protection to Div. Trans., which is where all supplies come from, food, clothing, ammunition and transportation, and even the medics are included in it. So our part is not too bad as we are at present about 15 miles behind the main battle front. We have been out here for nearly a week now. The actual battle part did not start until one minute after midnight Friday morning, and will last til Oct. 1st. From there we go into another maneuver, just like this one, only it will last from Oct. 3rd to Oct. 10th.
"The weather has been pretty nice up until today, but it looks like rain now. I suppose it will have to rain so as to make it all complete in everything.

"Since I have arrived in Germany I have crossed it 3 times already. From Bremerhaven down to Mannheim and then back to the Danish border and back to Mannheim again. Every mile I have traveled here I sure have enjoyed, as it is really a beautiful land. From what I have seen of the States, I have yet to see any part of it that can compare to this in any way. I always thought Montana was beautiful, as do many people, but this outshines it by far. I could easily elaborate on it some more but it would only fill a book, so I will just say I would not miss it for anything, although I would sooner be seeing it on my own, than under the Army, but then it is free in a way, this way. I always used to dream of taking a honeymoon trip out in Europe, and now more than ever I do. Seeing as how I am still single, I may yet get a chance, the Lord willing, that is. It is a picturesque country everywhere you care to go.

"I have been to Heidelberg for a while one day, and saw the Heidelberg castle which is very amazing, in the fact that it is still in very fine condition. It seems like the castles were not touched in the past war at all, which is really wonderful.

"Right now, I am only a few miles from an old buddy of mine and a friend of yours, Al Visser. As of now, we have not met each other. I hope as soon as we get done with maneuvers I can get a pass to see him. He is stationed in Mannheim, which from his last letter, supposed to be his permanent camp. While mine is some miles from there at Mainz. As of this writing we have not yet been near our permanent camp. During the time I have been here, I have lived in tents most of the time. I have spent only 13 days in barracks and these were sure wonderful. We have been living in tents due to the fact that our barracks at Mainz are not ready for us, but will be when we are finished out here in the field.

"It is amazing how fast this country has gotten back on its feet. As one does not find much evidence of the past war out in the country. In the large towns and cities, you can find lots of wrecked buildings, but the rubble has been pretty well cleaned away. Lots of new buildings are going up in the place of wrecked ones. The farms are most of them growing wonderful crops, though right now most of them are stored away. The people here seem to live in constant fear of the Russians, for they almost all say something about the Russians being no good, and the like. It really is a shame that one nation must always be living in fear of another, but I suppose it is one more of the Lord's ways, and His ways are past finding out.

"Before I started I just finished reading the August issue of Beacon Lights which I just recently received, and enjoyed it very much. Especially the article of Dr. Schuiler and Youth Society of Chatham. I must whole-heartedly agree with Dr. Schuiler, as we must never say we are the only True church, and all (continued on page 12)
THE VAGABOND

For centuries small tribes or clans of dark-skinned, black-haired people, gaudily dressed, have traversed the European and American continents. Although they have no basic religion or social structure which binds them together, their habits and shiftless manner of living identifies them. According to historians they originated in India and are more commonly known as “gypsies.”

In the realm of insects there is a moth which bears that same name—the gypsy moth. It, too, is a traveler and universal thief in that it feasts upon foliage of trees and shrubs with little discrimination and destroys the beauty and greenness of the plant. The destructive stage is that of the caterpillar.

The female moth is approximately twice the size of the mate and although it possesses wings it is unable to fly due to its heavy body. The body and wings are colored white with black markings. Very productive is this moth, laying her clusters of four to five hundred eggs in a variety of places as tree trunks, rock crevices, beneath stones or bark, in leaves or walls. A rather interesting fact is that this moth’s instinct seems more maternal than many others in that it takes the hairs from its own body to form a blanket and protection over the delicate eggs. Instinctively, the mother has cared for the new little caterpillars which hatch in the warm spring just as the available young leaves begin to unfold. Now the caterpillar in its state of development must recloth itself several times as garment after garment is shed by the enlarging insect in its larval stage. Although the caterpillar has no wings it is able to fly, but in a very peculiar manner. Soft, fluffy hair covers the body during this larval period. Gusts of winds blow these tiny larval into the air as they are dropping from trees by delicate silken strands which they spin while they descend (similar to the spider). It is not uncommon to be wafted away more than twenty miles. Thus, each generation is spread further and further resulting in havoc in the plant kingdom. When leaves of trees and shrubs are scarce, the relentless insect attacks grass, crops, or anything that it can strip. Beauty is turned into waste and barrenness.

How did this devastating insect reach our shore? It was in 1869 that Trouvelot, a French scientist, who was concerned about a plague detrimental to silkworms, introduced the gypsy moth from the Old World. He was attempting to cross various moths with the silkworm to produce a strain of caterpillars able to spin a silk which would not be effected by the destructive disease then prevalent. The
eggs of these different species of moths were kept in boxes, and carefully guarded.

However, on an eventful day, it took but one gust of wind to carry the light box with its destructive contents from the window sill of his lab to the ground. A tragedy, indeed! In vain he searched with his magnifying glass for these wee eggs on the ground below and surrounding territory. Nor did he conceal his accident, but immediately informed authorities, realizing that they must be on guard at once.

For the next fifteen years nothing serious happened, but in 1889 in Medford, a band of gypsy moths invaded the town. A plague it was, and gardens were infested with the swarming creatures, parks were stripped, trees were bared, houses entered by the hordes of caterpillars on their "hunger march." Housewives found them in beds, in cupboards and every conceivable place. Evidence it was of the productive life cycle.

How could man fight the small but numerous invaders? A question, indeed, for the scientist. Millions of dollars were spent and hundreds of men employed to fight this foe. In the autumn diligent search was made to destroy the clusters of eggs of the gypsy moth, while in the spring of the year a poisonous spray was used on trees. These methods could by no means control the rapid spread of this undesirable insect. It was essential to find a natural enemy which preyed upon these moths. To the shores of Japan and Europe (the native habitat of the gypsy insect) sailed scientists bent upon this goal. Results were gratifying, and they returned with a collection of a certain kind of beetle called the Calosoma beetle. It is a beautiful colorful insect with various shades of green, violet, copper, blue, and gold. What an ally this has proved to be, as it ascends the highest trees to capture and devour its prey and our enemy—the caterpillar of the gypsy moth. It has been estimated that during its lifetime one Calosoma beetle destroys the equivalent of three hundred grown worms.

By no means is this "insect war" over, it goes on without the sound of weapon and gun, but continues to cost our government at least two million dollars a year. The damage already done can never be estimated, and at present thirty-five thousand square miles of our eastern U. S., especially in New England is invaded by a tiny enemy—The Gypsy Moth!

We acknowledge with thanks:

**G I F T S**

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South Holland Prot. Ladies Aid... 10.00
Mr. and Mrs. B. Woudenberg..... 1.50
OPEN FORUM

Our last Young People’s Convention entertained two proposals from two of its Grand Rapids Societies which have to do with the duties, privileges, control, policy, editorship, etc., of the publication of Beacon Lights. We understand that for some reason the business of these proposals could not be finished and so a committee has been appointed to study the issues involved and bring some sound advice to next year’s convention.

In light of this we want to express the sentiment of our society with respect to some of the matters in question and hope that by doing so we may arouse an intelligent discussion of this important issue so that at our next year’s convention we may be alert to what is going on so that no unwise constitutional laws are slipped by that would only prove detrimental to the publishing of our Beacon Lights for years to come. In this there is no insinuation but a warning to move cautiously. It is better to warn against a possible mistake than to have to undo and correct an evil committed.

Our belief is that whatever rules may be adopted to facilitate the publishing of Beacon Lights, none of them should curtail the rights and privileges of the editor or department contributors. We must not burden the editors with a “censorious board of policy bosses” whose task it will be to do all except to compose the original manuscript. We have heard that in the past the editor was virtually forbidden to write on certain subjects because they happened to be topics of controversy in the church. If that is true, we consider it deplorable. It is tantamount to telling our young people (main readers of Beacon Lights) that the subjects of current church controversy are none of their business. And if that is so, where goes the church of tomorrow? We oppose any attempt to enter into the constitution of the federation any power that would so bind editors and department contributors.

We are of the opinion that an editor, appointed with the confidence of the Board, ought to retain the liberty to write about whatever he may see fitting. His task is to give expression to our specific Protestant Reformed Character and it is for him alone to decide whether he will do that (a) with a positive expression of our faith; (b) in an apologetic manner; (c) by refuting errors of the past or present; (d) in some other manner. If this liberty be taken away, we cannot conceive of anyone who would willingly serve as an “enslaved editor.”

Does this mean, then, that we do not care what may appear in our magazine? Of course not! To draw such conclusion is absurd for it must be remembered that (1) we must exercise confidence in our editors and if we cannot do this, we might better not have them at all; (2) we must allow them to freely express their own personal viewpoint whether we agree with that viewpoint or not because this is conducive to open, free, and honest debate and discussion which is wholesome for us all; (3) we do not
express in our stand that Beacon Light’s or the Federation is responsible for every ‘idea or notion’ an editor may express but we hold that the editor alone must give account of his own writing. If there is question, he will be called to defend his view. If there are serious doubts or questions as to his ‘orthodoxy’, he should be dismissed as editor rather than put in the hands of “policy bosses.”

We are also acquainted with the fact that in the past an undesirable piece crept into Beacon Lights. Without entering that matter we want to point out that this does not alter our view. We emphasize that the Federation Board should make a careful distinction between the “copy of its appointed editors and department contributors” and what we might call “voluntary contributions’. The latter may be written by anyone from anywhere and all such copy not only should but MUST be censured by the Publication Committee before it is submitted to the press. We do not say that the Board must exercise “confidence” in everyone but we insist that they should confide in those whom they appoint.

And so we urge the Federation Board, the Committee that has these proposals under study, and most of all the delegates to-be at the next convention to be very cautious to take no steps in which these editorial liberties will be curtailed or destroyed. At the same time we urge that all necessary action be taken to safeguard our magazine and to preserve its ‘distinctive Reformed character’.

And, lastly we ask our fellow societies to give expression to their views on this matter as we have so that through an intelligent and instructive discussion we may reach a decision that is in the best interests of Beacon Lights!

The Oaklawn Young People’s Society

Military Mail Bag—
(Continued from page 8)

Others are false, for then we are as nearly bad as the Pharisees of Jesus’ day.

Now as for Communion, I have an idea of my own, which may be wrong or again, it may be right. I do partake of it here once in a while, but I try and think of our Form for the Lord’s Supper, and then I partake as an individual, and at the same time think of the True church in Christ, and my church back home. If I partook of it as a group with the rest, I never could do it, as too many of the boys here take it too lightly.

Well, I am going to sign off for now, with my appreciation for getting Beacon Lights, as I enjoy every bit of it.

A Friend in the Lord, Harold,
Cpl. Harold F. Moss, U.S. 56092759
Btry “D” 94th AAA, AW, Bn. (S.P)
APO 42 c/o P. M.
New York, New York.

Thanks for writing us such a swell letter, Harold, and we know the rest of the fellows are going to enjoy reading it as much as the staff has. Any time you fellows have spare time, why not drop us a line? After all, just because you write us one letter, is no sign we don’t like to hear from you oftener. If it doesn’t get in one issue, it’s sure to get in the next, and as I’ve been told, who doesn’t like to see their ‘stuff’ in print?
FAITH AND CHRISTIAN LIVING

Because the word 'faith' as used in the Bible has various shades of meaning, it will be necessary at the very outset of this writing to make clear what the word denotes in this connection. Sometimes 'faith' expresses 'the act of believing.' Then again it may denote 'a continuous activity or life of good works.' More specifically we can speak of the different aspects of faith as 'knowledge, confidence, trust, assurance, etc.'

In our present writing, however, these phases of the faith are not our main interest. When we use the word we rather denote by it 'confession' and more specifically still 'the sum of the things confessed.' This meaning we find in the use of the word in Jude 3 which speaks of "contending for the faith once delivered to the saints." According to our Heidelberg Catechism the content of this faith is richly expressed in the twelve articles of faith commonly known as the Apostolic Confession. Your and my faith then is the substance of what we 'believe' and in our present discussion we are to see what relation that has to our daily Christian living.

This relation is very important. Needless to say, we always act and live according to the things that we believe. Everyone does that. A person who has no convictions and, therefore, believes nothing also has no directive or goal toward which he strives in life. These are "shifters, careless, sluggish" and live only in the things of the immediate present. Other people there are who believe 'the lie.' These are more energetic and also live for a purpose which is evil. They direct the course of their life along the wrong road which can only lead to ultimate destruction and ruin. This group, always the world's majority, have the faith of the devil whose works they also perform. They are really a 'delusory, dissatisfied, insatiable' people because their hearts and lives are full of the things that perish. Then there is yet the small minority called "saints" who embrace the truth and contend for the faith. They know the truth, they love the truth and they pattern their actions and lives after the truth because to them the confession of their faith is not simply an expression of doctrinal facts but 'doctrine and life are inseparable.' They act as they think, they live their convictions, and they walk in the truth. These then are 'living christians.'

Does it matter then to us, young people, what we believe or to what confession we subscribe? Indeed it does. It matters so much that not only is our
whole life determined by our faith but the end of life's course is also fixed accordingly. To believe and follow the lie is to be damned while to believe and walk in the truth is to be saved. Can you even conceive of one thing in life with more serious personal consequences? Can you and do you in this light put anything before the things pertaining to 'faith'? We cannot escape the fact that our daily living is a clear reflection of our faith!

What then do we believe and how does this affect our actions?

This question we must consider as Protestant Reformed youth with the purpose in view of applying the principles of our faith to our living. When we do this we learn that not only do we have a "distinctive truth" but also a "distinctive life." We do not believe as the 'modern christian' (??) nor as the 'arminian christian' (??) nor as the 'pietistic or mystic' christian (??) nor as the 'anabaptistic' christian (??) but we have a true Reformed content to our faith and that implies that we do not and cannot and may not live as these others but must, under the impulsion of our faith, live as Reformed Christian in the midst of this world. Our 'view' of life is distinct and, therefore, our life, too, must be different from all that we see being practiced under the false guise of christian living.

For this peculiar heritage we ought to be deeply thankful. To conform our lives to the pattern of the true faith must never be a "burdensome" thing or an "imposition" but should always be a "joy" and "pleasure." Instead of our speaking about "duties, obligations, responsibilities" etc., let us speak about the "privileges of our faith." To live daily in the covenant of God and to enjoy His fellowship in the way of faith is the highest blessing we mortals can receive. Considering that we deserve none of it, we will overflow with thankfulness at the thought of the grace through which it is bestowed. Although we are grateful for all things received of the Lord, let this be the heart of the expression of our thanksgiving also this month.

Now to bring that faith to its peculiar expression in our lives several factors may be helpful. The chief means is the preaching of the Word (content of our faith) for through hearing cometh faith. All the means of grace are important in this connection. As supplements we may add 'personal study of the Word' through which we ever grow in the apprehension of faith. Our 'societies' too have the task to weigh the faith in its practical application to living. All means which enable us to understand the principles of faith help us to attain unto a better christian living. Remembering that "all that is not of faith is sin" and "without faith we cannot please God," we hope in months to come to continue to discuss "the things we believe in their relation to the things we do." This we believe will lead us live out our convictions of the truth and doing this we will practice 'christian living.'
OUTLINE 5

B. I Cor. 1:11-12. The Occasion for the Exhortation to Unity.


a. Identity of Chloe's household. It is impossible to determine the exact identity of this Chloe. Nor is this necessary. Whether she was a member of the Church in Corinth and her relatives lived or were visiting in Ephesus; or, whether she herself lived in Ephesus and was visited or contacted by other means through relatives who were members of the Church in Corinth, this all makes very little difference. The important thing to be noticed is that Paul needs not to explain her identity nor those of her household for the simple reason that they were well known to the Corinthian Church.

It is also to be noticed that not Chloe herself brought a report to the apostle, but those of her household. These may have been her children or servants.

b. The report. They had reported to the apostle that there were contentions in the Church at Corinth. The word 'contentions' by itself does not indicate that there were actual divisions in the Church, but rather, it indicates that there were wranglings in this Church which if they did not soon cease would lead to open division. Those that were of Chloe, it appears, were outside of these contentions, i.e., they themselves had no part in them, and were deeply conscious of their malicious working and result. Hence they came to the apostle not only with this information, but also evidently with an appeal that he use every means to stop them.

The objection should not be entertained that the apostle is guilty here of listening to idle gossip. For we notice especially three things that make this impossible. First, the report is not given to him by merely one individual, but those of the house of Chloe are plural. In the mouth of two or three shall every word be established. Second, the apostle mentions the names of his informants, which would not be the case if he had simply listened to tale-bearers. Thirdly, as we pointed out previously, the Church at Corinth had evidently sent a delegation to the apostle with questions respecting certain conditions in the congregation. So that evidently before the apostle would repeat the rumor, he would have confirmed it with the Church's representatives who were now visiting him.

2. The meaning of the report. vs. 12.

The words which introduce verse 12,
namely, “Now this I say,” really intend to indicate what the apostle means by "contentions. We could paraphrase thus: "there are contentions among you, and by this I mean that, etc."

There were four parties in the Church composed of those who acclaimed Paul, or Apollos, or Peter, or Christ as their leader. This does not mean, of course, that these four were actual leaders in the contentions and of the contending parties. For there was no contention among the so-called leaders. Though it was true for example that on one occasion Paul and Peter were at odds with one another (Gal. 2:11), their differences were so removed and Peter himself acknowledged perfect agreement with Paul as is evident from II Peter 3:15, 16. But rather it must be understood these parties themselves had contended with each other, and used the names of these leaders to support their contentions.

That there was also a ‘Christ-party’ does not make this contentious group the more pious. Perhaps they were the worst of the four. This becomes plain from what the apostle next declares in verse 13: "Is Christ divided?" As A. T. Robertson remarks: "In scouting the names of the other leaders they lowered the name and rank of Christ to their level."

Questions for Discussion:

1. Would the apostle have been justified in rebuking the Church for contentions on the basis of the rumor of one individual, say Chloe?
2. Could a Classis treat a Consistory with discipline that is reported by the annual Church Visitors as being guilty of some misdemeanor?
3. Are the contentious parties in this instance in anyway to be compared with such as Korah, Datham and Abiram, who contended with Moses? (Num. 16).
4. Does the fact that the feminine name ‘Chloe’ is mentioned indicate that women have an influential place in the Church and her government?

OUTLINE 6

C. I Cor. 1:13-17. Arguments against Disunity.

1. Christ is not divided.

When the apostle asks: "Is Christ divided?" he does not refer especially to the Christ-party. Rather he is speaking to all who are contentious in Corinth. Whether they were of Paul, Apollos, Cephas or Christ, all must admit that Christ is the one Lord of His Church. Christ crucified must be believed by all, or they cease to be the Church. The answer to the question: "Is Christ divided?" is an emphatic, NO! And if Christ is not to be divided, how then can there be those in the Church who intend to live separately from others who also bear the Name of Christ. This is impossible. You will notice how tactfully the apostle avoids the names of Apollos and Cephas in this connection. He will merely use himself as an illustration. So he tactfully condemns partisanship by neglecting to again mention the names of the so-called leaders. O, he will mention these names again, but with an entirely different purpose. (See: 3:4-6, 3:22). He does not use these names as party labels.
The unity of Christ is exemplified in His crucifixion. He was crucified for all. This is emphasized in the next question of the apostle when he says: "Was Paul crucified for you?" Of course not! All, no matter which party he belonged to, must admit that there was one only crucifixion, and therefore only one Saviour, and He is Christ. Though there be powerful leaders in the Church such as Paul, Peter, or Apollos, none can distract from the unifying power of Christ's saving work. Rather he must extol it.

2. The Church is not baptized in the name of Paul.

No! she is baptized in the Name of Christ, the Revelation of the Triune God. You will notice how the apostle plays on the thought expressed in the question: "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" He thanks God that he had baptized only a very few. There is really no one who can boast that he belongs to Paul's party simply because Paul baptized him. He mentions by name those whom he had baptized, and then, as it were by a slip of memory, he suddenly recalls that besides Crispus and Gaius he had also baptized the household of Stephanas. What an effect this must have on those in Corinth who had boasted in Paul as their leader! If they were of the party of Paul and prided themselves in the fact that Paul had baptized them, they would now be put to shame, because Paul hardly remembers.

Surely Crispus, Gaius and Stephanas were not sufficient to constitute a Paul's party in the Church. And all of these, well-known to the Corinthians, would certainly not allow that they were baptized in the name of Paul. How absurd then that any should say be belongs to a Paul's party or any other for that matter. They were all baptized into the Name of Christ, and covered by what that baptism signified. There was their real unity. (See: I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:5).

3. The Preaching of Christ Crucified is Central. vs. 17.

It is important to notice here that the negative 'not' does not go with the infinitive 'to baptize', but with the main verb 'sent'. We might gather from the English translation that the apostle meant to say that Christ did not send him to baptize. This, of course, would not be correct. For Paul as well as all the others was obligated to fulfill the command of Christ in Matt. 28:19 "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of, etc." Though it is no doubt true the apostles themselves did not conduct the actual baptisms, but did this through their helpers, they all were deeply conscious of this aspect of their calling. Rather we should see what the apostle really wants to emphasize here. Actually he says: I am not sent to be a baptizer, but a gospelizer. Baptism was only a result. Preaching the Gospel was the main thing. That this is so, will become evident in the verses and chapters which follow.

About the contents of that preaching, its manner of presentation, and its results, the apostle is about to speak at length. But already here, he clearly
enunciates that the preaching which is central is Christ and Him crucified.

Christ sent him to preach “not with wisdom of words.” Literally: not in wisdom of a word; i.e., human word, as over against THE Word, i.e., the Word of the Cross. The wisdom of a word is man’s wisdom which, as we shall see, makes the cross foolishness.

Though the apostle does not mention names here, and very tactfully so, he may have in mind the Apollos’ party, which evidently gloated in the fact that their leader was one who was mighty in word. This is not, of course, a reflection on the person of Apollos who no doubt as strongly as the apostle was adverse to partisanship and himself would have disowned the party under his name. No, the apostle has in mind the section in the Church which rather than glorying in the Gospel of the Cross of Christ, revealed in the fine arts of the preacher, who could very appealingly and with much oratory sway the audience.

Paul simply argues that preaching whose contents is mere words of human wisdom empties the cross of Christ, or really the Word of the Cross of Christ of its real content. If the Church of Christ will be truly unified she must insist on the preaching of the Cross of Christ. Anything else will disrupt this unity, and destroy the Church.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Is the apparent lapse in Paul’s memory indicative of the fact that inspiration was not mechanical?
2. Is it always sinful for the Church or groups in the Church to adhere to a certain leader?
3. Is it proper that Reformed Churches call themselves Calvinists?
4. Would it be wrong for a preacher to speak on the theory of Evolution in a sermon?
5. Is it strictly true that the preacher can make the cross of Christ of none effect?


OUTLINE 7


1. The Preaching of the Cross a Power.
   Verse 18.

   a. What is a power? Literally we read here: “For the Word of the cross.” By the “Cross” must be understood the cross of Christ. There is principally only one cross. Yes, the world also speaks of its crosses. When things don’t seem to run right, when calamities, pestilences, etc., come upon it, when its citizens become sick with fatal maladies, the world speaks of the crosses it bears. Scripture also speaks of the crosses the people of God are called to bear. They are commanded to deny themselves and to take up and bear the cross after Jesus. Even among Christians one often hears the expression; he or she has a heavy cross to bear, or, each house has its cross. Yet all of these crosses are such only when they are connected to and result from the proper relation to the One Cross of Christ. The one cross of Christ stands pivotal in the midst of the world. This passage does not speak of ‘crosses’, but of the cross, the one, only, unique cross. The cross that swallow
up all crosses. It is the cross of Golgotha, the one on which Jesus died, that accursed tree to which He was nailed, and from which He shed His life's blood.

It is that cross with all that stands connected to it. It is true that the cross is centrally the cross of Christ on Golgotha. That bloody cross on which the Saviour was hanged, some two-thousand years ago. But it includes more than that. It includes all the suffering of Christ, as well as all that Christ stands for. Christ suffered more than the actual pain of the cross. From the beginning of His incarnation to the end of His life upon earth He suffered. And all this suffering and death of Christ means nothing unless there is included in it the resurrection and all the attending blessings of salvation. Take the resurrection away from the cross, and the word of the cross has no significance. Take the attending blessings of salvation out of the idea of the cross, and all you have left is a bloody man who died perhaps for his principles. The cross therefore means Christ and all that stands connected with Him and the work He came to accomplish.

You will notice that the apostle speaks of "the word" of the cross, not as our English translation has it: "the preaching of the cross." O, yes, that also, for how could there be a word without the expression of it? And to preach concerning the cross is to give expression of the word concerning it. But the thought is much deeper than merely the expression. The "word" of the cross is first of all the word which is in the cross and then concerning it. In other words, the cross and all it represents is a word. Being a word, it is also a thought. As a thought, it finds its source and origin only in God. God had a thought. God revealed that thought through a word. And that word expressed comes to its own in the cross and must be concerning it.

The cross is therefore a Divine Word. This word of God is both eternal and creative. "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made and all the hosts of them by the breath of His mouth." By the word of His power He upholds all things in heaven and earth. So it is also with the word of the cross. It is an eternal idea, thought, and word which He eternally speaks. And when in time He speaks the word of the cross, then that cross with all its importance comes into the sphere of created things. The Way of the cross is ordained by Him. The Christ of the cross is His creature. The whole word of the cross is His word.

As to its contents, this word of the cross may be said to be three-fold. It is first of all a word concerning the necessity of the cross. The highest necessity is the glory of God. The mediate necessity is the fact of sin. Secondly, it is a revelation of atonement and reconciliation. Thirdly, it speaks also of the effects of that cross.

b. Of whom a power? It is a power of God. Never is the word of the cross a power of impotent man. So it is often conceived of in our day. But such a conception is just what the apostle militates against. He is afraid of his own word, and man's wisdom. Such a word
must necessarily negate the word of the cross and oppose it. No, the word of the cross is a power of God. The word for power here is the same as our word dynamic. It is a working power that is capable of bringing something to pass. As a dynamo generates electricity, so the power of which the apostle speaks works something. It is God’s power which He uses and with which He works.

This power He displays first of all in the cross itself. In that cross He displays His power to save. Through Christ that power comes to manifestation. Secondly, He lays the word of the cross in the apostles. That same word He spoke on Golgotha and the resurrection, He speaks through the Spirit of Christ in the apostles. So the word of reconciliation is in them, and they speak and write that same word to the Church. And finally, He operates by the power of that word thru the apostles in the hearts of men.

c. Unto whom it is a power. The text says the word of the cross is a power of God to those who are perishing and unto those who are being saved. Or, as the apostle says elsewhere: it is a savor of life unto life, or a savor of death unto death. There is purpose in this power of God which is the word of the cross. It hardens and it damns. It works energetically and efficaciously in the minds and hearts of those who are in the process of perishing to make them perish. While on the other hand, just as energetically and efficaciously it works in the minds and hearts of those in the process of being saved, to save them.

The word of the cross is not a power of God unto salvation unto all.


The apostle in these verses quotes from several passages in Isaiah to substantiate what he had just written. It will be noted that when he quotes from Isaiah he does not quote literally, but he merely gives the sense. The passages referred to are most probably: Isa. 19:12; 29:14; 33:18. He introduces these quotations with: “For it is written.” The perfect tense signifies that the written word in Isaiah stands as written for all time, for every age, with all that the word contains. (See: Rom. 15:4).

If you study all the texts referred to above, the following becomes evident

a. There are those who by their own wisdom, and artifice will seek to counsel the people of God with a different counsel than that of Jehovah.

b. The Lord shall bring to pass His Word, contrary to the advices of mere men.

c. When the Lord has worked, men will look in vain for the fulfillment of man’s predictions. For the Lord will destroy all the wisdom of the wise, etc.

The word “For” at the beginning of these verses answers the question why is this so, namely, what the apostle has said in the preceding; i.e., it does not answer the question why the word of the cross is foolishness and a power, for no proof is necessary to show that. A plain statement of Scripture will suffic-
o show it is true. But it answers the question: Why it is so that those perish who consider the word of the cross foolishness.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Who today consider the word of the cross a power of man?
2. What is the difference between wisdom and understanding?
3. If the word “world” in verse 20 is translated “age” as it should be, what is the difference?
4. How do you explain that the apostle can quote Scripture and give it his own meaning?

OUTLINE 8

3. 1 Cor. 1:21 The Only Way to Salvation Pleasing to God.

a. The Way as Such.

1. Through the foolishness of preaching. The preaching also here has for its contents the word of the cross. However there is a distinction here in the manner of its presentation. The word “preaching” is not the same as that used in verse 17. There the word “preach” meant literally: to bring good tidings, to evangelize. Here it refers only to the declaration, the heralding of the Gospel. The preaching of the cross refers then merely to the announcement of the cross, to draw attention to it, to deliver a message concerning it.

This preaching of the cross, the wisdom of the world calls foolishness. Of this we saw already in verse 18: “For the preaching (or word) of the cross is to them that perish foolishness.” This does not mean that this preaching is really foolishness. Since it is essentially a display of Divine wisdom. If it were foolish, it would be the opposite of God’s wisdom. But the apostle employs the world’s vocabulary to show up their folly. The world calls this preaching utter folly. Through such a weak, foolish, and base thing as a cross the worldling wills not to be saved. When the world sees the bloody Man of the cross, they laugh. When they are told that salvation and blessedness are hidden in that bruised Spectacle, they scorn. They ask: Would you have us believe that a Man Who calls Himself a Worm can possibly be a Saviour? Will He give us that utopia we are looking for? That is sheer nonsense!

But the Lord says: What the world calls foolish and absurd is My way to save.

2. This way is well-pleasing to God. It is the only way to salvation. Salvation is deliverance out of deepest depths of eternal death and misery, and deliverance unto the highest glory and eternal life. The only way to that salvation is through the foolishness of preaching. You see, worldly wisdom also seeks salvation. No one will deny that the world needs salvation. Things are so unsafe that also the world calls this globe a vale of tears. But the world seeks salvation quite other than that proclaimed in the cross, and through means other than the preaching of the cross. It seeks salvation in world courts and peace conferences. It is even willing to undergo psycho analysis to diagnose its physical and mental ills. Sometimes it seeks salvation in many saviours: education, reform, in various isms, e.g.,
socialism, communism, and in individual leaders. And the world also has a heaven of heavens, a place of abiding bliss to which it aspires, but one without God and His Christ.

But the only way to salvation is through the preaching of the cross. Notice the text does not say through the cross, but God saves through the foolishness of preaching. Disregard the preaching of the cross, and you disregard the cross itself with all its significance. By the preaching that cross comes to those who must be saved by it. Where there is no preaching, here can be no cross through which men are saved. God saves only in that way.

This is according to His good pleasure, i.e., not only by Divine decree, choice, or ordination; but this means that God had delight in that choice. He finds perfect delight in saving in this way.

b. Why well pleasing to God? Because the world will not acknowledge God through wisdom. The question here is: what is meant by the first and second wisdom in the text? Is the first wisdom the attribute of God? Is it our Lord Jesus Christ who is called the wisdom of God? (vs. 30) Or is it the wisdom of God in the creation? Undoubtedly it is the latter. This is in harmony with Romans 1. In creation there is one grand display of the wisdom of God. There is His divinity, His God-head clearly manifested. The second wisdom is the philosophy of man. So we have this: the world with its wisdom standing in the sphere of God's wisdom refused to acknowledge God. But God would be acknowledged as God. He would do this first of all by confounding the wisdom of the wise, and secondly, by saving a people who would know Him, who would taste Him and call Him Good. These He would save through the preaching of the cross.

c. Who are saved in that way? The believers. These are they who by grace receive the preaching of the cross, are convicted by the truth, and who put all their confidence in it unto their salvation. What do they believe? That God is God. That the preaching of the cross is the wisdom of God. That in the wisdom of God they are saved through the word of the cross.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Does the world call the preaching of the cross foolishness because it is illogical, or for some other reason?
2. How much of the wisdom of God does the wisdom of the world perceive?
3. Could we say that the wisdom of the world is the same as “the glimmerings of natural light” in Canons III, IV, 4?
4. What according to Romans 1 does the world do with the wisdom of God revealed in creation?
A TEAR FOR JUDAS
by LeGette Blythe
The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc.

"Look at the tree, Shelomith. It has been buffeted by the winds—the burning sirocco from the East, the blasts from the Great Sea, the hot desert winds from below Kirriot, the wet winds that rush down from the north. It has been buffeted, Shelomith, and it has bent beneath the fury of the tempest, but it has never yielded. It has always lived in danger. Danger presses upon its roots. It stands on the rim of the precipice. It has never been away from the very brink of destruction. Yet it has stood.

"May the God of Israel grant me such a life! May I be hard and tough and unyielding, and may I tread the borders of destruction and yet not fall into the abyss!

"Then I shall accomplish what I swore to do."

Judas, born in a time of violence and sworn to vengeance, is the central figure in this new novel by Le Gette Blythe.

As a little boy Judas was witness to the horrible death of his Uncle Bezek. Bezek was a member of a band known as the Zealots. This was an underground organization that defied the Roman conquerors and took it upon themselves to raise insurrection against Rome. Crucifixion was the punishment meted out to these Zealots who were captured and so it was that Judas' Uncle Bezek also died such an agonizing death.

Ever in Judas' eyes was to burn the memory of that scene of terrible death; ever his ears were to ring with Bezek's dying injunction. He was to go south to Kirriot, in the desert country of Judas, wait there till the Romans had grown soft and lost an edge of their cunning, and then he was to return to Galilee and raise another revolt that would drive the Roman eagle from the ancient and holy land.

Grown to manhood, Judas kept this purpose of his life fixed, a mission consecrated by dying words. Once the great day of vengeance had come and the Romans were driven into the sea, he would be free to marry Shelomith, his beloved, niece of the High Priest Caiaphas, and live with her near the tree by the precipice, buffeted, twisted, imperilled, but unyielding.

Then a strange force came into Judas' life. One day a tall young man in dusty robes was pointed out by the prophet John. Judas heard the stranger identified as one Jesus, of the household of a Nazareth carpenter. John the Baptist spoke of this man, spoke of him as one
whose shoestrings he would be unworthy to lose. Judas' heart stirred and beat rapidly within him. Could this Jesus be the Messiah of ancient prophecy, so long awaited?

In the months to come Judas was to grow well acquainted with Jesus of Nazareth. He accompanied Jesus on His rounds of teaching in the villages, on the lake, and in the countryside. He heard words that fascinated him and at the same time set his brain in a whirl—the gospel of love in a brain dedicated to hate. But he saw the wideness of a miraculous power greater than nature and stronger than all the force of man.

Then the momentous thought came to him. Here was the power to crush Rome. He, Judas, would turn and use that power, would turn it from the weakness and folly of love, and he would use it to work the liberation of Zion. He would force the Messiah to declare Himself the King of His chosen people and set up His throne in Jerusalem. He, Judas, would betray his Master to the temple leaders and Rome so that in order to save himself, this mighty man of God would call forth His legions of angels and unseat Israel's captors and raise again the kingdom of Israel.

"A Tear For Judah" mounts to a climax in the disclosure of a man whose name has become a symbol of man's failure to recognize the divinity of his own soul. The author would have Judas earn a tear of compassion. He is a portent of passions we know—ambition, greed, revenge. Judas' tree of life plunged at last into the abyss.

Such is the betrayer of the Christ presented in this story. The author would have us believe that really in his heart Judas did not mean to betray the Christ. In his hate-warped mind he was but trying to fulfill the ancient prophecy that a King should arise and that He should free His people. It is a matter of record that there were many at that time who expected Jesus to set up an earthly kingdom. Not the least of these were at times His own disciples. However Scripture does not substantiate the theory that this is also what motivated Judas to perform the betrayal. Rather the opposite is true. Holy Writ reveals Judas as a selfish, grasping man who Jesus Himself refers to as a devil.

As is so common amongst books of this type, by this we mean books that have these settings and background based upon Biblical times and whose characters and personalities are taken from the Bible, the author fails to grasp the true significance of these events. God has indeed hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. Only when we realize the utter folly of the philosophy of men which is so prevalent today and which is expounded in practically all of our present day literature can we begin to rejoice in that heritage which is ours. A heritage which God has laid away for His people and which He has chosen to reveal only unto those whose names He has written in The Lamb's Book of Life.
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