DEDICATED TO
our young men in the
Armed Forces . . . . .

ARMY

MARINES

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NAVY

COAST GUARD

THE APRIL ISSUE FOR 1953
A Servicemen's Issue . . .

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FOLLOWERS

The leaders in the church are important. They are men called of God and entrusted with the care and feeding of the flock. Naturally, they must be men of special gifts and abilities, and they are recognized as such.

But there is another group within the church which are equally important: the followers. Only a very few are leaders and the vast majority of us are followers, also called of God and also given definite duties and tasks. Following, too, requires special gifts and abilities, as well as the exercise and development of those gifts. We should never make the mistake of assuming that following requires no effort and serious application. Let us consider then what is implied and demanded of us in our capacity as followers.

Our following is essentially and primarily a following of Christ. Any following of human leaders is meaningless unless these men are men of God, for it is only insofar as our leaders are followers of Christ that we can follow them. Paul said to the Corinthians, "Be followers of me, even as I am of Christ." Thus, the prime requisite of following is faith in Christ. We follow Christ because we are his sheep and know his voice; it is Christ's voice we hear when we follow the leaders in the church.

We know his voice. A wealth of significance is contained in that statement. First, we are called by Christ. His voice summons us, and we respond in faith, as faithful followers of him. But we must know his voice. Consequently, ours must be an enlightened following, for only as it is enlightened is it a true and faithful following. We possess the prime requisite, faith, in a measure, but the extent to which we develop this faith into knowledge is often pitifully small. One of the confessional standards begins with the statement, "We believe in order that we may know." This implies that our faith must develop into knowledge, into enlightenment. We must think. Even we followers must think. It will not do that our leaders carry the whole burden of development in knowledge of Christ and in Christian living. They are our leaders, not our substitutes. They can and must guide us in the development of faith, but they cannot develop for us.

Ah, but it is painful, this thinking. It requires effort. It demands that we arouse ourselves from our lethargy, and work. No work of the hands and muscles is so demanding and wearying as this spiritual labor of following. To follow blindly is easy indeed, but that is not following at all. A string of boxcars follows the engine, but our following must be entirely different. If we know neither where we are being lead nor the significance of our actions, we are not following.

For example, take the matter of our denial of the theory of Common Grace. Our leaders have denied it; we deny it, too. Does this mean that we are following? Not necessarily. We are following if we have studied the meaning
of common grace and the significance of its denial, and have thereby reached an enlightened and intelligent conclusion. If we have not done this, if we have not thought our position, then our denial of common grace means nothing.

Or, to take a positive example, we often say that we are Calvinists, following the teachings of John Calvin. This means, among others things, that we believe in the limited atonement. How many of us can give a clear and significant account of this important doctrine? Or, for that matter, how many can even repeat the rote-memorized definition of it which was taught in catechism? The same may be said about the perseverance of the saints, the absolute sovereignty of God, and almost any other doctrine of the Reformed churches. Now, if our understanding of these all-important dogmas is so hazy and ill-defined, how can we say that we are followers of John Calvin? We cannot believe these doctrines if we do not know them, and we cannot disbelieve them, either. We then stand in a natural shadow-land of ignorance.

Of course, there are always intricacies of doctrine and faith which are beyond our depth. There always will be. But no one of us can say that he has explored his faith to the utmost of his ability. We must be especially wary of being satisfied with a shallow and superficial acquaintance with the doctrinal contents of our faith, of being content with the mere formal description of our doctrine without the living reality of it.

We are followers. Let us be proud of that fact. Let us accept the challenge which it brings. Are we faithful followers? Then let us develop in faith. We must explore the meaning and significance of the commitment we have made; we must read and study, and lis-

(Continued on page 11)
Hello To All Servicemen,

We're back once again with more letters and pictures. We hope you will enjoy them as much as we did. You're doing a grand job of keeping this column interesting—Keep it up.

Our first letter was written a long time ago. I imagine the author has given up hope that it would ever appear. Our apologies to A/3c Peter J. Bos from 1st Church in Grand Rapids. It definitely was worth waiting for however.

Tuesday, October 28, 1952

Dear Christian Friends,

It was with genuine pleasure that I read through the October issue of the BL. Receiving material from home, through the Church, makes you feel that you are not forgotten however far from home you may be.

Perhaps no one knows how much it means to a person away from home except an ex-service men. There are many times when you feel very discouraged and lonesome, and getting a pamphlet like the BL and issues of the radio sermons give you renewed hope.

I noticed that the October issue was void of a letter from our boys. And in this respect I have failed also, but will attempt to make it up with this manuscript. It is going to be a little long.

I arrived here in June. We are stationed about seven miles from Tripoli on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. I will try to be brief about this place called Tripoli.

It is inhabited mostly by the Arab people. Italians, Jews, English and the Americans make up the rest of the population.

Tripoli, in the province of Libya is protected by the British. There have been no serious disturbances here, although it is a known fact that the Italians here are mostly Communists and resent the Arab laws. Therefore British troops have to protect the Arabs for political reasons.

It is the Arab nation that I would like to tell you about. In all of my time in the service I have never seen so much open wickedness as there is here.

Truly Tripoli is of the Sodom and Gomorrah type.

A child of God can readily see how blessed he is of God to be in His grace when one sees so much sin. It is true that the Jewish nation is not morally right and are scattered over every portion of the earth. But I truly believe that the Arab people are cursed of God since Esau lost his birthright to Jacob.

In all their dwellings they are ruthless and to speak of them morally would not be possible in this paper.

As a person it is hard not to tell you what I see, hear, and know about this people. What
I would like to drive home to you is the fact that we, as Christians, should be thankful for the heritage that God has given us. It is only according to His divine grace and mercy that we are His people.

I know the other boys in service right now in all parts of the world are also against a great struggle and it is to them that I would like to say, "Keep up the good fight, that no one take your crown."

As God has kept you in the faith back home, so He will keep you in His care, no matter where you are. He knows where you are and will keep you in His love no matter what—Because you are His.

Next I would like to say that a letter is, above all other things, the most appreciated thing that can be sent to a person far from home. It makes you feel that people are thinking of you and have still remembered that you are the fellow that used to sit near you in church.

At present I am working over here as a Rowinsonde operator. We send up the balloons with a small radio transmitter attached which records the temperature and relative humidity from which we get our dew points and freezing levels which are important to the flight plans of our aircraft.

We receive this information on an SCR-658 receiver with an anteneae. We record the wind direction and speeds at different altitudes with this receiver and if we lose the balloon because of equipment failure we can follow it with a theodolite-taking readings once a minute.

Our weather station is situated on the sea shore 50 yards from the water. When we work the night shift we can see the sun come up in the morning and it really is a beautiful sight.

We work from 9:00 PM to 1:00 AM and 3:00 AM to 7:00 AM. We take four runs a day.

About the base itself—We have about 20 jets here and 15 B29's. But is is mainly a refueling base for cargo planes to Durban, Arabia and the Far East.

The base is getting a little overcrowded, but I am a little more fortunate than most. I live in Mussolini’s old billets where he kept his horses. Most of the boys live in tents.
ther in Michigan is a little colder than that.

Well, it's time for me to get to work again, so until the next time,

I Remain, Yours in Christ,
Peter J. Bos

Here's a picture of Pete and his theodolite.
That was a wonderful letter Pete. Thanks so much and I'm sure everyone will enjoy it.

From Tripoli we go to the other side of the world in Korea. This letter was written in February and is from Pvt. Willard Baar who was in Yong-do, Korea at the time.

Dear Friends,

I will try and tell you a little about what I am doing and where I am. I have been in the Army since March, 1952 so it's time I was writing.

I have been in Korea since the latter part of September and at present am with Co. C of the 8069th Replacement Battalion which is on Yong-do island just off the coast of Korea.

We are connected to the mainland by a bridge and are considered on the mainland because we are so close.

When I first arrived here I was cook and baker for the rotation center, but just recently I was transferred to this company which handles R and R men going to Japan for 5 day rests, hospital returnees and civilian USO personel who might be staying in this area. I am baker here.

I work with one Korean and prepare meals for 150 to 600 men each meal. We make all the pies, cakes, rolls and cookies for the outfit. It's a big job but I like the work pretty well.

We live in Quonset huts and have it pretty good. The weather is cold here but we get very little snow.

Even here in Korea I had the good fortune to meet a fellow church member — Stu Beiboer. We only saw each other once because we worked different hours and couldn't get together in our free time but it sure was wonderful to see someone from way back home — especially from our own church.

So far I haven't seen anybody I know coming through this company either rotating or going to Japan, but I hope someday I will.
In closing I will say I enjoy the BL very much over here. It keeps us informed and is well worth reading. I enjoy the Service Men's section very much. This seems to be all I can think of—I hope it will do.

Sincerely,

Willard Baar

It sure will do Willard. Hope you can do it more often.
Thanks a lot for the picture too.

Our last letter, also from Korea, is written by Sgt. Henry Vander Vos of our Manhattan church. I think our servicemen from Manhattan have written more letters in proportion to congregational size than all our other churches put together. Other servicemen—can you take the hint?

Dear Friends,

Several times I have taken my pen and started to write to the MILITARY MAIL BAG. But every time something has intervened and I wouldn't complete my letter. But this time I will finish what I have started.

First of all I want to thank you for sending the BL. It has been a big spiritual help as all the church papers are.

I have been in the Marine Corps for a little over two years and have been in Korea since last August. My job here is section leader of an assault platoon. Our weapons include rocket launchers (bazookas), flame throwers and demolitions. The job puts me in a position to experience some close up combat now and then.

During one of our contacts with the enemy, I was slightly wounded, but not seriously enough to be evacuated. I am very thankful for that.

Korea, as everyone writes, is a very hilly country and an ideal place for the Chinese to defend. Our sector of the front (the Marine section) has been particularly active lately. Bunker Hill, in which I was unfortunate enough to have had a part in, the Hook, and all the hills around the Pamonjun (peace talk area) have seen a lot of blood shed. A lot of it has been ours.

War is not very pleasant and we have to keep telling ourselves it is better to fight over here than to fight in our own home towns in the US.

I, like everyone else over here, would like very much to go home, but it will be a few more months before it is my turn to go.

I'll appreciate things more when I get home; things like electric lights, good chow and a decent place to live in. I also will enjoy a day off; something we never have over here.

Our chaplain is a very great help. He tries to help everyone who has a problem. Our last chaplain was killed trying to visit some of us in the front line trenches.

I had better conclude this letter before I use up all the space in the Military Mail Bag. Once again I want to express

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BE YE SEPARATE

“Our staff is planning to make the April issue of the Beacon Lights a special Servicemen’s Issue. We would like to have your regular contribution ‘Christian Living’ for April be of special interest to the servicemen, if possible.”

That is the request that came to me from our staff clerk, Miss Elsie Kuiper, few weeks ago. And with that request I will gladly comply. For even though most of you boys are strangers to me according to the flesh, yet as members of Christ’s church we are one in spirit and we are united by that bond of love which makes us members of one another. And especially for you boys in service, Christian Living, though extremely difficult, nevertheless is vitally important. Therefore I am happy for this opportunity to pay you a little “visit”, and in doing so, I would like to have a little “talk” with you about your calling to stand alone and be separate.

To be alone, friends, is something which people, generally speaking, do not enjoy. And that is only natural, for man was not created to be alone. He was not made to live the life of a hermit, but to live in blessed fellowship with God and man. Therefore, rather than to stand alone and be different, he would speak, think, and work as others. What others say he would say, as others dress he would dress, and where others go he would go. It lies in our very nature to follow the crowd.

And yet, fellows, to follow the crowd today is a bad sign and it is also extremely dangerous, for the crowd has forsaken God and is on the road to eternal doom. Therefore the Word of God always again reminds the church of Jesus Christ that she is a pilgrim and stranger here below and that it is her calling to be in the world but not of the same. And for the same reason, especially to you fellows in service, as you find yourselves far from home and church, in the midst of the world, surrounded by temptation and danger, the admonition comes: “Come out from among them, and be ye separate”.

You understand this does not mean of course that you must separate yourselves in the outward, local sense. That is, the meaning is not that you must withdraw yourselves from your present environment and must simply go A.W.O.L. Were that the case, then heeding the admonition would certainly bring you into trouble, and that with both God and man. For not only would your superiors most likely soon “catch up with you”, but even God would disapprove of your doing. For it is true as we confess, that nothing befalls us by chance but all things come to us by the hand of our Heavenly Father. Hence, also your being where you are is the will of God concerning you, and therefore, difficult though it may sometimes be, nevertheless you must willingly re-
main where God has stationed you for the present, and submit.

Thus it becomes evident that the admonition refers to a spiritual separation. You must be separate and come out from among them with whom you dwell spiritually. And that means that in your entire walk, conduct, speech and attitude, you must be different than they are. They live out of the principle of sin, and mind the things below. And in all their conduct they plainly reveal that they despise God and His Word, and that they are at home in the sphere of darkness. In that environment, your calling is to live out of a different principle, to serve a different God, and have a different hope. You may never join hands with them and become one with them in the true sense of the word, but you must always condemn their darkness and testify of the light. Always it must be seen in you, that you are spiritually different, since you have a different goal, seek a different country, and live a different life.

That, friends, is your calling. And on this point there may be no compromise. For, notice, thus "saith the Lord"! This call to come out is not the word of man, but of God. And notice too, that God simply says, "Come out." That means, in spite of the cost, regardless of the sacrifice: never compromise, but come out from among them, and be different. To come out and be separate therefore is not an invitation, but an obligation. It is not something we may do, but must do. God simply demands it of us. And that He does so need not surprise us, for our spiritual separation must serve to the praise of God's marvelous grace.

In this same chapter in which this admonition is found, the apostle points out that in principle there is a vast difference between the church and the world. He makes that plain by means of asking, "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" The underlying thought in all these questions is that in principle the church and the world are already separate. The one is righteous, the other is darkness; the one is a follower of Christ, the other of Belial. In principle they are directly opposed to one another.

And this principle difference between the church and the world is the fruit of God's marvelous grace. By nature we are one with the world and like unto the world. But by grace in principle we are different. Having been chosen from eternity and redeemed in time, by a miracle of God's grace in principle we have a new life, a higher aim, and different hope. And the more that difference becomes manifest in our lives, the more the beauty of God's grace is displayed before the eyes of men. Therefore it is such a sad picture when the church goes hand in hand with the world, and makes common cause with the workers of iniquity. And for the same reason, God comes to us with the necessary and stern admonition, "Come out, and be ye separate." For His glory is at stake!

Needless to say, therefore, the way of the Christian is difficult, and especially for you boys in service it is far from easy to bring this admonition into practice. For in the measure that you do, you will be shunned, hated and despised. In the measure that you show your spiritual colors and never compromise, you will have to suffer and stand alone for Christ's sake. But, friends, no one knows that better than God Himself. Therefore He has added to the admonition the beautiful promise, "Then..."
I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you."

And that, friends, is a blessedness beyond compare. In fact, it includes everything that heart could wish. For what could be more blessed and glorious than to have God as our Father? If that be our portion, then we have a Friend Who is always near, Who is always able to help, Who always knows what is best, and Who will never forsake us, for His love is eternal. And for that blessedness we need not wait until the day of our death. No, it is experienced already today, while the battle still rages and while we are still far from our Father's house.

Only, we must bear in mind in this connection, that it is experienced and enjoyed by us only in the measure that by God's grace we are spiritually different. For also here, it is either-or: either we have God as our Father and the world as our enemy, or we have God as our enemy and the world as our friend. We cannot have both. For God says, "then" and the implication is, then and then only, when you separate yourself, I will receive you and be a Father unto you. Hence, it is either-or: alone with God, or together without Him. The former is life, but the latter is death.

Therefore, Christian friends, by the grace of God, be not afraid to be different. Dare to be a Daniel. Dare to stand alone. For in the measure that you do, you too, will experience and say with the Saviour: "Yet I am not alone, the Father He is with me!"

YMN SING at Fourth Church Sunday April 19, at 9 o'clock. Everybody goes.
Dear fellow soldiers:  
This is in the nature of an open letter to you service men. Having been requested to write upon a subject of interest to the service men I choose this means to chat with you about current events, which I hope will be of interest to you.

My first event is our recent trip to Iowa to attend the Classis in Sioux Center. Of course, you fellows can understand that I cannot relate the matters that came up for attention in this brief letter. If you are interested you ought to consult the church papers for the official reports. There are impressions that one receives which are not found in official reports, and that is the matter about which I wish to write.

One thing that was impressed upon me by the conversation with elders and ministers and by my observation of things in general is the fact that there is trouble in our churches. That ought to be expected in our churches because wherever Christians are serious about matters of faith and conviction there is inevitable clash in the church militant. The trouble is serious however, when there is not the faith that our only King and High Priest, Jesus Christ, is going to see us through this difficulty. You fellows in the service realize that that firm conviction is necessary to have peace of mind. When you face the matter of induction and battle, your only comfort is that you belong to Him and that He will cause all things to work together for good. Without that faith you are not good soldiers. Speaking to the soldiers of Christ Paul says, “endure hardness”.

Another trouble with trouble is that there is often a failure to determine or to state the issues. It is always necessary to analyze the case, to seek understanding of both sides and finally to express an impartial judgment upon the case in hand without having imposed other issues produced by our fears and imaginations.

In this connection it was impressed upon me too that we should heed the admonition of Paul, to be followers together of Paul, and mark them which walk so as ye have us as an ensample. By our associations with certain Christians we learn to gain the right perspective upon matters that take place in our church life and also in our personal life. Certain individuals are only able to inflame us and lead us into deeper bitterness by their malice and slander. Others are able to lead us closer to God; they seem to stand aloof from all small things and yet have a way to dissolve the little troubles.

Such a character I met in Hull, Iowa. She was Grandma Gritters, mother to our Rev. Gritters. This month she is eighty years old, and she is still keen of mind and spirit, one whom many old and young in her neighborhood have cherished for her Christian spirit and wisdom. Her conversation was seasoned with salt and it brought me into contact with one who has been connected w (Continued on page 15)
Under the above title we have occasion to reflect upon some of the problems that confront the young Christian who is called to give a part of his time and life in the service of the army.

There are two distinct elements in this problem that stand out for our consciousness, namely, that of the soldier, and that of the Christian.

In the idea of a soldier we are confronted with various deeply important relations to which it is our duty to give instant attention, if the idea and the duty of military service is not to degenerate into a base brutal libertinism.

As soon as we speak of the soldier in the accepted sense, we are implying that such a person is a member of some nation, or at least has placed himself in connection with some nation through becoming a member of her army.

We have here the idea of citizenship.

But now the membership in this body, or nation, also implies duties. The privileges are possible through the fulfillment of the duties that are fulfilled in the communion. Also this is abundantly expressed in the great organization of the Church of Jesus Christ. Serving one another, submitting to one another, edifying one another unto the building up of the body until all come to the full stature of the blessed knowledge of God. And also here it applies first of all to the Christ Himself. His calling and His honor are balanced hand in hand.

I do not think there is any question about this relationship as the Bible teaches it.

Because of this principle it may also be regarded as very doubtful whether one may ever drift on through life without becoming a citizen of some country where he assumes the duties and enjoys the privileges.

It is evident that also here we have to do with the command of the law of God: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."
To express it in the relation which we are now discussing we shall have to say that a man must love his country, his nation. This may seem strange at first, for our thinking in the past decades has gone through a whole cycle of attitudes and reactions. We know of times when patriotism, love of country was almost an idolatry, expressed in the words to show the absurdity, “My country right or wrong.” And we have also seen a period of cynical criticism in which the idea of love for country became a huge joke.

Evidently both of these are wrong. And the one as well as the other betrays a lack of balanced biblical thinking.

Also here the Word of God is the light for our thinking. It teaches that we shall love our neighbor as ourself. And this also applies to our neighbor as he is related to us in the bond, the organism of the nation. As we are exhorted to love servant or master in the implied relation, and as we love our family and its members in the relations that grow up out of that family organization so also as a citizen in the state.

If this presentation of the facts is correct then with respect to the Christian soldier, it means that he is a soldier in love to his country. In this particular relation he carries arms for the purpose of seeking the welfare of his country. Also here we have the guiding word of Scripture. The ordained power carries the sword as the executor of revenging wrath upon the evil for the good of the citizenry (Rom. 13:1-10).

I am well aware of the fact that the realities of life make this situation so complex and confused that there is a great tendency simply to become bitter and indifferent, because nothing makes sense any more.

Perhaps we will say that love is impossible, because this country has simply become a mass of atheism and wickedness. Yet we know that the Bible does not teach us to love only the righteous neighbor, but also them that hate, curse, persecute us. Wickedness does not absolve us from the duty of love.

Or we may say that the whole foolish war makes no sense. Also here we must be careful. We do not know all the facts that would form the basis for a sane judgment. In general we may consider that it is the duty of our nation to administer and protect the territories and peoples that it had on its hands at the termination of the war in which it was involved and victorious.

That there is possibly much corruption and foolish involvements in the whole situation is a part of the world of decay in which we live, and to which we always contribute our part and bear the responsibility. But as to the essential issue of right or wrong in the war as a whole we can poorly judge.

Or a soldier may even go so far as to say that he cannot possibly fulfill this duty of love to his country, when that very country is in war against his own Christian brethren, and is harrassing the very church of God.

However here we must also remember that our Christian brethren on the opposite side may, in spite of their Christian hearts, be supporting a wrong cause. And conversely, a nation of unbelievers may well be defending a righteous cause, a defense of country or a rectification of crooked international relations.

I think this only shows how terribly complicated our life and calling can become in this sinful world. For situations could arise in which we would be convinced that our own nation is carrying an unjust war against an innocent Christian people.
Then there would be two possible alternatives.

There would be the possibility of withdrawing from our commitments to the nation. The possibility would be open of renouncing our citizenship in such an unrighteous nation, and casting our lot in with what we considered the righteous Christian nation. But of course there are situations where such transfer of allegiance would be far from easy both physically and from moral considerations and perhaps wholly impossible. Then we would simply have to recognize that our de facto government is over us in the providence of God and we are committed to obedience.

And this also involves tremendous spiritual consequences. Who of us is sufficient to these things.

For under a situation so averse to the Christian sensitiveness the Christian soldier would still be bound to do his duty to his own nation. He would be in duty bound to carry his sword with zeal. He could not be a robot, that marks time. In such a case as above it would still be the duty of the Christian soldier to give himself with all his talents, gifts, and energies night and day to further the task assigned him, namely to wield the weapons by which God executes order and restraint and vengeance among the nations.

In all these dire complications it will always give strength to remember that government is an institution of God and obedience to it is a recognition of the wise provisions of God. On the other hand rebellion and anarchy is the rejection of the provision of God. Bad government is better than anarchy which spoils the destruction of orderly life.

This also shows us how serious is our calling not to be passive and cynical when we think to see and know the general rule of right and equity also as these apply to government, and as we would urge our government to honor these.

We cannot be passive on-lookers. We are members of the body-politic. We are neighbors one of another. We stand under the will of God and under the law of righteousness also as citizens of the state and as Christian soldiers.

**CURRENT COMMENTS**

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the organism of the church many more years than you young soldiers or any of us.

One thing among other things that I shall remember was her remark about someone's loss of a dear one. To such a one she had remarked that it was hard to bear such a loss at first but that one will get used to it after awhile. She spoke from the Christian hardness that the Lord gives to His children from His abundant grace. It was not a hardness which had its sufficiency in the flesh, or which spoke in a fatalistic vein. It came from a humble and quiet spirit which trusted in God's goodness and wisdom with all things.

Fellows in the service, you must have had experiences of separation which many of us have not experienced. You too can appreciate the sentiment of this old lady and can thank God for the strength He has given and will give in the days that lie ahead.

The second event which occurred during my visit to Iowa and which is now being treated in the news comments that I am reading is the death of the ruler of Soviet Russia. The death of a world ruler impresses me so much with the inescapable fact that there is a Ruler who rules from everlasting who doeth all His good pleasure.
A FAMILIAR BOUQUET

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

The grass of the field is clothed by the Almighty God. What a beautiful array is theirs and what a selection of colored garments is distributed among the various species. Only a Master Artist could design this infinite number of varieties among the “grasses of the field”. Petals differ in size, shape, hue, number, arrangement, fragrance, and in many other ways. Who of us has not been impressed by the gorgeous panorama in nature. No adornment is more elegant than that of a flower.

The study of an individual flower makes us more fully aware of the perfect design, the intricate pattern, the marvelous arrangement in the most common types.

Along railroad tracks, in vacant lots, in isolated fields, or on farms is a familiar bouquet. Seldom does one find a whole bouquet—hundreds of flowers, carefully arranged on a single stem. Generally each plant produces only one cluster at the apex of the plant in contrast to most plants which have several flowers distributed over their foliage. Hundreds of miniature tiger-like flowers, only ¼ of an inch in diameter, are arranged into a convex head which is surrounded by a golden crown of specialized ray flowers accented with long yellow petals. Sometimes this “floral head” becomes a foot in diameter and are borne at the tip of stout stalks which not infrequently reach the height from six to fifteen feet. This plant is called the sunflower because of its radiating yellow petals.

The entire bouquet not only turns toward the sun but it actually follows this heavenly luminary through its course during the day. Before sunrise one finds it still facing the west—its stopping point the previous evening, but within a half an hour it will begin rotating to the east and gradually turn its yellow head as day advances to ever be inclined to the sun’s path. This is repeated day after day until the sunflower is heavy with seed.

The large coarse heart shaped leaves become progressively smaller as they near the top. Just as the large shaggy head chrysanthemums are produced by the floriculturist by pinching off all the lateral buds to produce one large flower at the apex, so, too, this flower accomplishes the same, but by its own internal process without human assistance.

Nearly the whole genus of Helianthus is found in the United States. Many species and varieties are found in different parts of the country. Seeds have been uncovered in many ancient Indian burial grounds. Pictures of sunflowers...
are also found on Indian murals. Peculiar varieties were grown by the Hopi Indians for food as well as for the purple body paint.

The sunflower is grown in large quantities in western Canada because it produces an excellent table oil. People in southwestern Europe, Hungary and the Ukraine grow it as a crop plant much as we do corn. The seeds are used as food for poultry and cage birds, among other uses. Although this plant is a native of the United States, it cannot be grown very successfully here, due to the fact that it has so many natural insect enemies and is subject to many fungal diseases. Generally, the first planting is a success, but succeeding crops show marked diminishing returns due to the rapid increase of insects which harbor in the pith of the stalk and in the seed.

Why is this plant found so frequently along railroads, in sandy lots, or bordering dumping areas? Is it because it is such a hardy plant which can withstand adverse conditions? In part, this is true, but it is found in these desert places because it is allergic to members of the grass family; thus, it will thrive in areas in which grass is sparse or fails to grow. Grains which are closely related to grass have a depressing effect on the sunflower. Experiments with varying amounts of rye growing next to them have demonstrated this. In fact, only a single stalk of rye showed a retarding effect upon four sunflowers when grown in the same container.

Let us be ever more conscious of the magnitude of God's wisdom in creation and appreciate the study of His revelation. A common sunflower—a mere grass of the field—yet God in His providence has deemed it wise to create this plant allergic to others for a definite purpose, a plant whose flowers rotate with the sun, a flower which in reality is a bouquet of miniature flowers!

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**SPRING MASS MEETING**

**Place**—KALAMAZOO

**Date**—APRIL 21

**Time**—8 O'CLOCK

**Speaker**—REV. C. HANKO

**After recess**—INTERESTING PROGRAM AND DEBATE
LIFTING THE LID.

COMMUNISM
PART IV
THE TACTICS OF ITS SECRET CONTROLLING POWERS IN DESTROYING ALL EXISTING GOD-ORDAINED INSTITUTIONS FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH

IN THE FIRST two verses of the thirteenth chapter of Romans we read the following: "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they shall receive to themselves damnation." Communism and its secret controlling powers, that is the Devil and his "sacred cow," knows very well that before they can dethrone the Living God, they must first get rid of all the God-ordained institutions existing on this earth in order that the whole world may be united into one solid union against the Lord and His Anointed. The God ordained institutions on this earth can be divided into four main groups; that is the family, the church, our daily occupation, and our civil governments.

In the first place Communism and its secret power always tries to disrupt the family. Scripture teaches us that the wife should always be subject to her husband and that the children be subject to their parents. What does the radio, television, Hollywood, the newspaper, and all of the literature you can buy at the corner drug store or at the five and dime store teach? They teach the very opposite. The wife with her children are represented as the supreme rulers of the household; while the God-ordained head is degraded to the level of a fool. This is the principle cause for all the family quarrels and divorces you constantly read about in our day. The devil knows that the weaker sex, and children, will more readily fall to his temptations — (see Gen. 3:1-6). Therefore he elevates the same as head of the family, in order that wickedness may abound and that the basic institution, the family, may be disrupted. (Also see Prov. 22:15); eventually causing the disruption of the other God-ordained institutions. This is also the reason why the devil and all his powers support woman suffrage and encourage all manner of sin against the seventh commandment.

The same is true with respect to the God-ordained rulers of His Church here on this earth that keep His commandments and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, who are always slandered and ridiculed by so-called Christians, the radio, television, Hollywood and the modern press at large, in the most outrageous manner. They are always termed sectarian, parochial, intolerant, illiterate, fanatical, cracked, warped, bigoted, fussy, impracticable, unreasonable, stupid, old fashioned, etc. And I hasten to add that our Christian schools and hospitals are also bearing the same reproaches. Yet Communism and its secret power will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts, who will turn away their ears from the truth, giving heed to doctrines of devils, thru the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron.

Communism and its secret controlling powers also resist the God-ordained power in the labor sphere. What is the
hidden power that causes the common laborers to organize and to go on strikes, walkouts and boycotts? The devil also knows that man is covetous by nature; therefore he tantalizes mankind with all the wealth and luxuries this world can provide in order to accentuate that covetousness and greed in order that men may go on strike against the God-ordained authorities in the labor sphere and against God himself. I know from my own experience that it requires oceans of God's grace to keep oneself unspotted from this evil. Just why are our government officials powerless to execute the law-defying labor union racketeers?

I will answer this question by quoting a passage from one of Freemasonry's dark documents, "The Protocols of the Learned Sages of Sion," written about 1897 by the innermost Jewish rulers of the lodge at that time, and we will see the hidden powers (humanly speaking) behind this constant warfare between capital and labor.

"We will encourage the love for boundless luxury which we have already developed. (through science and inventions, S.B.) We will increase the wages which will not help the workman; for at the same time we will raise the prices of prime necessaries, taking as a pretext the bad return of agriculture. (Who dares to say that this isn't the case today?! How about those mountains of wheat and potatoes that go to rot annually in order to keep the prices up?! S.B.) We will also artfully undermine the basis if production by sowing seeds of anarchy among the workmen and encouraging them in the drinking of spirits.... We will conceal the true position of affairs by an apparent desire to help the working classes in solving great economic problems."

This quotation brings me to the fourth of the God-ordained powers that Communism and its secret controlling powers seek to destroy, that is our civil governments. Think of what would happen if the U.S. were in a total fighting war with Russia and at that time all the steel, public utilities, and the transportation workers would simultaneously go on a nation-wide strike which would last for two months or longer! This is very well possible today. I will let the reader answer this for himself. Let us also consider the economic situation. Just why is our nation hundreds of billions of dollars in debt? Why are we paying over one third of our earnings in taxes? (Reader's Digest, Feb., 1953, page 115). Another quotation from the "Protocols" will answer this very satisfactorily.

"Taxation of the poor is the origin of all revolutions and always greatly conducive to the injury of the government, as the latter, while trying to raise money from the poor, loses its chance of obtaining it from the rich.... I think you know that gold currency has been the destruction of all States that have adopted it: because it could not satisfy the requirements of the population, all the more so, because we have done our best to cause it to be congested, and to be withdrawn from circulation.... External loans are like leeches, which cannot be separated from the body of the government until they fall off of themselves or until the government manages to shake them off.... It is evident that such loans under the existing system of taxation draw off the last cent from the poor taxpayer in order to pay interest to foreign capitalists from which the State has borrowed the money."

Do you know that it is a proven fact that Freemasonry was and is the secret power behind all the major revolutions which occurred within the last century and a half? Do you know that organizations such as the League of Na-
tions and the United Nations are controlled by Freemasonry and Communism? Let me quote another short passage from the "Protocols" in order to prove that these facts are not in vain. This will also explain why there are legions of known Communist spies freely running around in every free nation, seeking the overthrow of the various governments.

"In the whole of Europe and on other continents with the help of Europe, we (the rich secret inner rulers of Freemasonry S.B.) must promote dissensions and mutual hostility.... We must be in a position to meet every opposition with a declaration of war on the part of the neighboring countries of that state which dares to stand in our way; but if such neighbors in their turn were to decide to unite in opposing us, we must respond by creating a universal war."

To prove that the above quotation is not some vain talk, let us listen to the opinion of Whittaker Chambers, whom I quoted in a previous installment on this score.

"In nothing shall I be so much a witness, in no way am I so much called upon to fulfill my task, as in trying to make clear to you and the world the nature of Communism and the source of its power, which was the cause of my ordeal as a man and remains the historic ordeal of the world in the 20th century. (bold type mine S.B.) For in this century, within the next decades, will be decided for generations whether all mankind is to become Communist, whether the whole world is to become free, or whether in the struggle, civilization as we know it is to be completely destroyed or completely changed. It is our fate to live upon that turning point in history.

"The world has reached that turning point by the deep stages of a crisis mounting for generations. The turning point is the next to the last step. It was reached in blood, sweat, tears, havoc, and death in World War II. The chief fruit of the First World War was the Russian Revolution and the rise of Communism as a national power. The chief fruit of the Second World War was our arrival at the next to the last step of the crisis with the rise of Communism as a world power. History is likely to say that these were the only decisive results of the world wars. For these world wars did not end the crisis. They raised its tensions to a new pitch. They raised the crisis to a new stage. All the politics of our time including the politics of war will be the politics of this crisis.

"Few men are so dull that they do not know that the crisis exists and that it threatens their lives at every point. It is in fact a total crisis—religious, moral, intellectual, social, political, economic. is in fact a crisis of the whole world. Communism, which claims to be a solution of the crisis, is itself a symptom and an irritant of the crisis."

My dear friends, do you know that the Scripture says that all these wars and rumors of wars are only the beginning of sorrows? Do you know that the Antichrist will arise out of the sea of the troubled nations? Revelation chapter 13 is not just another dark portion of Scripture; in fact it is being fulfilled before our very eyes. Do you know that the deadly wound, that is the barriers of language, customs and distances is rapidly healing? Does not the tremendous power of the hydrogen bomb remind you that the beast will be able to make fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men? Today there are legions of false prophets (modernistic preachers Ezekiel 13, Matt. 24: 11, 24) who will try to glamorize Communism and try to have us believe that...

(Continued on page 23)
I was given these questions:

1) Is city mission work as it is traditionally thought of, possible as an activity of the Protestant Reformed churches?

2) Explain Hebrews 6:4-6 please.

3) Does this apply individually or also in the generations?

Answer to Q. 1.

I WISH MY correspondent had stated exactly what he means by the phrase: "as it is traditionally thought of." But I can't help but to be dealing with the matter that he must have had in mind, if by rewording his question I make it read thus:

- Is official preaching of the Gospel by persons other than those called and sent by Christ THROUGH HIS CHURCH allowable in the light of the Scriptures and the Confession?

The phrase in capitals indicate the real issue. That no one may preach unless he be sent by Christ follows from the nature of matters, and is denied by no one. In the words of the apostle, "How shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written. How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things" (Rom. 10:15).

The Scripture that Paul here quotes to prove his point is found at Isaiah 52:7. The thought underlying it is, that the bringer of glad tidings must be sent of Christ or he has no tidings to bring, in which case his feet are not beautiful. To be sent is to be appointed by Christ; it is to go by the unction of and as qualified by His Spirit to speak His gospel and none other. Thus, how shall they preach, except they be sent? It is quite impossible.

But, it is also plain from the Scriptures that in this dispensation Christ calls His servants—Ministers of the Gospel, Elders and Deacons—through His church and not apart from it. It was the apostles in cooperation with the common members of the church in Jerusalem that, in their care for the poor, appointed seven men to the office of deaconship. And likewise it was the apostles in cooperation with the common members of the church in every place that appointed, called, the men for the office of ministers of the gospel and for the office of elders. A few texts to prove this. Acts 14:23: And when they—Paul and Barnabas—had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." In cooperation with the members in the various churches and thus as adhering to the procedure that had been followed in Jerusalem, Paul ordained them, the churches, elders, that is, rulers, and pastors and teachers, ministers of the Gospel. One more text. To Titus Paul wrote: "For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee" (Ti. 1:5).

Limiting ourselves now to the office of ministers of the Gospel, then we perceive the fact of the matter to be this: Christ instituted in His church this special office to which He calls the men of His choice through the agency of His church. They whom he thus calls He empowers to be his official
proclaimers of His Gospel. Upon these persons alone devolves this right and duty. It is their preaching, that is, the preaching of the church through their agency, that constitutes the keys by which Christ opens the kingdom to the believers and shuts it to the unbelievers.

This is Reformed. “No one,” so reads Article 3 of the Church Order, “though he be professor of theology, Elder or Deacon, shall be permitted to enter upon the Ministry of the Word and the sacraments without having been lawfully called thereunto,” lawfully called of Christ through the church, is the meaning. For the next article reads: “The lawful calling of those who have not been previously in office, consists: First in the election by the consistory, and thirdly, in the approbation by the members of the calling church…”

Rightly considered then, Christ’s official proclaimator of the gospel is the church functioning through its teaching ministry. It’s the only organization that has this right, task, calling, duty. And this is its sole calling.

This eliminates the state, the family and the school. The state must be Christian, certainly. And the duty of parents is to bring up their children in the fear and the nurture of the Lord. And our schools must be Protestant Reformed. But the state is not the church. Its calling is not to administer the word and the sacraments certainly. And the same is true of these other institutions. And whatever our appraisal of street evangelism may be and of the labors that purpose to bring back to God such who have drifted away from the church and have apostatized from the truth, all such activity, if the work of the layman, is not official preaching of the Gospel.

It is through the proclamation of the Gospel by the church as functioning through its ordained pastors and teachers. His official ambassadors, that Christ builds His body and gathers out of the world His elect. It requires but one Scripture to prove this. “Wherefore he saith, When he ascendeth up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men... And he gave some apostles, and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Eph. 4:8-13).

Every believer studies the Bible. It is his duty certainly. We have our societies for this purpose. Would that they were better attended. The family if it is Christian, has its altar. The is the Sunday School and the day school. And by the good instruction given and received the man of God is fully furnished. But as substitutes of the church and its ordained ministry, these things are worthless. Only as adjuncts of this ministry and as willing to be enlightened and guided by its preaching do they have value, and great value.

In the light of this Scripture, preaching by the layman can bear no fruit. But, one may say, the Gospel is the Gospel isn’t it, no matter by whom it is proclaimed, whether by the layman or by the ordained minister of the Gospel. But let us not forget that the preacher of the Gospel is Christ and not man, and that, if Christ does not preach, nothing happens. It is well then, that we pay strict attention when Christ tells us by whom He wants His Gospel preached.

But outside the church and apart from the official preaching of the Gospel by its ordained ministry there is no
salvation for a man, no matter how diligent he may be as a student of the Scriptures. As pitted against this ministry and its preaching, he is doomed, unless, of course, he repents and returns to the church. For to reject this ministry is to reject Christ.

Now this is not Roman Catholicism. On the contrary, it is good Reformed doctrine.

Art. 28 of the Belgic Confession reads, and I quote:

We believe, since this holy congregation is an assembly of those who are saved, and that out of it there is no salvation, that there is no person of whatever state or condition he may be, ought to withdraw himself, to live in a separate state from it; but that all men are duty bound to join and unite themselves with it; maintaining the unity of the church; submitting themselves to the doctrine and discipline thereof; bowing their necks under the yoke of Jesus Christ; etc.

Of course, the article speaks of the true church and its ordained ministry, which can be known by definite marks, marks that the Confession names in the following article. The marks named are these: if the pure doctrine of the Gospel is preached therein; if she maintains the pure administration of the sacraments as instituted by Christ; and if church discipline is exercised in punishing sin.

I shall have to wait with answering the other question. G. M. O.

ATTENTION SOCIETIES—
Now is the time to begin thinking and sending in proposals for the 1953 Convention to the Federation Secretary:

Miss Eleanor Veldman
1436 Kalamazoo Ave.
Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

1953 CONVENTION: HERE WE COME
Dates—August 18, 19, 20
Place—First Church
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Theme—The Armour of God
1 The Shield of Faith
2 The Girdle of Truth
3 The Sword of the Spirit

Your Host Societies—
Talitha and Young Men's Soc.
You are Our Letters of Recommendation.

The apostle opens this chapter with the accusation which some of those in Corinth will make when they receive this letter, that the apostle is beginning again to commend himself to them. That is, that he is boasting in order that he may be the more readily received by the congregation in Corinth.

It may be that there were some in Corinth who set themselves up as teachers and leaders by virtue of certain letters of recommendation which they had received from others, either other churches or other men well-known and well-thought of in the churches. It is also very likely that when such men left they desired and received letters of recommendation which could be presented wherever they moved. The apostle denies the intention of this or the need of it, not only as far as his own recommendation to the church of Corinth is concerned but also as far as his contact with other churches is concerned. He needs no letters of commendation for them nor from them as others evidently did. Neither must this letter be interpreted as a self-written letter of recommendation.

Boldly the apostle states that he needs no letters of recommendation for them or from them because they, the Corinthian Christians, are the living letters of recommendation to which not only he can and does refer but which are also to all men an evident proof of his apostleship and of the authority with which he spoke and speaks.

Letters of Recommendation Written on Tablets of Flesh.

A beautiful figure the apostle uses here in defense of his God-given ministry when he refers to letters of recommendation, written on tables of flesh. The idea is that a pen and paper letter is not necessary because Christ has done his own writing upon their hearts, writing through the Holy Spirit, his message of salvation. Through this writing, ministered indeed by the apostle Paul, the church of Corinth and the individual believers are evidently set forth as the living testimony to the power and efficacy and authority of the preaching of the apostle Paul. He need only refer to that work of Christ, through the Spirit, wrought by the ministry of Paul and those who worked with him, to stop the mouths of those who wickedly and perversely brought his apostleship and his authority to speak the Word of God into dispute.

The contrast between tables of stone and fleshly tables of the heart is that between marble inscriptions which are well-nigh indestructible and yet which are of far less value and permanence than the living testimony of the converted heart. There may be here already a reference to the law engraven upon stones. Where could the apostle...
find a better, more glorious and also more permanent recommendation to those in Corinth, than that work of the Spirit, wrought through his ministry but also what greater recommendation to those outside in his contacts with them than the living witness of the work of Christ in the hearts of the Corinthian Christians? "Your faith speaks my praise as being the seal of my apostleship." (Calvin).

All is from God!

Lest the Corinthians should after all receive the idea that the apostle is boasting in his own authority and ability, the apostle adds the thought of verses 5 and 6. Very definitely the apostle wishes to impress upon the minds of the Corinthians this fact, that all the beautiful, testimonial, work in Corinth, which he claims as his letter of recommendation, is after all, and in the final instance, only the work of God through him. His sufficiency is of God. The apostle stresses the fact that they have no sufficiency whatsoever and hence can reckon and claim absolutely nothing as their own product. All their sufficiency is from God. He is its source. And in that glorious work of the ministry and its blessed fruit, the apostle would be last to claim an independent share, but is very conscious of the fact that it is all of the Lord.

Now while we must not lose sight of the fact that the apostle is here speaking of the glorious work of the ministry, yet it is at the same time an indication of the source and operation of every Christian good work. Even though this example of the apostle, as a minister of the blessed gospel, may not fit us directly, still we must say every day and again—our sufficiency is of God. All the work of salvation in our hearts, all the work of God's grace, yea, even the good works in which we walk, are of the Lord.

our God through our Saviour Jesus Christ working by the outpoured Spirit.

And that is also the idea of verse 6 in which the apostle presents the beauty of the New Testament ministry as not of the letter of the law which cannot but bring death, but which is through the Spirit of the resurrected Christ which gives us life.

Discussion

1. In the church of Christ are letters of recommendation right or wrong? You may discuss here the whole idea of calling and transferring ministers and members from one local church to another.

2. What is the authority of a legally called minister when he speaks officially? Does he speak "ex cathedra" and therefore infallibly? If not, what authority does he and his words have?

3. What is the relationship between Paul's sufficiency being of God and the fact that he is nevertheless the apostle through whom Christ ministered to the Corinthians? What is the relationship between Christ's working as children of God?

LESSON 53

THE GLORY OF PAUL'S MINISTRY

Our Ministry Exceeds in Glory! (7-11).

The contrast which the apostle introduces between the ministry of the law and that of the gospel, between the old, typical ministry of Moses and its beautiful fulfillment in Christ, had been introduced already in verse 6. Now the apostle takes this subject up more in order to point out by way of contrast the glory of that ministry, entrusted to him, and which was ministered unto the Corinthians whereby they were saved.
The reference is undoubtedly to Exodus 34:30-35. "And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone and they were afraid to come nigh him... and till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face." etc. Now this awe, inspired by the shining of Moses’ face, must not be ascribed first of all to sin. Rather I believe Paul uses this as a symbol of the whole nature of that old nature of that old covenant and that Old Testament ministry. That ministry and that law was one written on tables of stone. That is, it presented the law as something external, engraved on stones—that was its essential character. Therefore also it was a ministration unto condemnation. That law written on the tables of stone could not but condemn. And for Aaron and the children of Israel, standing before the face of Moses as the minister of and the living reflection of God’s righteousness displayed in the glory of his shining face, it could not but engender fear. Therefore Moses wore the mask over his face to cover that glory so they could receive the revelation.

Now all this is done away in the New Testament. No longer is the law the external code written upon the tables of stone—engendering to fear and to condemnation. Christ who is the end of the law, has fulfilled it and thru the Spirit of Christ, that law is written in our hearts. It is no longer then the outward brilliance of the Old Testament and its ministration but it is the inner brilliance of the New Testament righteousness of Christ—the law written in our hearts.

Now certainly, even in its temporary character and in its ministry unto condemnation, that ministry of Moses is glorious. Evidently so because its brilliance necessitated the veil before Moses’ face. But how much more glorious is that ministry of the N. T. which is eternal in Christ Jesus and which is unto righteousness and life and peace. Happy indeed may we be in the glory of that revelation of God in the N. T. thru the ministry of the apostles, an abiding, a life-giving, an inner-spirit not an outer-letter ministration. That ministry is more glorious even as the Christ is more glorious than Moses.

Our Ministry Bestows Glory! (12-18)

Having the hope of this more glorious but especially of this lasting revelation we use great plainness of speech the apostle says. Exactly because this ministry is more glorious, is free in Christ, is the gospel of salvation, we need not the covering up of the glory of God. But it bestows on us the ability to read and to understand and to stand before the glory of God’s revelation and God’s law through Jesus Christ our Lord. Because the condemning character of that old ministry is done away in the new we do not need a veil upon the word and glory of God. So standing in the glory of the liberty of the children of God, the apostle can speak openly and we can hear that glorious gospel of the God of our salvation.

"The point of this paragraph is not the hope of Paul and of his assistants, not the openness of speech they use, nor the liberty with which they operate; all these are subordinate. The point is that the glory inherent in their ministry is one that brings glory upon glory upon us all, upon those who are served by this ministry as well as upon those serving it.” (Lenski).

This is in striking contrast to the Jews of Paul’s day and even today who stubbornly hold the veil upon their hearts. That veil is once again the condemning sentence of the law—which alone can be lifted in the freedom of the gospel of Christ Jesus. But there—
is hope—for in the way of turning to the Lord that veil is lifted even today.

Through that Spirit of the Lord, working that liberty in us, we all stand as unveiled before the revelatory face of God. That is the glory of the New Testament ministry, and its blessed fruit. Turning to the Lord, that is thru the Spirit of the Lord, gives, not only to the Jews, but us that perfect liberty.

And so standing with unveiled faces, not only the ministers, but we all, reflecting constantly that glory of the Lord in His revelation are changed from glory into glory. And this is the ultimate glory in that the glory of the grace of Christ enters into us, transforms us, changes us into His glorious image. And that work of the Spirit in us, wrought through the gospel, manifested in all of our lives as children of God, is indeed glory unto glory. Supernatural glory of the blessed Gospel of Jesus Christ!

Discussion

1. Was the purpose of the law to bring condemnation? What was the relationship between the law and condemnation?
2. To what extent did sin necessitate the veil over Moses' face?
3. How does this transcendent glory become manifest now? How in heaven?

LESSON 59

EXHAUSTED, BUT VICTORIOUS

II Cor. 4:1-10

Paul and Timothy are, as it were, in the arena. Enduring, waiting it out, as ministers of God. The whole Christ-despising world against them. Many in inth also against them. Beaten,ashed, chased, felled, dragged out for dead (Acts 14:19). God's servants they. The offense of the cross. Exhausted, but always victorious. Because it must be seen that the power is "not of us but of God."

We faint not (vs. 1). Luke 18:1 explains what this word faint means. Seeing God has put them in trust with the preaching of the glorious Gospel, it is His mercy which keeps them from giving up in discouragement. They might become "popular" ministers as they of 2:17, but, says Paul, then we should be traitors to our Sender. Instead, we have renounced all deceitful handling of the Word of God. Rather, we bear the odium of the Cross and are honest before God and men, than to seek popularity by preaching a gospel which natural man would find palatable. False preachers may hawk the Christ and make a bid for popularity, but we would rather lie exhausted on the arena floor than arrive at the popularity of pseudo-ministers. (Vs. 2)

And some of you have urged us to change our preaching because people just cannot "see it" and "accept it", because a Christ crucified makes no sense. Says Paul, rather than change the Gospel of Christ, if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost (vs. 3). That men, who have for some time heard the plain and simple preaching of Christ, should say "it is too deep" or "it does not make sense", only indicates that they are blinded. Signs of reprobation. The god of this world has blinded them. Satan, by means of sophistry, love of popularity, false philosophy, etc. has blinded the eyes of the unbelieving. The sun is there and it is shining, but they cannot see it. The light-giving power which emanates from the Gospel, emitting the radiant glory of Christ, the glory of the image of God, that glory-light shines from the Word we preach. But Satan has blinded the eyes
of the infidels so that it should not shine forth into their minds. Thinking themselves to be wise they are fools, and God gives them up to reprobate minds in His just judgment (Rom. 1) That some men stumble at this Gospel must not discourage us. Satan is busy blinding the eyes of men. God judges them that believe not and slays them with blindness. And forget not that God's ways are ways of election and reprobation. (vs. 4).

We preach not ourselves (vs. 5). We do not aim at using the Gospel to get ourselves a name or fame among men. But we preach Christ Jesus the Lord, and towards you we are your servants for His sake. We preach and teach, not to BE something, or to GET something, but we preach to glorify Christ and thus bring you something. The God who in Gen. 1 brought light out of darkness by the Word of His power, (vs. 6) is the same almighty God who shone into our hearts, giving us to know Jesus Christ. In His light we see light. And carry forth that light to you. That is our service.

We have this treasure (of preaching Christ) in earthen vessels (vs. 7). We are not super-men. We are plain, weak, frail human beings, who can be chased, persecuted, pummeled, beaten, felled, exhausted. God would have it so. For God would have the world to know that the beyond-all-human-endurance power is not of men but of God. God proceeds to preach His Christ, even when we become expendable. (vs. 7.) So we are troubled, hated, persecuted, given up to die. But Christ always wins out. For even if these things lead to our death, His power becomes evident in our weakness. His Word goes on even if enmity beats us unconscious and our mouths go shut (as with Stephen). Therefore we are resembling the dead but we live. For our Christ lives. Therefore we faint not.

Questions for discussion
1 The god of this world blinded the minds of them which believe not” we read in vs. 4. Does Scripture teach also that God blinds men’s eyes and minds? Compare.
2 In verse 5 Paul speaks of men who preach themselves. What does that imply?
3 Seeing all the hardship it cost, why was Paul so zealous to preach the Lord? Cf. I Cor. 16ff.

LESSON 60
DYING, WE LIVE
II Cor. 4:11-18

Paul is still reminding the Corinthians what manner of thing the ministry of the Gospel is and how the Lord, for the greater glory of His omnipotent grace, has His work done through “earthen vessels”. Let not the Corinthians be ashamed of this divine wisdom.

Vs. 11. We, apostles, are walking examples of the fact that the world hates Christ. It has murdered Him, and it continues after us who preach the Christ. Always again being delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake. Meantime however, though we are constantly being hounded by death, the life of Christ becomes manifest in us. Though we are chased from city to city, escape one prison to be anon cast into another... we poor derelicts... we preach Christ. Christ uses us to bring men life through the Gospel. In our dying Christ becomes evident as the Life-giver. So then, the works in us but through it all we brought
you Corinthians the Gospel of Christ. And His Life works in you. (vs. 12).

The same faith-giving Spirit which made the psalmist of 116:10 say: "I believed, therefore I spoke." makes Paul say "we also believe, therefore we speak." (vs. 13) Paul believes in the Living Christ, therefore He cannot but confess Him in preaching. Whatever persecutions there be, he is confident in Christ and as he believes, so he speaks ... until the enemy destroy his body and shut his mouth.

Paul's confidence is not that Christ will save him from being killed by hounding persecutors (vs. 14). In fact Paul envisions death at the hands of Christ's enemies. But this is his confidence that the God Who raised up Jesus from the dead, will raise up and bring to glory His confessors. What can the enemies do to us who have the life everlasting? Only will he raise up us, His preaching, but He will raise also you with us who have received the gift of faith. The minister is not selfishly interested in his own glorification, he wants the congregation standing with him in the final presentation.

In fact, all that has come upon us preachers, has come upon us for your sakes, for all things are for your sakes (vs. 15). that the Gospel might come to you. The farther God's grace reached, the greater became the number of those that expressed thanks, to the glory of God. Our struggling and dying is not in vain. Through us, earthen vessels, God recruits the multitude which afterward shall praise Him for His grace. Paul wants to have the grace and glory of God magnified.

Vs. 16 again, as in vs. 1, therefore we do not give up in discouragement. Paul then speaks of the dying of the outward man, by which he means every ing of us that belongs to this temporal life. It can be brought to decay.

The present relationships of this life can terminate. Then Paul speaks also of an "inward man", which, I believe, refers to that which we have by regeneration, such as hope, confidence, faith, courage, etc. These things after all constitute life. As often as the present earthly relationships threaten to, or actually do break down, the hope and confidence in Christ rises up with renewed vigor. So the outward man perishes but the inward man is renewed from day to day. Vs 17 gives the reason for this. Our afflictions are "light" he says, and momentary, compared to the exceeding and eternal weight of glory which is our by promise. Besides, the afflictions "work out" this weight of glory, they are not in vain. Our afflictions are not the meritorious cause of coming glory, but they are the way to glory and effectuate it. We do not suffer in vain. Weighing the one against the other, we have every reason to be of good courage. Vs. 18 tells us that this comes about through that seeing of faith where by we look at the things unseen. We see and feel our afflictions, but we keep our eyes of faith on "what is not seen" (with natural eyes) for the things we see are passing but the things which are not seen (except by faith) are eternal. So we faint not.

**Questions for Discussion**

1 Christian Science says that suffering etc. are not real, they say that "unrealities seem real to human, erring belief, until God strips off their disguise." and "the punishment for sin lasts as long as belief in sin endures." In the actual reality of the christian's life how could forty years of affliction, for instance, be called "light" and "for a moment"? Discuss.

2 In vs. 14 what does it mean that God shall raise us up "by Jesus"?
Since this issue of ‘Beacon Lights’ is a servicemen’s issue, I have been asked to review material especially well suited for use by our men in service. I have located two small meditation booklets which were printed for exactly this purpose.

The first of these is ‘Our Boys in Brown and Blue’, by Rev. Rolf L. Veenstra, a booklet which should prove beneficial to each and all of our boys in the armed forces.

Any young man who enters the service of our country is immediately faced with many problems. This is true for a worldly young man, but it is especially true for one who is also in the service of the King of kings. He must, while surrounded by evils and temptations of every conceivable sort, remain a true soldier of the Cross. He must ever be on his guard lest he fall into the snares of the evil one. Reading and rereading this pocket sized booklet should help our men to do just that.

What about swearing? What about sex? What about drinking? What about gambling? Why the Bible? Why chapel attendance? Why Christian companions? These questions are discussed separately in a man-to-man manner. The final section answers the question, But how can I maintain my faith while in service?

The booklet may be obtained from the Baker Book House at Grand Rapids for 50 cents.

The second booklet is ‘Road to Victory’ by Rev. Raymond R. Van Heukelman. Here again we have an enlightening pamphlet for our servicemen.

The purpose of the author is not to point out methods which might be used by the armed forces to defeat a human foe, but rather to remind Christian servicemen that they also have weapons with which to overcome their spiritual foes. He shows them how they can maintain their faith and become victors, even over death, by being faithful in prayer, keeping in close contact with God’s Word, and trusting alone in Christ, Victor.

This booklet is printed by the Society for Reformed Publications, 1519 E. Fulton Street, Grand Rapids. The price is 25 cents.

Beside the above mentioned booklets we might call your attention to a bi-monthly publication of the Young Calvinist Federation of the Christian Reformed Church. It is entitled ‘Spires’ and is printed especially for servicemen. It is designed to be carried within the covers of a pocket New Testament and contains brief meditations to accompany daily Bible reading.

It may be obtained from the Young Calvinist Federation, 44 Ionia Avenue, S. W., Grand Rapids 2, Mich. It is mailed free to servicemen, 20 cents per copy to others.

It must be remembered, of course, that these materials are not meant to be, and definitely must never be used in place of regular Bible study. Also, church papers should never be laid aside.
Quite some time has elapsed since our last report. The reason is that there simply wasn’t enough news to make a report worthwhile. However, as the convention time approaches, the Board becomes busier and meets more frequently.

On March 9, the Board lost a valuable (and may I add a jolly) member—John Cammenga. We miss him and hope that he may experience God’s loving care until his return. We are remembering you and all of our boys in our prayers, John.

Our Spring Mass Meeting will be held April 21, in Kalamazoo. Thank you for your invitation, Kalamazoo! Plans have been completed for what we think will be an enjoyable and edifying evening.

We also carried on the following business:
1. The appointment of Mrs. B. Verstrate to our Book Review Department.
2. A suggestion to Beacon Lights Staff that we introduce a Society of the Month feature. (More details later.)
3. The appointment of a new Library Committee to assist our Young People’s Societies in planning constructive after-recess programs.
4. We approved the minutes of the 1952 convention.

Lest you think our activities are all work and no play, we have planned a combined Beacon Lights Staff and Executive Board party in April.

THE FEDERATION BOARD
Eleanor Veldman, Secretary