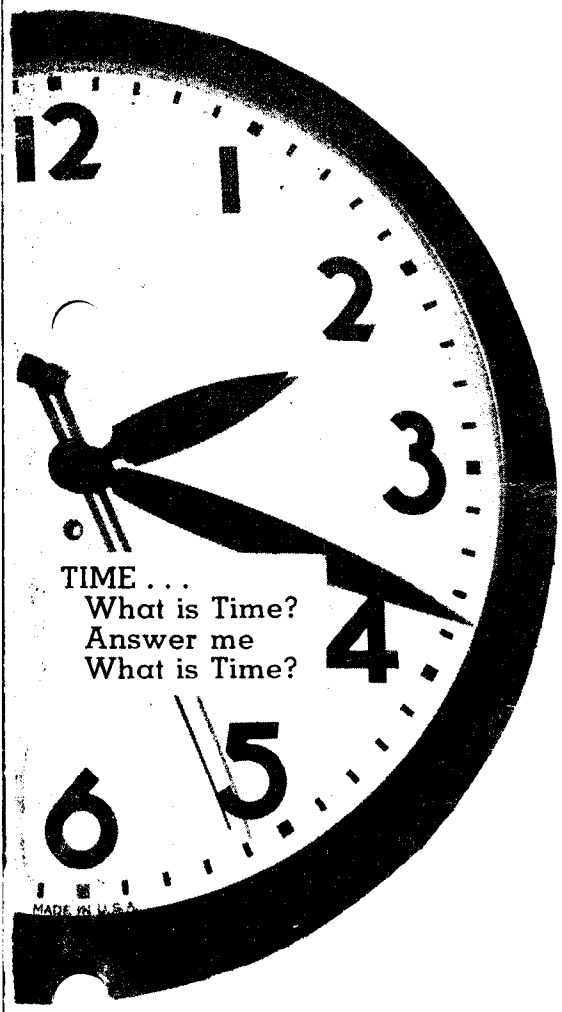
BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH



January, 1955

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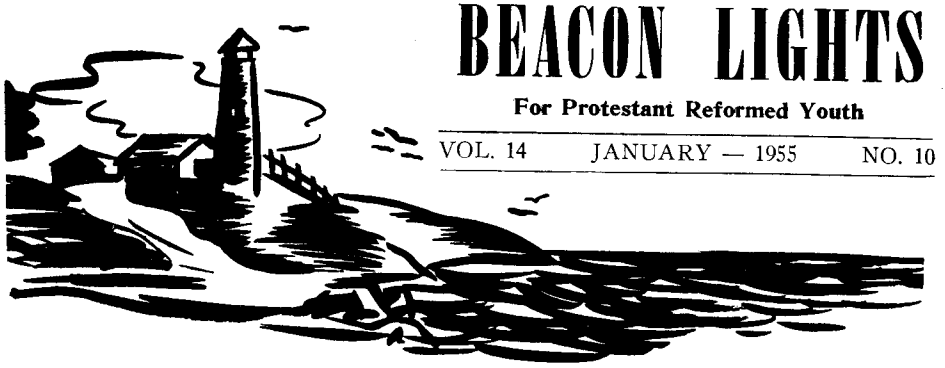

BEACON LIGHTS

For Protestant Reformed Youth

VOL. 14 JANUARY — 1955 NO. 10

"With A Strong Hand"

A New Year's resolution is like a brand, new car. A new car looks so sleek and shiny, so durable and powerful. But —just one little collision with some other obstacle of about the same size and its beauty is gone. The fenders are crumpled, the doors are banged in, and this beautiful car has become quite a wreck. The whole thing is sadly in need of repairs.

And so it is with a New Year's resolution. It may look like a beautiful plan on the first day of the year, but all too soon it will surely collide with the general plan of that person's normal, sinful way of life. And when it does, he will be ashamed to own it as a New Year's resolution; it will be so sadly in need of repairs.

Making a resolution on the first day of the New Year is supposed to give the maker added incentive to keep it. Those who make such resolutions want to start the New Year out right. We hear such expressions as starting the New Year "with a clean slate," and "turning over a new leaf" at the beginnng of a New Year. These sayings are indicative of a desire to do better in the year to come; to make the future better than the past. Those who wait until January 1 to make their resolutions and to "turn over a new leaf" seem to feel that starting their new way of life on the first day of the year will make it easier to stick to it. They feel the need for certain improvements. They see the difficulties involved in making real and lasting changes, that is, if these changes in some way conflict with their normal, sinful way of life. They determine to do better, but they find that they never do. So at the beginning of each year they resolve once more, and at the end of that year they again see that they have failed.

The Christian knows, however, that all hope for doing better in the coming year, than he has done in the past, is vain. Each morning the Christian resolves to fight sin and each night he knows he has failed. The Christian's resolution can only be a prayer of repentance and a plea for grace.

The custom of making New Year's resolutions on the first day of January has its roots in ancient Roman mythology. In ancient Rome, the first day of the year was given over to honoring

Janus, the god of doors and gates. The month of January was named after him. He was the god of the beginnings of things. People prayer to him when they were about to start something new. This god, Janus, was usually represented with two faces, one turned to the front and one to the back. This was so that no one could enter the gates of Rome without his knowing it. And just as the god Janus looked both ahead and backward, so the Roman people, on the first day of the month, January, looked back to what had happened during the past year and looked ahead with new hope to what the coming year might bring.

The Romans also gave each other presents on New Year's Day. Many persons brought gifts to the Roman Emperor and wished him good fortune. Roman merchants carried this custom of giving gifts, as far east as Persia, which is now Iran. There the ancient Iranians, or Persians, followed the custom of giving eggs to their friends. Since an egg hatches into life, this custom meant much the same as "turning over a new leaf" at the beginning of the New Year.

The early English took over many of the Roman New Year customs and later English people followed the custom of cleaning the chimneys on New Year's Day. This was supposed to bring good luck to the household during the coming year. Starting "with a clean chimney" was a way of making resolutions to correct faults and bad habits, and resolving to make the New Year better than the one just ended. Today many say they wish to start "with a clean slate" instead of "with a clean chimney."

In the history of the People of God, as recorded in the Bible, the first month of the year is also mentioned. It is, however, not the month of January, but April, the month Abib or Nisan. In Exodus 12:2 we read: "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months, it shall be the month of the year to you." It was in this month that Israel was brought from bondage in Egypt. And the people of God were commanded to keep the Feast of the Passover each year on the fourteenth day of the first month of the year to commemorate the exodus from Egypt. In that day, fathers were to instruct their sons by telling them that the reason for this celebration was "because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt — for **with a strong hand** the Lord brought thee out of Egypt. Thou shalt, therefore, keep this ordinance in his season, year to year."

As the People of God of the New Dispensation, let us approach this New Year in the spirit of the Passover, which is the Spirit of Christ. Let us see that our resolutions are vain. Let us not resolve what **we** will do to make this coming year a better one, but let us see what God is doing through us to give us, each day, a closer walk with him. Then we will acknowledge with humble hearts that "with a strong hand" the Lord is bringing us, day by day, and year by year, out of our bondage of sin into the Promised Land. Alice Reitsma

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IT MATTERS TO HIM!

I Peter 5:7

My child, I know thy sorrows
Thine every grief I share;
I know how thou art tested,
And what is more — I care.

Think not I am indifferent
To what affecteth thee;
Thy weal and woe are matters
Of deep concern to Me.

But, child, I have a purpose
In all that I allow;
I ask thee then to trust Me,
Though all seems dark just now.

How often thou hast asked Me
To purge away thy dross!
But this refining process
Involves for thee — a cross.

There is no other pathway
If thou would'st really be
Conformed unto the image
Of Him Who died for thee.

Thou canst not be like Jesus
Till self is crucified;
And as a daily process
The cross must be applied.

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EDITORIALS

Past, Present, and Future

Invariably, the New Year season is the one in which we take mental inventory of the past: noting those facts and events that stand out in our memories; reviewing sad, or pleasant experiences; and remembering what was significant. Following hard on the heels of the review of the past is the inevitable tendency to look ahead; to look to the coming year with hope and wonder. Next, we find ourselves taking part in that age-old custom of making resolutions for the new year—resolutions we know we shall never keep, because we are still in the body of sin and death. (Rom. 7:18) The question, then, arises: "Isn't a review of the past year helpful to us?" Indeed

Much blessing can come from a review of the significant and the insignificant in our past life, in the past year. In all our way, the child of God sees the Lord's hand in all that has transpired. In all situations of life's pattern, the believer —the young or old—sees that God is unfolding before his eyes, the roll of His counsel concerning His revelation: that He directs all our way. When we see, by the eye of faith, that we have been in God's way in the past, and that we are in God's way in the present, and that we shall be in His way in the future, then the knowledge of this fact gives stability to Christian living. Without this stability, life would be chaotic.

It is especially in the church life of our young people that the hand of God is evident. God has wondrously marked the past year with signs of His ever-abiding presence in our midst. This fact we experience; of this fact we are confident. It is indeed an inspiring past; it speaks clearly of faith in God; it tells of dedication to His truth in a church situation which made for great self-denial. Friendships long established were broken — although young people, who easily make friends, found new ones; church life was disturbed, so that young people's societies felt the impact of the denominational changes; even homes were divided over the church issues. In some of our churches, young people's societies were constituted all over again. In all this change and disturbance, the evidence of the past year is one of continuing fidelity. In this, there is cause for rejoicing. God is in our midst. The story of our witness in the past year is one of faithfulness. Let us never forget, that the history of the past year, as that history affects us as young people, is a history of God's own work. **He** it is, who is faithful; He has preserved us; He has kept alive His witness to His truth in us. It is all His work. This fact constitutes our chief joy.

This fact has its own significance, for three reasons: First, when the history of denominational witness, generally, in the twentieth century has been one of growing Arminianism, our young people have remained faithful to our Truth. One has only to think of the growing "Youth For Christ" movement, and the Billy Graham campaigns. Even some churches that are in name, Reformed, are swept away with this rushing tide. Secondly, it is significant, that an age that is characteristic for its modernism in doctrine and life, sees these two rushing streams,

Arminianism and Modernism, running side by side, in one river-bed. There is a reason for this: Arminianism is the fountain of Modernism. Thirdly, it is significant that an age that is characteristic for its re-interpretation of denominational doctrinal standards in the light of spreading Arminianism, has also seen a re-interpretation of the Three Forms of Unity in the light of the doctrinal position of the Liberated Churches of the Netherlands. So powerful an influence was this Liberated interpretation of the Three Forms of Unity, that it swept the thinking of a wholle segment of the Protestant Reformed Churches, of ministers and people, in its swelling tide.

To stem this tide of false doctrine that would re-interpret the Three Forms of Unity, the Protestant Reformed Churches drew up a doctrinal statement of tremendous spiritual depth and insight: the well-known Declaration of Principles. It is well, for all our young people, as a new year resolution, to re-read this marvelous statement of what our churches believe concerning God's Covenant and Promise. (This Declaration is printed in the "Standard Bearer." Your pastor will show you where it is.) Because words mean what they say, our ministers and people have declared what the Three Forms of Unity say, in connection with this very important truth. Thus, in a review of the past, we find a satisfaction in the history we have made, and we give thanks to God.

It is also our task to evaluate the present, and live in the present, in the fear of the Lord. God directed our way in the past; what does He desire of us for the present? We can make our question very concrete. Since our way through the past is His doing, what place must our churches serve in the current church scene? Is there a place for our churches? This question is not hard to answer. The answer is emphatically, "Yes." For that matter, our churches occupy a more important place amongst the large number of Protestant churches and denominations, than it ever has before—yea, even though its number is small. Small, oh so small, as to have a voice hardly above a whisper (in the eyes of the church world). Yet, our churches occupy a position of tremendous importance. Why? Because, in our churches, we have The Truth. That fact alone is all-significant. In that fact lies the deepest reason for our existence. Were it not for the fact that we have The Truth, then we might just as well join the growing inter-church union movement that has its logical conclusion in one super church. But this we cannot do; we feel that immediately. On the basis that God has called us into existence in 1924, and reaffirmed our existence in 1953, we know that God has a labor for us to perform. That is our labor for the present.

But there are voices among those that have separated from us, that also speak of their right of existence. Do they have one? Young people, do not be confused. Those have a right of existence in the church world scene—particularly the Reformed church world scene—who uphold, defend, and proclaim the truth of the Covenant and Promise of God as it is defined and declared in the Declaration of Principles. We are the only ones who have The Truth as it is set forth in that document. God gave it to us. It is that truth that we are called upon to preserve in the present.

As for the future? Let us leave the future to God. As He has preserved us in the past, He will continue in the future; this is our comfort. We may do no more, nor less, than leave it in His hands. Because He gave us a labor to perform in the past, He will also give us work to do, in His service, for the future.

James Mc Collam

CHRISTIAN LIVING

Preparation

Even as on the last day of the year our thoughts turn back to the year behind us, so naturally, on the first day of a new year our thoughts turn to the future. And, of course, we do not do this as the world does, for the child of God ends the old year and begins the new year in the presence of the church and Christ. For the world looks back at all that has taken place and counts its sorrows, its disasters, its disappointments, and drowns all its grief in revelry; and on the morrow, as it again faces the future, it catches a quick breath in its headlong rush, mumbles a few resolutions for better living, and vows to make the next year a better year than the past; that although the world was yet a very sordid place in '54, it will be much better in '55. But not so the church. We look back December 31, but only in order that we may better look ahead. For in looking back we see that God blesses His people and causes all things in this world to work together for their good; thus we can look ahead to that good which is the perfect glory of God in the new Jerusalem when the tabernacle of God shall be with men. And we start the new year in prayer that God may, by His grace, establish the works of our hands in order that His kingdom may come.

And that we must also do as young people—young people of the Protestant Reformed Churches. But as young people we look ahead in a very special way. For while it is true that the older members of the church see only a few more years of their life before them, we stand at the very beginning of our life, especially at the very beginning of our life as active members of the church. And although it certainly is our calling on January 1 to look beyond, to the coming of the day of the Lord, nevertheless, we also look ahead to many years of active life in the church militant—the church that fights the battle of faith on earth.

I intend to start a series of articles in this issue on the subject of the preparation of young people with a view to their taking an active place in the midst of the church of God in the future. I remember, once, at a convention, that one of the ministers remarked, as he surveyed the group of young people that were assembled at the banquet, "The future of our churches, and I tremble." And although the remark was made at least partly in humor, nevertheless I am sure that we often tremble, ourselves, when we think of the time when we too shall have to take an active part in the church in which we are brought up. At least that is true if we think at all seriously of the fact that we, the youth of today, are the church of tomorrow.

We recognize immediately that this can only be true because of the fundamental truth of the Scriptures that God saves His elect in the line of continued generations. If this were not true—if God gathered His people for only one generation, in Grand Rapids, and then gathered His church for another generation in far away Africa, and then established the assembly of the saints in Europe for a generation, then we could never speak of a preparation of the young people. But because it is true that God gathers His church

throughout the ages in the line of generation, it becomes a very important reality in our lives how we must prepare ourselves to be active within the church of God, in years to come.

The truth that God gathers his saints from father to son and from mother to daughter throughout all the ages of history means very concretely that we are the future church. We believe that the Protestant Reformed Churches are the purest manifestation of the church of God in the midst of the world. We believe that our denomination is composed of saints whom God has made holy and empowered to live holy lives, if that be but in principle. We therefore maintain that the youth of our churches are the members of that true church of the future. And if that be true, then we ought to face, seriously, the question whether we are preparing ourselves for that great calling to which God has called us.

It is true, and must be emphasized before we proceed, that God by His grace prepares us for that place. Even as young people, we can see in our lives that God uses all of our upbringing for our particular place in that church. Our birth—whether that be within the church, or, as an exception, outside of the church—, our up-bringing in Christian homes, our instruction in Christian schools, our catechism teaching, the development of our abilities and talents, as they are peculiar to every individual, are used by God to prepare us for our own particular place. And yet again, if it were not so that God prepared us and kept us in the sphere of His grace, even then we would never be fitted to take our own part in the furtherance of His kingdom. For if He should not keep us always faithful, we would return unto the world with all its sins and corruptions. And thus at the very foundation of our preparation, stands the work of God as He Himself forms each stone for its exact place in that temple of Jesus Christ. Each has his own place, and for each place, God prepares a person.

And yet as the fruit of that work of God, the youth of the church are called to prepare themselves in order that they may take that place in the church.

And in general it should be born in mind that that preparation does not begin with any particular age. From earliest infancy on, when we wonder ourselves, how a small child can possibly be prepared by God, God uses the influence, particularly, of the home, to teach that child the fundamentals of a life within the sphere of the covenant. Who really knows what response the singing of a psalm has upon the regenerated heart of an infant? Who really knows what thoughts are in a child's mind when he learns his simple prayer upon his mother's knee? Who can say how God speaks to the heart of a baby through the godly conversation of believing parents? And thus, even though we are not preparing ourselves, nevertheless our preparation begins. But of this we must treat in a latter article, for that is also the calling and promise of parents in the church; that is: to bring their children up in the fear and nurture of the Lord. And for that we are prepared in our youth.

But it is true, on the other hand, that that preparation never ceases. It is not so that we reach a point in life, when we can say that now we have become fully fitted to be members of God's church. For even the hoary-headed believer, who is not even able to worship with the saints, feels that he is prepared, day by day, to be fitted for his purpose on this earth, whatever that purpose may be, even as He approaches the grave. Thus preparation is not peculiar to us as young people, alone.

Nevertheless, it is true that we are in that period in our lives when, more than

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TRUTH vs. ERROR

"Salvation's Exclusive Standard"

Every doctrine stands or falls with the Word of God. Every proposed theory and conception is received or rejected by the children of God according as it is in harmony or in conflict with the infallible Scripture. The Bible is the criterion of the Truth!

With respect to the doctrine of salvation, numerous theories with various modifications are presented today in religious market places. We are all undoubtedly acqainted with them. We encounter them in religious periodicals; hear them on our radios; meet with them in conversations with our neighbors. Most of them cannot stand when submited to the test of the Word of God, although it may be said that every theory is not equally false. In some of them there are still found **elements** of truth while others are entirely false. They range from the ridiculous theory of **a salvation for everyone through a Christ Who died for all men,** to the rash, deceptive theory of **a conditional salvation for the elect.** Our best refutation to these theories is found in presenting the clear truth concerning salvation from the Word of God itself.

What is the truth of salvation?

There is in the Greek language a small four-leter word that is frequently translater "according to" in our English version which expresses the rule or criterion by which certain things are done. It may even express the "ground" for certain actions, according to G. T. Winer and A. T. Robertson. This little word is very often used with respect to the matter of salvation. It explains salvation's only standard. It answers the why, how, who, and wherefore of salvation. With it as our guide we wish to point out a few truths which in our day are either directly or by implication denied.

We take our starting point in Ephesians 1 where this little word is used no less than six times. The first **"according to"** we find in verse 4, **"According as** He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." Election is first. By it salvation is determined. Whether one is saved or not saved is decided by the criterion of sovereign, eternal election. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God," we read in Peter 1:2. And Paul writes in II Thessalonians 2:13, ". . . God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation." True it is that Arminianism reverses this fact and makes faith preceed election as a prerequisite; but according to Scripture, election is the fount of all the blessings of salvation.

But, then, how is it determined who shall and who shall not be included in the number of those chosen? Answering this question, we turn to the second **"according to"** of Ephesians 1. It is found in verse 5, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto Himself, **according to** the good pleasure of His will." Not my will, not my works, nothing of me determines this but only the good pleasure of God's will. Election takes place from eternity ere man exists, and its scope is limited alone by the Divine good pleasure. Man has nothing to say and in no way determines it.

By now I hear some who are ready to accuse the apostle of "fatalism; determin-

ism; making man a stock and block; denying responsibility, etc." Doesn't man do something in **obtaining** his salvation? Perhaps what you say about the decree of election is true, but those things are secret, and we are not supposed to know anything about it. How about time and the historical realization of salvation? Man comes into focus then, doesn't he? And so we ask, "How does man receive his salvation?" and for an answer turn to the next **"according to"** which is found in verse 7. There we read: "In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, **according to** the riches of His grace." How disappointing! Nothing of man! Salvation by grace! And now do not conceive of grace as a gift promiscuously offered, or promised to all upon the condition of faith, for then you get into conflict with the apostle. He presents grace as the irresistible power of God through which He saves His people unconditionally. Later in the chapter he utters the prayer in behalf of the Ephesians (see vss. 17 ff) that they might know what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe **according to** the working of His mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead!

That is grace! Without entering into details we must mention three things here: (1) That the text does not say "if you believe" (2) that believing is determined by and attributed to "the working of His mighty power." Faith is the fruit of grace and the dynamic spiritual effect of God working in us. (3) This power is resurrection power, power to make alive what is dead and causing those raised by it, to live the life of faith. By that power we are saved. Apart from it there is neither salvation, nor the will to be saved.

Soli Deo Gloria! Not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth but of God that showeth mercy. By His mercy he saved us. (Titus 3:5). God alone is the author and finisher of our faith!

But there is more. What about the gospel and the preaching? Is salvation a mechanical transposition from death to life? How do we know we are saved and how do we obtain the conscious assurance of our election? Notice the next "according to" in verse 9. It reads: '(God) having made known unto us the mystery of His will **according to** His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself." Canons I, 3 states: "And that men may be brought to believe, God mercifully sends the messengers of these most joyful tidings, **to whom He wills** and at what time He pleaseth, by whose ministry men are called to repentance and faith in Christ crucified." It is all of God Who "hides these things from the wise and prudent and reveals them unto babes for even so, Father, it seemed good in Thy sight." (Matt. 11:25) And for this Jesus gives thanks! Oh yes, God uses means, the means of His Word to unveil the mystery of salvation to some while from others He withholds it. And again the determining criterion is "His good pleasure which He purposeth in Himself."

Finally, we have another **"according to"** in verse 11. Here it says that we **"obtained** an inheritance in Christ **according** to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

Listen! Salvation by grace! Salvation of the Lord! Salvation determined by this four-fold standard:

"According to eternal election . . ."

"According to the Divine good pleasure . . ."

"According to the working of Divine power . . ."

"According to Him Who does all things

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BIBLE OUTLINE

LESSON XIII
"THE PEDAGOGICAL USE OF THE LAW"
Galatians 3:23-29

1. The terms of the Testament of God, the Father of Abraham, are very exact. They leave no room for misunderstanding. The "meaning" of the Testament is written in the terms, and the terms are not at all such that they allow a two-fold interpretation. "In Thy Seed shall all nations be blessed" means nothing less and nothing more than that all God's promises are yea in Christ and in Him Amen to the glory of God the Father. All is dependant on the redemptive labors of Christ. There is no "fine print" in the Testament making it dependant on works of law!

2. Yet, the question persists (verse 19) "wherefore then is the law"? Why is this law added to the Promise, the Testament words? Notice:

a. This law is, according to God's intention, in no sense a means whereby man can save himself. Why not? Because it is weak, it cannot make us, dead sinners, alive. Gal. 3:21. Only if the law could make alive would righteousness be out of law. But the law is never out of faith. (3:12). The law and faith are two principles which cannot and may not be identified. The law kills! II Cor. 3:6. Only the Spirit makes alive.

b. The reason for the adding of the law to the promise is twofold:

1. It was added for the transgressions' sake. Confer Romans 5:20; 7:8 and I Cor. 15:56.

2. It also had a more positive, pedagogical purpose. All is placed under sin by reason of this law, and that most emphatically so. In this way it becomes most evident, as a crying need, that the promise will be faith in Jesus Christ to those believing.

3. Concerning the pedagogical purpose we notice the following:

a. In the first place we should notice with pains-taking care that the Apostle is here not speaking of the "before" and "after faith came" in the life of the individual believer, as two spiritual-psychological states or conditions, in either the Old- or the New Testament, but that he here has in mind the difference in the "before" and "after" the fulfilment of the Testament of God in Christ's death and resurrection. Paul has in mind a Dispensational difference, that is, the different manner in which God dispenses the blessings of His Covenant in the time of the Old Testament shadows than what he dispenses these Covenant blessings in the New Testament reality. What is here said of the difference of the "Dispensations," **lest we tempt God,** may not be presented as applicable to the life of the individual believer in God's Church. Acts 15:10. He, that readeth this, take note of this for his very life's sake! Let no one have the brazen audacity to make what was before and after the Cross of Jesus tantamount to what is before and after the self-conscious faith of the children of God as this reveals itself in daily conversion. That would be simply "borrowing trouble," and "troubling" the church, (Gal. 1:7) subverting the Gospel of Christ, ushering in the "law" once more under the smoke-screen of the "pedagogical approach"! Upon such falls

the "Anathema" of Paul. "Wherefore let us submit our every thought in faith to the Word of Christ.

b. Having thus "rightly devided the Word" (II Tim. 2:15) we will have no difficulty to understand the following:

1. That "before faith came" must refer to the time prior to Christ's redeeming us from the "law" and his giving us the adoption of sons in His blood. Confer Gal. 4:4-6. It is before the dispensation of the fullness of times.

2. That Paul says that "faith has come":

a. This must not be taken to mean that prior to the coming of Christ no faith lived in the hearts of the elect. Then too the just lived by faith. Hab. 2:4. But they believed in hope even while under the dispensation of law. What an incongruity this was, we would say. However, let it be remembered that it could not be otherwise, for Christ had not yet come into the flesh and was not yet glorified. John 7:39

b. This means that "faith" had not yet come in the sense that the reality of grace and truth had yet become history. All was yet type and shadow and promise. But the "body" is of Christ. Pentecost was not yet fully come for the Lamb of God was not yet slain. Acts 2:1. And all the implications of the Old Testament Promise were not yet unfolded and fulfilled. Many prophets had desired to see what we, what the New Testament church sees, and could not see them and to hear what we hear and could not hear it. Our eyes and ears are more blessed then theirs are. They could not recite the "faith" of the Twelve Articles of Faith. Faith was not yet come in the objective sense. The Kingdom was not yet come!

c. When "faith" came we were no longer under the "law" and its "curses." We **are** under grace! Objectively this is true in Christ. Such is our Dispensation from God as He ministers to us the New Testament in Christ's blood. Confer Romans 6:1, 15. We are new creatures standing in freedom. The "law" is **not** our Taskmaster to Christ. We stand in grace, and, standing in this grace by faith, **we learn** our misery out of the law of God. But even so we are nevermore **under** law but wholly **under grace!** We learn **by grace,** from the law of God, our great sin and misery. And this learning our misery is an infallible fruit of election. Canons I, 12, 13. Hence, we are never under law, not even for "pedagogical reasons." To teach that we are still **under** law in the latter sense is a tempting of God even as Israel did at Meriba and Massa, and is a disturbing of the weak conscience of those for whom Christ died! Confer Psalm 95 and Hebrews 2:7-11; Acts 15:6. Let him that readeth discern with a spiritual mind, not confusing the things of the Spirit with those of the flesh. The "natural" man does not apprehend; let us not form fleshly judgements. I Corinthians 2:14-16.

3. In **this faith** of Christ we are:

a. The fact that we are Jew is no advantage and the fact that we are Gentiles is no disadvantage. Neither one have any meaning or value in faith. Nor is the distinction of a free man or a slave of any importance, nor that of male and female. It is all newness of life in the last Adam, the Lord from heaven. In heaven there is neither marriage nor giving in marriage. These are all the principles of this present evil world from which we have been plucked. He who wishes to maintain these principles is still under law, and does not hold on to Christ, the Head in Whom all the Godhead, all wisdom and knowledge is contained, and in whom "all nations are blessed."

b. But we are "new creatures" one and all in Christ. We died in Him by faith

and we live with Him. What we now live we live by the faith of the Son of God. We are in grace and not under law. We are one great family, as believers, gathered **out of** all nations. Japhet dwells in the tents of Shem **with** Shem. And in this tent neither Shem nor Japhet is **under the Taskmaster** of the law to **bring to** Christ, for that would be an anachronism. God does not set the clock of His own work back. The Sun of righteousness has risen and blessed is he who is not offended!

QUESTIONS

Why can Questions 3 and 4 of the Heid. Cat. not possibly place the Christian under the Pedagogy of the "law," but are most positively the pedagogy in grace? Is there an **essential** difference between the Command of the "law" and the "precepts of the Gospel"? Conf. Canons III, IV, 17. Is it a safety measure against "false and presumptuous security" to place men under law? Are not those who pretend to keep the law as did the Pharisees and the Roman Catholic guilty of "presumptuous security?" Matthew 15:1-20; Decrees of the Council of Trent chapter 12, Canons of Dort, I, 12, 13. Does the Christian in the healthy, spiritual sense know, that, he, with all the saints, "have arrived" in the Christ in Christ and no longer see Him from afar? Eph. 3:14-21. Does it mean that we have already attained that perfection in Christ which shall be ours in the ages to come? Phil. 3:7-12. Has any man ever experienced any real spiritual joy out of works of law? Gal. 3:10.

LESSON XIV

"THE ADULTHOOD OF THE CHURCH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT DISPENSATION"

Galatians 4:1-7

1. These verses are really a **continuation** of the former verses, Gal. 3:23-29. They developed more fully and more completely the Status of the church in the O. T. Dispensation in contrast with the Status of the Church in the N. T. Dispensation. It should be once more carefully noted, that Paul is here not comparing the believer as he is "before conversion" to the believer as he is "after conversion." This is not the difference in a certain individual, but it is the difference in the one Church of Jesus Christ as she was under law in the O. T. Dispensation and as she is now no longer **under law!** She is now under grace. Faith has come. It is now after Christ came in the "fullness of time." Verses 4-6.

2. The question of the difference between the Status of the Church in the O. T. Dispensation and the Status of the same church in the N. T. Dispensation is presented under the figure of a "child," who is, indeed, legally the heir of all his father's possession, but who must wait till the time appointed by his father in the Testament (Last will) before he can actually possess all things. We notice the following:

a. That the "child" and the "adult" are one and the same person; in his capacity of the former he is heir without possessing all things, and in the latter capacity and status he is indeed heir, actually having taken possession of all. Such is also the case with us the Church. She is the same people of God, the same church of Christ, both in the Old- and New Testament Dispensations. This is the death-blow to the Dispensationalistic presentation of the Pre-millennialists. This only in passing, lest we lose sight of the point which Paul is here making in this passage. Let's not go off on a tangent.

b. The point of comparison between the "child-heir" and the "church-heir":

1. The "heir-child" is indeed heir of all things. But while the time appointed

of the father had not yet come, he is, as far as the actual possession is concerned, no different than a slave. He is equally under "governors and tutors" with a slave. He is under "controllers of his person and property" during the "interim" appointed by the father.

2. Thus also the church. "Thus also we" says Paul. Verse 3.

a. The church in O. T., that is, "we" were under the "principles of this world." These principles are the A-B-C of all the world's thinking and willing apart from grace. Whether one was under the "morality" of the greek, or the "law of Commandments" made no difference as far as affecting our salvation is concerned. Neither one could or did save. Both say: **only the doer of law is a good man.** Neither one knows of the gift of justification. It is under the law, the principles of this world, where the rule is: touch not, taste not, handle not. Col. 2:20-23.

b. And this Status was ours in the O. T. Dispensation till the "time appointed by the Father." See Gal. 3:19, 20. This time is the "fullness of times." During this entire period the church was also under governors and tutors. But only **so** long!

3. "The Time Appointed by The Father." Verses 4, 5.

The Church became "adult" at the time appointed. The "fullness of time came."

a. The idea of the fullness of time. It refers to that point in history when time is full, when the proper and ripe time has come for the coming of the Son of God in the flesh. It is the time when all that pertains to our salvation can, according to the sure counsel of God, be realized. It is the time spoken of by all the prophets, who searched out the time and manner of the time of the suffering that would come upon Christ and the glory to follow. When that time is come according to God's counsel, the time appointed by the Father, then the fullness of time is come. I Peter 1:10-12 Time is here viewed as a measure of time. It requires the last drop of water to fill up the bucket. When that drop came in the bucket, time was full, all of the time with all of its history. Such is the time spoken of by Daniel, the prophet. Read Daniel 7 through 12; Malachi 4. The proper "woman" had been born, the virgin Mary, the blessed among women. Luke 1:28. Jacob's dying prophecy is being fulfilled. Gen. 24:8-12. Compare also Romans 5:6. It was the time for the Woman's Son, the Church spoken of in Rev. 12:1-3 to give birth to her Son, the Son of God, conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary.

b. It is the time when the **futility** of being saved by works of law had been fully demonstrated in **all** of Israel's history. The sinfulness of sin had ever revealed itself and could now reveal itself in the nailing of the Lord of glory to the Cross. The proper generation, called by Jesus "this generation" lived for the Promise to be fulfilled. Compare Romans 2:24 with Isaiah 52:5 and Ezekiel 26:20.

c. It was the time when the proper sons of Japhet too were living, elected before the foundation of the world to be the sons of God by adoption, and who would dwell in the tents of Shem. God would be found of them that sought Him not. Isaiah 65:1; Hosea 1:10 and 2:23; Psalm 117; Romans 15:10-12. It was the time according to the purpose of election. Romans 9:11-13

4. It was at this time that God sent His Son, made of a woman and under the law! Vss. 4, 5.

a. That the Son was made of a woman is evident from Luke 1:26-35; Matt. 1:18-25; Is. 7:14, Luke 2:6, 7.

b. That he was "made under law" appears from Luke 2:21-24. Jesus was born

such that he was subject to the law of circumcision. It is true this rite was not, strictly speaking, of Moses. It is of the fathers, yet it was incorporated in the "law." John 7:22. Under this law Jesus was born. And he is also subject to the law concerning the "first-born in Israel, which were holy to the Lord. He is redeemed by the sons of Levi as a son of Judah. Thus he need not serve in the earthly temple-worship as did Samuel, but he is free to serve in the heavenly temple not made with hands by the redemption through a regulation of the law. Read Luke 2:22-24. Compare Lev. 12, Ex. 13:2, 12, 15;

c. He became thus "under law" that he might redeem us and that we might receive the actual adoption unto sons. This means:

1. Not only that we receive the right to the adoption of sons in hope of some day actually experiencing it.

2. But it means that we actually are the sons of God, and that, therefore, we have **received** the Spirit of the Son in our hearts, crying: Abba, Father! Indeed we are **under grace!** Compare Rom. 8:15.

QUESTIONS:

Does the New Testament "exegesis" of the O. T. Scriptures warrant the contention that the congregation of Jesus Christ is confronted with the "blessings" and "curses" of the Old Covenant? Compare Deut. 27 and 28 with II Cor. 3:1-18. Does this curse remain on the "unbelieving," who read the Scriptures with a "covering on their heart?" Do they have the spirit of bondage again to fear? Is it a good pedagogical, Scriptural approach to tell the congregation that this great blessedness is hers? Must attention be called to the earmarks of such "faith?" What does II Cor. 5:20 teach us concerning the need of preaching the "ministry of reconciliation?" Can this ministry be reconciled with placing men under the "curse" of the law? Must those who back-slide toward this righteousness of "law" be warned of their impending doom threatened in the Scriptural warnings? Heb. 6:4-6.

LESSON XV

"THE REPROVABLENESS OF RETURNING TO BEGGARLY PRINCIPLES POINTED OUT"

Galatians 4:8-11

1. How glaring is the fault of these Galatian brethren in returning to "weak" and "beggarly principles!" All the more this became evident in the fact that it is seen against the background of the coming of the Son of God in the flesh. He came in the fullness of time. He suffered and died, rose from the dead, ascended on high and sent the Spirit into our hearts, testifying with our spirit that we are the children of God. The Son made us free and thus we are indeed "free." We are free from the curse of the law, an as we shall see later in Chapters 5 and 6, we are also free from the "dominion" of sin. Compare Canons of Dort, V, 1. What the "law" could not do, namely, "make us alive," that God did in the sending of His Son. Rom. 8:3. Here is the working of the power of God's might to usward, who believe. Eph. 1:20, 21. Concerning this power we notice:

a. This is the power that makes Jew and Gentile, bond and free, male and female all one, in a new unity of faith and of the Holy Spirit, having made us a "new creation," one new man in Christ! Confer Eph. 2:1-6.

b. In this power the glory of God's grace and love is revealed, whereby He raises us from deepest hell and death to the pinnacle of God's glory in His Son. Here is the power and the wisdom of God, which is the very opposite of the "weak and beggarly principles" of the law and of all moralistic teaching.

c. How glaring! therefore the fault in returning again to these principles.

2. What are these weak and beggarly principles? We should bear the following in mind:

a. What Paul has in mind is, without a doubt, the return of **Gentile Christians** to **Jewish** principles! This was a placing of self once more under the bondage of "law!" For the **Gentiles** this meant a return to the same old bondage of sin, only now in a new form. They had here-to-fore as **Gentiles** never been **under law.** In the decree of God's election and in the Dispensation of God the Gentiles never were placed under law. Nor was this the Divine intention when once they would dwell as the sons of Japhet in the tents of Shem in the new Manhood in Christ. Gen. 12:3 Gal. 3:8. Paul had established this point in Gal. 3:7-9. He now brings this point of Gen. 12:3 home to these backsliding Gentile Christians. The law contained in "ordinances" of the temple, and of the feastdays are simply "weak and beggarly principles." That Paul has these ordinances in mind is evident from the following:

1. The entire context, which speaks of them who teach a keeping of the law in order to be justified before God by such "works of law," bears this out.

2. That Paul explicitly cites the keeping of days, months, seasons and years. By this latter Paul has in mind a "religious return" to the entire ceremonial ordinances. This is **in principle** a return to the whole law! For this return means a "minute and scrupulous observance;" an interested, assiduous observance. Compare Luke 14:1. It belongs to the category of self-willed worship, which does hold on to Christ, the Head, but returns to the Shadows and Types. This was simply "borrowing trouble," placing one's self under the yoke of bondage, which Christ Himself does not place upon the "poor and heavy laden." Matth. 11:28. It is a tempting of God, even as Israel tempted God at Meriba and Massa. Ps. 95; Heb. 3:7-9.

b. This all is denominated by Paul as being "weak and beggarly principles."

1. They are called **principles.** Principles are the A-B-C, the fundamental rudiments of a thing. Take, for an example, simple Arithmetic. 2 x 2 is always 4. The underlying principle of the law of numbers and of the law of thinking is such that, therefore, 4 x 4 must always be 16. We here deal with a uniform "principle." Such is the A-B-C of numbers! So also we can speak of the "principle of "law" and of the principle of "faith." Compare Rom. 8:2. The "principle of law is always such that it says: the man that doeth the same shall live thereby! The last **must** always confront man with its "blessings" but also with its "curses." Such is the principles, the A-B-C of law, of all nomism, legalism! Such is also the principle of Neonomisn, which makes "faith" and "experience" the **condition** of salvation! In these circles the law must thunder at the church, rather than that the church under grace **learns** her misery out of the law of God! Now the law is never out of faith. One cannot insist on the principle of law and live out of faith. Rather, faith **establishes** the law! Rom. 3:31. On the contrary, the "principle" of faith is that of a new creature. Old things have passed away and all things have become new. The principle of faith is such that by faith we appropriate in a certain knowledge and in a hearty confidence the blessings in Christ Jesus, the forgiveness of sins and the complete redemption in Christ, both justification and **sanctification.** Two principles that work through to the very end!

2. The principles of law Paul calls "weak and "beggarly."

a. They are "weak" because they have no power to rescue the sinner from con-

demnation. Fact is, that the law is the power of sin. I Cor. 15:56. Confer Rom. 8:3 and Hebrews 7:18, 19.

b. They are called "beggarly" for they "bring no rich endowment of Spiritual treasures." Lightfoot. The principles of the law do not belong to that power which brings in a better hope, a better Covenant and a greater High priest after the order of Melchizedec. It is all unprofitable unto our salvation.

3. That these Galatians now return to these principles of "law" is, indeed, as reprovable as it is amazingly unbelievable. Notice:

a. That the problem here, although principly the same as in the entire book of Hebrews, is yet different in viewpoint because of those addressed here. In the book of Hebrews the **Jewish** christians are addressed, while here Paul is addressing **Gentile** christians. This implies that the former were returning to the old Jewish bondage of law from which they had been liberated while the latter returned to a bondage under which they had really never been before! Yet, even so, in both instances, whether in the serving of idols in heathendom, or the bondage to the "law" in Jewry, we are dealing with the same weak and beggarly principle. In the former it is the principle of being a law unto self and thus perishing in it, or in the latter of being under law and being judged by the law to be a transgressor. Rom. 2:12-16.

b. Here is the reprovableness:

1. When these Gentiles **once served** idols they had not yet been enlightened. It was the times of their ignorance. God had then not yet given proof that He would judge the world by one man Jesus Christ, and did not yet call all men to repentance. Acts 14:16; 17:30. At that time they knew no better.

2. But now they have been enlightened. They now know God. Yea, it is much stronger "they are known of God." They belong to those who have been found of God. For God is found of those who sought Him not. For all is indeed of grace. The mater now is far more serious. Romans 9:24-26; Hos. 1:10 and 2:23.

3. Hence, Paul expresses great fear for them. The purpose is stated very well by Calvin, "The expression is harsh, and must have filled the Galatians with alarm; for what hope is left to them if Paul's labor had been in vain?" If this does not bring them to their spiritual senses, it seems, nothing else will avail.

QUESTIONS:

What did our Reformed fathers have in mind with the dictum "principles work through?" Is it ever dangerous to stand wholly in the principle that we **are** under grace? Confer Romans 6:1, 15. Who claim that this position is dangerous to good ethics and why? Confer Heidelberg Cate., Question 64. Is that principle of Question 64 rather safe? Would there be a true and living faith without the reality expressed in Question 65? Is the latter not wholly the principle of the Power of grace in which there is no weakness or poverty at all?

LESSON XVI

"PAUL'S 'BIRTHPANGS' FOR THE GALATIAN BRETHREN"

Galatians 4:12-20

1. In these verses Paul brings the more **personal appeal** to bear in this matter of the Galatian's back-sliding, in their becoming renegades to the truth of the Gospel; they had indeed fallen from Him who had called them into the fellowship of Christ. Paul's appeal is as truthful, factual, as it is heart-**touching** and **conscience**-searching! We notice that Paul's appeal contains the following note-worthy elements:

a. Paul appeals to his **own example** in the truth of the Gospel. Paul's own personal glorying in the Cross colors all of His labors. Confer Gal. 2:19-21; II Cor. 4:1, 2; Phil. 3:2-17. This fact of

Paul's conversion and what he became to the Gentiles in the Gospel is here expresed. The point of fellowship with the church is expressed in the term "brethren!"

b. What was this example? Paul gives this in verse 12. "Become as I because I also am as ye are, brethren." This means:

1. This does not mean that Paul had become a worshipper of idols, nor that he had returned to weak and beggarly principles of law. These latter he accounted so much loss and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus His Lord. No, Paul has ceased to be a Jew in his heart and life. Neither did he become a Gentile. Confer Gal. 3:28, 29. Paul had through law died unto law that he might live unto God. Paul had become a new creature and, therefore, has seen himself as a poor sinner, justified freely through grace in Christ Jesus. Christ's strength and grace is revealed in Him. Gal. 1:16. On this plane the Father's house with its many mansions. John 14:1-3. Such Paul is. For him to live is Christ and to die gain. He is such that he only desires that Christ be formed in Him more and more. II Cor. 3:17, 18.

2. Now he desires only one thing: the Galatians must become like him in the Lord. Christ must have a form in them. Their whole life must be that of faith in Christ, so that what they now live they live by the faith of the Son of God. With a free and good conscience they must live unto God. Compare Heid. Cate., Ques. 32. Then Paul and these Galatian brethren will be living out of a common principle, rich, strong and free. In this "principle" they are "brethren"

3. Paul "exhorts" the Galatians. It is an appeal to their sanctified, believing hearts and consciences. They must walk in all that is required of them in grace by virtue of grace! If they are indeed known of God they must have the same mind as was in Paul.

c. It calls to mind that the Gospel was **first** preached to them by Paul at such a season in Paul's life that the only thing appealing about his visit was: the message that he brought! His personal appearance had been contemptible, but his message had been, therefore, all the more manifestly wonderful. Notice the following elements:

1. That Paul calls to remembrance that the Gospel was preached to the Galatians because of a providential sickness of Paul. The proper translation is not "though weakness" but rather "on account of weakness." It was on account of illnes that Paul tarried in Galatia to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. The "earthen vessel" was indeed quite apparent in Paul. He had not been able, evidently, to speak with vim and vigor. The excellency of the entire visit had been the demonstration of power and of the Holy Spirit. II Cor. 4:7. It is salutary to be reminded that the beginning of our faith is wholly the work of God. They had indeed begun in the Spirit. Gal 3:4. Should they now not persevere in this same Spirit and become like Paul?

2. There had indeed been a temptation is his flesh. Verse 14. Yet, the Galatians had not despised Paul and spit him out for it. Why not? Simply because the hand of the Lord had been such as to open their hearts and they had experienced in faith the words of Isaiah 52:7-9, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings . . ." Hence, they received Paul as a Mesenger of God, as Christ Himself!

3. Well may Paul ask the heart-searching question: Where is the blessedness ye gave utterance to. They had sung Psalm 32:1 with David. And now?

2. Paul also "shows up" the false pretense of these Judaizing teachers, who ambitiously court (zealously affect) these

Galatians. Their intent is to not merely alienate their affection from Paul, but to alienate them completely from the Gospel and from its rich joys of salvation. It is this evil which these "teachers" perpetrate toward the flock of God that causes the soul of Paul to travail as it were in "birthpangs!" Verses 16-20.

a. Notice, that Paul is not small and peevish, so that he cannot endure the very thought that others might share the confidence of these Galatian brethren. Paul is not afflicted with the "green-eyed monster" of envy and jealousy. See I Cor. 3:3-9 for Paul's attitude toward a co-laborer in the Gospel. Wherefore he writes, "It is well to be zealously affected (jealously courted) always in a good thing." Paul's personal prestige is not at stake. Ye have wronged me in nothing, he writes. Verse 13.

b. But Paul has **travail of soul** when he sees that these sons, who are free, are tempted, courted by false lovers, who only have a very, very selfish interest in mind. They simply court in order, that, when they have made these Galatians their victims, they may make them return court to them. They will then not say: What a wonderful God and Savior **we have,** but they will say what **wonderful men** these are **who keep the law!** However, these evil men themselves do not enter the Kingdom and others may not enter in!

c. Paul's metaphor brings to mind the truth that he can only have joy and rejoice once more when he may see Christ formed in these Galatian churches. Only when he may see the new man in Christ revealed will Paul's heart rest. What a great heart of a great preacher. The love of Christ constrains him. II Cor. 5:11-21. Paul, indeed, knows the meaning of the words of Moses, "Would that all Jehovah's people were prophets, that Jehovah would put His Spirit upon Him." See Numbers 11:26-29. Here is the pure love of God showing itself in the zeal for God's house!

QUESTIONS:

What do you think of the following presentation of false teachers: "We are therefore said to be **justified by faith,** because faith is the beginning of human salvation and the root of all justification; without which it is impossible to please God, and to come to the fellowship of His sons. But we are therefore said to be **freely** justified because none of these things which precede justification — whether faith or works — merit the grace itself of justification. For **if it be grace,** it is not now by works, otherwise, as the same apostle says: "grace is no more grace?" Is faith the "beginning," the initiative of salvation? Is it the "root" of justification? Is faith not more than a mere intellectual assent to the truth revealed in Scripture? Is faith here not a "pre-requisite" to justification and entering into the Kingdom? Guess from whose "Confession" this quotation was taken? That it is herecy pure and simply is evident. Decrees of the Council of Trent, Decree of Justification, Chapter VIII. What do you think of Rome's insistence that all is of "grace?" Is this "grace" the same as that taught in Holy Scriptures and confessed by the Reformed Confessions?

A few years ago, a distinguished newspaper columnist died. In one of his last colums, he remarked on his failure properly to appreciate the preciousness of the common aspects of family life that he had earlier overlooked. He told how he had discovered during his long illness the tenderness, devotion, and utterly selfless love of his wife as he had never known it before.

Lifting the Lid . . .

The Seduction Of Youth

PART III — IN EDUCATION

In my last instalment we have seen how the secret controlling process of Communism in the United States seek to destroy the God ordained institution, the family, from off the face of the earth. This is exactly in accordance with Communist doctrine as taught by one of its great leaders, Lenin, who wrote the following:

"The Government of the proletarian dictatorship, together with the Communist Party and the trade unions, is, of course leaving no stone unturned in the effort to overcome the backward ideas of men and women, to destroy the old uncommunist psychology.—We are establishing communal kitchens and public eating places, laundries and repairing shops, infant asylums, kindergartens, children's homes, educational institutions of all kinds. In short we are seriously carrying out the demand of our programme for the transference of the economic and educational functions of the separate household to society."

This quotation also answers the question: If both of the parents must work at some occupation outside of the home, what then becomes of their children? These are of course a few instances where the children are well cared for, both physically and spiritually, by grandparents, brothers, sisters, friends, etc.; but in most cases the children are left to roam around on the streets. Oh yes, the above quotation mentioned such things as "infant asylums, kindergartens, children's homes, educational institutions of all kinds," where children are brought up in the ways of a wicked world Oh yes, the laws of the state require that all children must attend school, and free education is provided. Oh yes, they say that the public schools are neutral in regards to religiuos matters. Are they? The first commandment reads: "thou shalt have no other gods before me." Take a walk into any classroom of any public schools as into a children's ward in any large local hospital during any of our Christian holiday seasons and note the legions of ikons hanging on the walls — the ghosts, the black cats, skeletons, and the witches of that wicked revelry against Reformation Day, called Halloween; then behold the Thanksgiving turkeys, the Santa Clauses, and the Easter Bunnies. Yes, gods of all kinds in opposition to the Living God. Suppose a true Christian taught in a public school and attempted to teach the children about the real significance of these holidays or suppose she taught them truths such as the Creation, the Incarnation, the total depravity of mankind, the Resurrection; or about God's holiness, justice, righteousness, wrath, etc. as well as God's mercy and love. Could she hold her position very long? You know the answer. She would be called sectarian, intolerant, and narrow minded. The Beast of Revelation 13 of which Communism is a type, if not the actual Beast — will not stand for such teachings. Furthermore, as the children grow up into manhood and womanhood and at the same time passes through the various stages of education — elementary grades, high school, college, university — the Antithesis becomes more and more plainly marked. In many of the famous colleges and universities of our land one must deny the Living God if he wants to succeed in his studies. If he refuses to become an Atheist or at least profess to be

one, he is penalized by receiving low grades and consequently becomes a failure — a modified form of the former Roman Catholic Inquisition.

The public educational institutions have a long arm which reaches out and separates the children from their families, not only during the daytime, but also during the evening. I am thinking of the countless athletic activities, dances, parties, plays, entertainments, etc. together with their rehearsal and practise periods, which keep the students occupied almost every night of the week. Some schools now play more than twenty basketball games a season and great pressure is put upon all students to attend all the games as a matter of school loyalty. Then think of football, baseball, golf, etc. Last but not least there are the various fraternities, clubs, and kindred student organizations. The consequence of all this is that a terrible impediment is put upon the student that refuses to go along with the various activities and upon the parents that refuse to allow their children to participate in the same. In one large school a visiting psychologist was brought by the school administration to address the Parent-Teachers Association. The burden of his message was that parents who keep their children away from any of the social activities sponsored by the high school are thereby harming their children, possibly irreparably. Again students who refuse to participate in extra curricular activities are punished or discriminated against by means of low marks." Then think of the time needed for studying ones lessons; for making book reports on worthless, anti-christian literature, etc.

From the above facts the instruction given by the public educational institutions can be summarized to amount to the following: There is no God. Likewise this same doctrine is taught to the children and adolescents by many a modernistic minister or Sunday School teacher. Oh, they may camouflage this teaching somewhat by stating that God is man's highes self, but nevertheless it amounts to the same because they cast the God of the Scripture away from them. But God laughs at them and speaks to them in His sore displeasure. The Apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, writes the following: "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, prowd, boastess, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: who knowing the judgement of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." Rom. 1:28-32.

Dear reader, did you discover that the above chapter of Holy Writ, from verse eighteen to the end, and also the epilogue to the second commandment, Exodus 20:5, contains the real causes of juvenile delinquency in a nutshell. God punishes sin with more sin. In former years, a youth was punished severely if he would upset a vendor's apple cart, or if he were caught stealing a watermelon from a farmer's melon patch. But now a days, such misdemeanors are merely laughed at and presented as "cute." One only has to consult his daily newspaper to find daily accounts of destructive vandalism and of sadistic acts of cruelty and murder performed by mere children. In fact now a days it is considered cruelty to "spank" a child for his wrongdoing. In many cases the children are lords and masters of their families and our modern pedagogues love to have it so. In former

years children had to retire at an early hour in order to be physically prepared to study their lessons for the next day; but now-a-days, in many cases, the children (even under ten years of age) roam the streets almost till midnight — free to practise the sins they learned via the theater, the radio and television, and the comic books, which many parents provide for their children, in order that they can persue their own selfish interests and recreations. In former days, a child, as soon as it was able to, had to help with the household chores and also help to augment the family income. Today the secret controlling powers of Communism term this as "child labor," in order that todays children may spend all of their spare time, such as the evening hours, weekends, and vacations, either in the theater, or watching television, or reading comic books or any of that literary junk you can buy at the corner drug store. The mentioning of these agencies of seduction brings me to the most difficult part of our discusion on the Seduction of Youth, not because the inventions such as the printing press, the radio and television set, the phonograph, the movie (or still) camera or projector are evil in themselves, but because the Devil and his "sacred cow," Jew controlled Freemasonry, uses these inventions to glorify that thing which is so terrible in the sight of the Holy and Righteous God, that He will damn it forever in Hell, unless graciously forgiven in the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, dear reader, we are dealing with that one, horrible, little three lettered word of the English language — SIN — with all its stark reality, even to the child of God.

Seymour Beiboer

CHRISTIAN LIVING

(Continued from page 7)

ever, we can fit ourselves beter, than at any other time, for the tremendous calling of members of God's church. For we do not yet take a completely active part in the affairs of the church. That is partly true because many of us are not confessing members and thus are not considered ready to take our places. But even though we may be what is called "full members" we are nevertheless not spiritually and mentally mature enough to be fully active in the church. And thus we can use our time to full advantage to be made ready for that place.

All this is true only because we believe that God uses us, as members of the denomination of Protestant Reformed Churches, to cause His kingdom to come. The good that we do, as living in Christ, is used by God to the end that Christ may return. If that were not also true, then we would have no incentive for this calling. But because God gives us grace, and also prepares and uses us, we have a positive incentive to prepare ourselves for that future calling.

At the beginning of 1955, let us think about this!

H. Hanko

TRUTH VS. ERROR

(Continued from page 9)

after the counsel of His own sovereign will."

According to the apostle's instruction; is the salvation of God or the promise of that salvation conditional, or unconditional? Does God save His people "if they believe" or does God by His power work faith in them unto salvation?" (See Canons III-Iv, 14)

Now don't say: "But . . . but . . .but . . . there is another side" Don't distort the truth and camouflage it with philosophical errors! Rather bow before the truth and rejoice in the work of God for we are bound always to give thanks to God (II Thess 2:13) "for of Him and through Him, and to Him are all things, to Whom be glory forever." (Rom. 11:36)

Rev. G. Vanden Berg

ATTENTION!!

SINGSPIRATION

At our CRESTON CHURCH

On Sunday, February 6, 1955, 9 o'clock

Don't miss it Tell your friends

This is for ALL our people