BEACON LIGHTS

For Protestant Reformed Youth

THE MARCH ISSUE FOR 1955

"Behold, a Sower went forth to Sow . . . . he that received Seed into the good ground is he that heareth the Word . . . . which also beareth fruit." — MATTHEW 13:3 and 23

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BEACON LIGHTS

For Protestant Reformed Youth

VOL. 15 MARCH — 1955 NO. 2

Suffering and Comfort

As we go into the Lent season, our attention is called to the sufferings of Christ in the week before His crucifixion. Of course we know that Christ suffered, not only in this week, but throughout His whole life, until He said, "It is finished."

The first step of Christ's suffering was His lowly birth, or really the fact that He, the only begotten son of the Most High God must come down into the likeness of sinful man. He must enter into a body made of dust. Certainly this was suffering for Christ. After this, of course, Christ suffered all thru His life. Try to picture, for instance, the Holy Christ walking in the streets of today. How it would pain Him to see His own chosen ones going along with the world, cursing and fighting against Him. We can understand some of this from our own experience. Certainly it causes sorrow when we see a close friend or relative going astray, leading a worldly life. This especially if we have seen them once walking in the fear of God. However, in this, we may be comforted in the words of our baptism form when it tells us that God will keep His own from sin or turn it to their profit. We can be comforted also when we read in Romans 8:28: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God . . ."

Another source of sorrow takes the form of persecution for being Christians. Especially today when a Christian must give up his job or join a worldly union. Undoubtedly it is becoming harder for a Christian to live in this world, and continue in his Christian walk of life.

But here too we can be comforted. Take, for example, the apostles Peter and John; how they sang in prison because they might suffer for Christ. Remember how Paul counted it joy to suffer for Christ. Indeed all the apostles enjoyed their suffering for Christ. Christ comforts us too when He says: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

But we have another cause for suffering, and this is probably our greatest cause of suffering.

The first part of our Catechism deals with the misery of man because he himself is so sinful. How our sins mount up against us, as the Psalmist puts it, "pre-

vailing day by day." We can certainly agree with the apostle Paul when he says: "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil that I would not, that do I." What suffering it is for the Christian when at night he reflects back on the day which is passed and sees how far short he falls from the calling to do all things to the glory of God. Then he cries out with the publican: "Oh God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

But here too we have comfort for we read, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This is because Christ has borne our sins; Christ suffered for our iniquities. If we were to pay the penalty we would have no comfort, for then our sins would only result in eternal death. But since Christ has died for our sins, we know that our sins, and all our suffering, is for our preparation to Eternal Life.

But let us look back at the suffering of Christ. All through His life He lived among those who didn't want Him. They wanted a man who would give them all the pleasures of this life; they wanted a man who could heal all their earthly diseases and feed them with earthly bread. They wanted an earthly Savior.

But did they want a king who would send them affliction; did they want a king who would chastise them with hunger and diseases? All through Christ's life He was sought after by the multitudes for earthly satisfaction. Even His disciples, shortly before His death, argued among themselves who would be the greatest in His kingdom. And when finally, at the garden of Gethsemane, the disciples saw the downfall of all their earthly dreams, they fled and left Christ. How Christ must have suffered when Peter, shortly after, denied, cursing, that he never knew Him.

Going back to Gethsemane, we remember how Christ, when he foresaw the suffering ahead of Him, sweat drops of blood, and prayed to have, if possible, the cup removed from Him. But no; God's justice must be satisfied; God's wrath must be borne. Stop to think; if one sin is enough to condemn a person to hell, and Christ had to bear all the sins of all the elect of all ages, what a tremendous load Christ must bear. And Christ did bear the burden; Christ did descend into hell. But, Christ rose out of the depths. He had overcome hell, the devil, and his whole dominion. He had saved all His chosen from eternal death and washed them clean of all their sins. He made them blameless before God so that God could say, "I behold no sin in Israel, no iniquity in Jacob." This was Christ's comfort.

Peter Elzinga

We Gratefully Acknowledge:

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WHO ARE THEY?

Most of the men who belong to secret organizations know no more of what the head centers of those organizations are doing than private soldiers know of what their generals are doing. Nor have they any more power or influence in the directions of affairs than private soldiers have. All they have to do, or can do, is to obey the mechanism of their "order," like jumping-jacks, the strings being pulled by such men as Schuyler Colfax, General Logan, Benjamin F. Butler, Daniel E. Sickles, Albert Pike, Andrew Johnson, etc., etc. What kind of men enlist under such leaders? Who are they? How do they vote? —From "More Light"

PARENTS AGAINST COMICS ROMAN ARCHBISHOP WARNS

Archbishop Richard J. Cushing of Boston recenty stated that comic books "paralyze the spiritual, slow down the mental and whip the physical into a frenzy." He urged parents who consider such publications harmless to "examine their conscience."

He said that a "constant afterschool diet of comic books will bog down the children into mental wrecks," and "even those not morally objectionabe are responsibe for unhealthy stimulus."

Only about 30 per cent of the comics make any pretense at being funny, and their appeal is based on "crime, sex, terror, adventure, etc., sold on sensational covers that appeal to those looking for the shock treatment."

He added that about 80 per cent of the 7,000,000 comics sold are "bought by children in ultural and critical stages of their development," and said that there are 340 different comic books on the market.

Many Protestant and other leaders among the nonchurchgoers will approve the stand taken by the archbishop.

EDITORIALS

The Struggle of Faith

THE APPEARANCE of March brings many thoughts to mind: Springtime, with all its wellknown botanical associations; the resurgence of new season energy out of winter's doldrums; and the period of life that is youth, with everything that Youth signifies.

For the Christian, perhaps no thought connected with the return of Spring each year is more significant, than that in which he sees that Spring speaks to him of the presence of the covenant God. Spring is a sign that the God of the Covenant is present, providentially and omnipotently. The sign of Spring is the reminder to the child of God, that the Lord of heaven and earth is He who made all things in heaven and earth; that calls the things that are not as if they were; that raises the dead, and brings life out of death. Always, God reveals Himself as the wonder-working God, who so works His power in nature, as to cause the natural to be a picture of the spiritual. The appearance of the Spring flower, the budding of leaves on the trees, and the friendly warmth of the Spring sun are creaturely reflections of the power and reality of God, and of His Truth. This is one reason why Jesus so often tought in parables. The natural was a picture of the spiritual.

Surely, to think of March is to think of Spring; and to think of Spring, is to think of youth. Particularly, youth as Covenant Youth. We do not think, primarily, of the youth of the world. We have our eye on covenant youth; therefore, our youth. The world of carnal youth is one of spiritual darkness. The world of carnal youth is a world that lies in darkness, and all its ways are the ways of sin that leadeth unto death. But the world of covenant youth is a different world. It is different ethically and spiritually. The world of covenant youth is one of life in the Lord.

Covenant youth, which is the youth that we are interested in, centrally an principally, is the youth of the seed of the Church. This church is the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. This youth is the elect in its tender and formative years. This youth is the youth, that — even in this early stage of life — fights the good fight of faith. It is a youth engaged in the struggle of faith that it fights, in the spring time of its years. The characteristics of covenant youth are: it is not swallowed up by the philosophy of the world; it does not seek its pleasures in the things below; and it is not carried away by the temptation and sin of the world. Against such a way of life, covenant youth is constantly engaged in a struggle — a struggle of faith against the spiritual foes of darkness. All covenant youth must engage the foe in the battle of faith.

This struggle, in which covenant youth engages, is fought in the arena of youth's own problems and needs; problems and needs peculiar to this period in life. This arena is the battle ground where covenant youth learns to use its spiritual weapons of the knowledge of the Word, and the Sacraments; the habit of faithful attendance at church, catechism class, and society; and the totality of christian experience learned in Church, Home and Christian School. When covenant youth emerges from the noise and tumult of the battle of faith fought during youth's years, then it is ready, in the power of faith, to serve the ranks of the servants of God engaged in the main Battle of Life. And so life goes on.

But it is not always easy for covenant outh to see and understand the struggle of faith, in its own period and in the period that youth will grow into; namely, adulthood. Youth does not always see the struggle because it stands in its ivory tower of The School. While in this tower, youth may be protected from the struggle of life, rather than exposed to it. Those who do experience life's struggles, are those who have ventured forth from the tower. These are the ones who have tasted the privilege their parents enjoy, in sending them to Christian school, even if it means self-denial to do it. These are ones who, themselves, have worked to pay their tuition, either in part, or all of it, by dint of honest industry and self-reliance. These are the ones who have seen that the spiritual labor of the church in preaching, catechism, society, and Sunday school, is expended, through the years, to prepare them for their place in the ranks of soldiers of Christ, under the banner of the Cross. These are the ones who understand that they are being trained to maintain the Thesis, which is God; and to oppose the Anti-Thesis, all that which is opposed to God. These are the ones who follow in the footsteps of the wise man of old, who wrote: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh . . . ." (Eccles. 12:1)

God calls His children, the boys and girls of covenant youth, to fight the good fight of faith all through their lives. It begins in youth, and it continues in youth. It is fought by the boys and girls of covenant youth who, after completing their primary and secondary schooling, look ahead to their next calling in life. For some youth, there is further schooling in college or university. Here, the struggle continues. Now it is fought on academic levels in the various fields of knowledge, and human learning, and science. On this level the struggle of faith meets the fce in textbook and classroom. This struggle calls for a thorough grounding in the principles of the undoubted Catholic Christian faith as it is confessed in the Twelve Articles of the Apostle's Creed.

To another of our covenant youth, it is given to him to fight the good fight of faith serving in the armed forces of our country, on land, sea, or in the air. Here, the struggle of faith continues on the level of the life and administration of the

military might of our country. In the midst of the philosophy of power, covenant youth testifies of the God of salvation who hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. When the young man of our youth is faced with the question of whether or not to enlist, let him proceed with caution, and not plunge himself into the services. Let the Lord guide him in His own way and means.

To another of youth, it falls to his lot to seek employment in business or industry. Again, he is called to the struggle of faith. In job-hunting, the foe presents himself in the form of the powerful labor unions that either prevent the youth from obtaining employment, or attempt to seek him to compromise. In this endeavor, he must serve the Lord with distinction.

To the girls of our covenant youth, their lot may fall in the area of further schooling, job-hunting, or home-making. In higher education, her foe is the same one that meets the young man. So also with the level of job-hunting, or career employment. Here too, our girls may be faced with the same obstruction in their pathway, as the young man of faith. That obstruction is that of the worldly labor union. Our girls are being forced day by day into jobs, or career positions that are not controlled by labor unions. And the range of such jobs and careers gets smaller, year by year.

Another area of life, where our girls and young women must maintain the struggle of faith, is that of home-making. Our girls know not what the future holds for them, in life. The Lord takes care of that. To some, He sends God-fearing young men to be their life-partners; to others He does not. Here, as in other areas of life, God is on His throne.

What should our young ladies do? They should follow principles of good advice. Some principles are :(1) Trust in God, and pray to Him about these important matters; (2) Confide in the parents; they have gone along this same road years before, and they know of the many pit-falls youth may plunge into; (3) Keep company with boys who are Protestant Reformed God-fearing boys whenever this is possible. (4) If the boys are not our boys, then keep company with those who are God-fearing, who are really interested in the truth of the Scriptures. Do not encourage companionship of worldly boys. Avoid them. (5) Seek, primarily, holiness in the Lord. Holiness will beget happiness.

Moses was a very learned, as well as a very wise man. He had a vast knowledge of life, and all its component parts. Moreover, he was the greatests of the prophets. He said: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." This is sound advice. Let it guide us in the struggle of faith.

James McCollam

There are souls in this world which have the gift of finding joy everywhere and of leaving it behind them when they go. — **Faber.**

CHRISTIAN LIVING

Preparation

Confession of Faith

WE TREAT THIS subject at this time because it is the climax of catechetical instruction. Furthermore, Confession of Faith is always necessary for the individual member of the church to become a "full member" and to partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Participation, in this sacrament, we hope to treat in some other article, the Lord willing; and therefore, it is but fitting that we devote the space of this article to a discussion of Confession of Faith. The Church Order itself makes mention of this Confession in Article 61 which reads, "None shall be admitted to the Lord's Supper except those who according to the usage of the church with which they unite themselves have made a confession of the reformed religion, besides being reputed to be of a godly walk, without which those who come from other churches shall not be admitted."

Why must the youth of the church make confession of their faith? Is it not enough that he is a baptized member of a particular congregation? And if the objection is raised that there are Esaus in the line of the covenant, and that therefore he must give a profession of his faith, cannot it be argued that he constantly professes his faith by his daily walk? And that therefore a public testimony to this effect is of little value? And cannot it also be said that many who make this public confession prove later that the vow which they took meant nothing to them? Why then is public confession of faith necessary? But in order to answer this question, we must also ask the question: What is Confession of Faith?

What do you do when you make confesion of faith? In general it may be said that when you confess your faith you profess before God and His church that you believe you are a member of the body of Christ. You confess that it is your conviction that you are a partaker in the blessed riches of Christ which He has merited on the cross, and that you believe that you have been chosen by God from eternity to be numbered among the people of God. That in itself is a most beautiful confession to make. You say before God Himself and before the church which He has chosen, that you are no longer of the world; that you are a citizen of the kingdom of heaven; that you believe that God has forgiven your sins in Christ; that you are by faith united to Christ; that it is your sure hope that when you depart this present world, you shall reign with Christ forever in heaven.

But you do this in a very special way. For you answer in the affirmative to the questions that are asked you by the minister, which we find on page 59 of our Psalter. Let us look at these questions a moment.

The first question reads, Do you acknowledge the doctrine contained in the Old and New Testaments and in the Articles of the Christian faith and taught here in this Christian Church to be the true and complete doctrine of salvation?" We notice these elements in this question:

1) You confess your own salvation in the confession that you believe the doc-

trine contained in the Old and New Testament. This is, of course, exactly the purpose of all your catechetical instruction up to this point. You cannot acknowledge the doctrines in the Old and New Testament unless you also know what they are. And you learn what they are in Catechism. You confess your faith in Christ. But that faith is not a faith which lacks knowledge, but a faith which knows Who God is, What He is, and the works which He performs. And that is exactly your salvation too. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. This means that you know God as your own God Who has saved **you,** and Who has wrought His wonder of grace within **your** heart. To know that way is life eternal. That is implied in this first question of the form for Confession of Faith. You confess that you have eternal life. Then you confess that you know God as the God of your salvation in Jesus Christ. Then, and then alone do you confess that you have eternal life.

2) But, since it is very easy to say that you acknowledge the doctrine in the Old and New Testament, and mean by that, almost anything taught in this world as the doctrine of the Bible, therefore the form is more specific and asks you to confess also that you believe that doctrine of the Bible as it is interpreted in our own Reformed Confessions. For you must confess before God and His church, that you believe that the doctrine of the Bible is truly the doctrine as is in our own creeds.

3) And because, even of the confessions, there are many false interpretations, you add also that it is your conviction that **that** doctrine is taught here in this Christian Church. This is a very beautiful confession. For it means:

a) That the saints, in whose presence you make your confession of faith, believe the true doctrine of the Scriptures.

b) That **that** doctrine is taught in all its purity by the ministers of the Word who labor in that congregation.

c) That **that** doctrine which is taught is the means which God uses to apply grace to your heart and to the hearts of the believers in that church, because it is the true and complete doctrine of salvation. That doctrine is complete and sufficient for your salvation.

d) That **that** doctrine is preached and believed in all its fulness. This does not mean that the last word has been said by your church in respect to the revelation of God, for that will take longer than eternity. But it means that what the church has developed, up to this point is fully preached in your church. That is important, because there are even now those who accuse us of neglecting an important aspect of the preaching of the Word; namely; the responsibility of man. And so, when you make this confession, you also say that their charge is false. Not only is the doctrine, which is taught here true according to God's Word, but it is also complete — complete and sufficient for your salvation, and neglecting nothing of the fulness of that Word.

e) And when you emphasize that this doctrine which you acknowledge is taught "in **"this** christian church," then you — besides rejecting all the heresies of the modern church world — reject also the heresy of the three points and the conditional promise; and you positively affirm that you believe that God is gracious only to the elect in the preaching of the gospel, and that the promise is absolutely unconditional and given only to those chosen by God from all eternity.

But there is more. The second question reads: "Have you resolved by the grace of God to adhere to this doctrine; to reject all heresies repugnant thereto and

to lead a new, godly life?" Also this question implies many things.

1) The doctrine that you have just confessed to be the truth, you now promise to support the rest of your life on earth. Notice first of all that you resolve this by the grace of God. This means:

a) That you confess, that the resolution which you now make, you make only because God has given you grace to make it.

b) That in your adherence to this doctrine, now, and in the future, you confess that it is only possible by God's grace. Concretely, that means, that your future life, in adherence to the doctrine of God, must constantly, by a life of prayer, to petition the throne of grace, that God supply you with His grace in order to support what you now confess to be the truth.

2) Secondly this question implies that you adhere to that doctrine in a two fold way.

a) You adhere to it first of all by never forsaking it as long as you live. This is very important. So often it happens in our churches that young people make confession of faith and soon after they have made confession of faith, they leave the church to join a church affiliated with some other denomination. It even happens, on occasion, that they make this vow before God while knowing that they intend to leave the church. Such action is very serious. For when you answer "Yes" to this question, you vow before God, that you believe that what is taught here is the truth, and that truth you will never forsake in all your life. And before God's saints you make the same confession. So that if you do make this confession, and then leave the church, you break the vow which you have made before God, and His people. And therefore, in passing, I would remind you that when you make this confession, think of its seriousness. And, if you intend to leave the church before you have made confession of faith, don't do it! Or, if you have made confession of faith and then decide to leave, remember that you are breaking your vow!

(To be continued)

Herman Hanko

RULES FOR DAILY LIFE

BEGIN THE DAY WITH GOD;
Kneel down to Him in prayer;
Lift up thy heart to His abode,
And seek His love to share.

OPEN THE BOOK OF GOD,
And read a portion there;
That it may hallow all thy thoughts,
And sweeten all thy care.

GO THROUGH THE DAY WITH GOD,
Whate'er thy work may be;
Where'er thou art — at home, abroad,
He still is near to thee.

CONVERSE IN MIND WITH GOD,
Thy spirit heavenward raise:
Acknowledge every good bestowed,
And offer grateful praise.

CONCLUDE THE DAY WITH GOD,
Thy sins to Him confess;
Trust in the Lord's atoning blood,
And plead His righteousness.

LIE DOWN AT NIGHT WITH GOD,
Who gives His servants sleep;
And when thou tread'st the vale of death,
He will thee guard and keep.

TRUTH VS. ERROR

Prayer

"LORD, TEACH us to pray!"

This spiritual petition lies constantly upon the heart of the redeemed child of God who realizes that the holy art of prayer is incapable of human performance. Not man but God is first also in prayer. For every prayer, worthy of the name, is the spiritual intercourse of the regenerated heart with the Fount of all life through which the former receives the implications of grace out of, and from the latter. Prayer is the cry of the soul, that has been quickened by the Spirit of Life, seeking the needs of its life. The soul of man that is dead cannot and will not and cannot will to cry either for life or for the necessities of life. The babe must be born before it can cry and likewise man must be regenerated before he is able to pray. God is first. Always first! By His irresistible Spirit, He brings life out of death and even as a new born babe cries for nourishment that it may live and grow, so does the sinner, quickened by the Spirit of God, hunger and thirst after grace, and truth, and righteousness. Thus he cries unto the God of his life. He does not cry for life but rather because he lives. He does not ask to be given conception and birth, but he cries because he has been born. He does not pray for his regeneration any more than a child asks his father and mother to bring him forth. Regeneration is of God, unsolicited and sovereignly worked by grace in those whom it pleases Him. And the cry of the new born, which is prayer, is the fruit of that grace. Grace is not the fruit of prayer but prayer is the fruit of grace. Prayer does not preceed grace, but grace is before prayer. We pray not in order to live but because we are alive. Prayer is the certain evidence of the presence of life in the Christian.

Failure to consider these principles, or modification of them, in any way, leads to the many errors that are common in the conceptions and practices of prayer. Prayer, instead of consisting of "the chief part of thankfulness which God requires of us," as our Heidelberg Catechism so correctly expresses it, becomes merely an additional way of trying to get what we want. We beseech God for this, that, and the other; for success, riches, social prestige, physical perfection, etc. Giv me; give me; give me; is our perpetual demand, and when our appeals are not met, we feel aggrieved. Instead of communion with God, our prayers become dictation to God. Rather than "praying without ceasing" as the Scriptures exhort, our petitions are uttered spasmodically, according as our circumstances are, contrary to the desires of our flesh. These prayers are then not part of those good works that are done out of faith and unto God's glory, but are the works of the flesh in which the proud and carnal creature seeks to impose itself upon the Creator. Of such serious magnitude are these and similar errors in prevelent conceptions and practices of prayer, that such utterance are **abominations** in the sight of the living God.

"Teach me then, Lord, to pray!"

Without Thee I cannot pray! Such is the confession of the child of God who realizes that prayer is a spiritual art

which none but the Father of Mercies can teach His child. It requires a heart that is renewed and a spirit that is made right and true. In the state of true prayer, one is brought to rely perfectly, whole heartedly, and confidently, upon Him to Whom prayer is directed, so that the praying one is completely submissive to His Holy Will. Prayer is the spiritual attitude of the redeemed christian toward God in relation to all things which He, in His providence, brings to pass and which directly, or indirectly, affect his place and life in the present world. And, the cries that rise from the lips of the praying Christian, are those that express the sincere desire to remain always, and in every circumstance, in the favor and loving kindness of God.

Teach me Thy ways, Lord. Show me Thy paths. Grant me grace to walk therein with willing obedience. That is the prayer which is not taught from ooks or attained through education, but is the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. In this month we observe Prayer Day and as we do so, let us consider our prayers that they may be true, and further, take note of the thought conveyed in the following quotation from Foster's "Cyclopaedia of Illustrations":

"A number of ministers were assembled for the discussion of difficult questions; and, among others, it was asked, how the command to 'pray without ceasing' could be complied with. Various suppositions were started; and at length one of the number was appointed to write an essay upon it, to be read at the next meeting; which being overheard by a female servant, she exclaimed, 'What! a whole month waiting to tell the meaning of that text? It is one of the easiest and best texts in the Bible.' —

"'Well, well!" said an old minister, 'Mary, what can you say about it? Let us know how you understand it. Can you pray all the time?'—

"'Oh, yes, sir!'—

"'What! when you have so many things to do? —

"'Why, sir, the more I have to do, the more I can pray!—

"'Indeed! Well, Mary, do let us know how it is; for most people think otherwise. —

"'Well, sir,' said the girl, 'when I first open my eyes in the morning, I pray, Lord, open the eyes of my understanding; and while I am dressing, I pray that I may be clothed with the robe of righteousness; and, when I have washed me, I ask for the washing of regeneration; and, as I begin to work, I pray that I may have strength equal to my day; when I begin to kindle up the fire, I pray that God's work may revive in my soul; and, as I sweep out the house, I pray that my heart may be cleansed from all its impurities; and, while preparing and partaking of breakfast, I desire to be fed with the hidden manna and the sincere milk of the word; and ,as I am busy with the little children, I look up to God as my Father, and pray for the spirit of adoption, that I may be his child; and so on, all day. Everything I do furnishes me with a thought for prayer.'—

"'Enough, enough!' cried the old divine; 'these things are revealed to babes, and often hid from the wise and prudent, Go on Mary', said he, 'pray without ceasing, and as for us, my brethren, let us bless the Lord for his exposition, and remember that he has said, 'The meek will he guide in judgment'. After this little event, the essay was not considered necessary."

Gerald Vanden Berg

NATURE STUDY

Our Food Factories

THE LEAVES of trees all about us put on a striking pageant from May to November, for leaves have everything it takes to arrest attention: color, action, mass, and sound effects.

Leaves are the most articulate part of a tree. They never sound dischords, just as they never have color disharmonies. Their range of tones is symphonic. They produce high clear notes, and deep thunderous roars. They effect a few seconds of suspense in utter silence broken by an intimate whisper. They hum in a steady breeze, or swish like waves on a beach.

Not only are leaves arresting, en masse, in their color, motion, and sound; but also the designs of single leaves are so magnificent, that, of all objects in the world, they have been a source of inspiration for art, second only to the human figure. Everybody recognizes the rugged outline of an oak leaf, and the trident of a maple. They bear a subtile resemblance to the form of the trees on which they grow. The elm leaf has a graceful, smooth contour, and its heart shaped base has the same curves as the fountain-like branches. The poplar leaf is a narrow tapering ellipse like the silhouette of its tree.

In most instances, leaf structure and outline give us a suggestion of identification, and are a key to the marvelous variety and specific function of each tree. By far, the best way to realize the schemes and patterns that link various series of leaves together, is not to look at pictures or read about them in a book, but to find them on the trees. In an hour's walk in the countryside, you can collect a good percentage of all the common tree species in your part of the country.

However, a leaf was never created just to be admired. That is an aspect that helps us to know that life can be lovely, and interesting, and orderly, as God created it. In reality, a leaf is a hundred percent functional. We know, from last month, that leaves act as nozzles or outlets for all the gallons of water a tree draws through its system each growing day. Water, collected by the root department, is carried up through the trunk department — because the leaf pulls it up, as we saw last time. It is the dynamo of the waterworks, and at the same time it is busy making food. Both these operations are carried on in a mechanism that is packed between the upper and lower surfaces of the leaf, althouth the leaf itself may seem as thin as paper.

If any man invented a machine which would run by the power of sunlight and make good food out of water and air, he would be considered a genius. In a sense, he would also be wasting his time. Green leaves have been on the market a long while, making food out of water and air most efficiently. The patent on this process is held by chlorophyll.

Chlorophyll is almost the same as human blood, and has a similar chemical nature. While blood purifies food, chlorophyll makes food originally. Just how it does this is a secret formula; all we know is, that elements of water and air are combined, and then transformed into a substance that resembles neither, and contains sun energy — in much the same manner as a storage battery contains

electric energy. This substance is called carbohydrate; carbon for air and hydrate for water.

This synthetic food made by chlorophyll is the only food there is for men and animals, as well as for plants. Bakeries and food factories are simply converting and packing this food, after it has come off the end of the production line of the living plant. Milk and eggs, meats and fish, all derive from the same plant-made food. The difference lies in whether you eat carbohydrates first, second, or third hand.

Chlorophyll, as present in all plant life, had to exist before any animal life was present on the face of the earth. For life, and production of food, sunlight was necessary; even in this you can see the plan and intelligence of creation, as it is revealed to us in Genesis. Animals and man are entirely dependant on the surplus food produced through the instrumentality of the plant kingdom; without them we would die.

How does the green leaf go about making this miracle substance? First, the plan of leaf presents a broad surface to the sunlight so as to catch as much of the radiant energy as possible. The several hundred thousand leaves of a good-sized maple spread about half an acre of green to the sun. When in full operation, a square yard of leaf surface will manufacture about one gram of carbohydrates per hour. That same surface, working eight hours a day during June, July and August, will turn out a pound and a half of carbohydrates. That is 3,620 pounds of pure food concentrate made in a season by one maple tree. To do this, a leaf must be equipped with a two-way system that will supply water, and carry away the food made.

As they reach the stem of the leaf, these two conveyor systems — one bringing water into the leaf, the other taking food away — are combined. You can easily see their cables as they emerge from the stem into the leaf and spread out as a network of veins. They keep branching smaller and smaller, until they end as single microscopic veins only one little cell in thickness.

The whole leaf can be thought of as a huge factory in miniature. As viewed in cross-section through a microscope, the roof of this factory is airproofed and waterproofed with cells tightly welded, forming a surface covered with wax. This roof is one cell thick, clear and transparent, like a modern glass-roofed factory. As sunlight pours through this roof, it drenches myriads of vertical cells, hanging like clusters of sausages, from the ceiling. These palisade cells are bulging with protoplasm which is shot through with countless chloroplasts, or bits of chlorophyll.

Beneath the palisade cells is a layer of irregularly shaped cells which are spongy, and facilitate the exchange of air and water, since they are bathed in air from the spaces between them. Underneath these spongy cells is laid the floor of the leaf factory. This lower surface is transparent, waterproofed, and usually airproofed with wax, like the roof of the leaf. But there is one remarkable difference; this surface is perforated with tiny air valves that open and close automatically, to control the flow of air and water vapor in and out of the leaf. These valves are so small that you can't see them without a microscope; but their size is compensated for by their numbers. When the valves are open, they make the underside of the leaf practically porous, so that air and water vapor can pass in and out.

These valves are shaped like mouths, and they are called stomata, after the Greek, for mouths. The opening consists of a slit between two slightly curved,

somewhat swollen cells, resembling kidney beans. This slit opens and closes as the two cells swell up or deflate. A marvelous thing about these valves is that they open and close in response to light. The food factory operates only in daylight, when it can get sun energy. Thus, at night, the stomata cells are deactivated, and close automatically. It is a chemical-physical action, and is evidence of the minute and all-wise planning of our creating God.

When these valve cells swell up, they open the valve; when they deflate, the valve is automatically closed. The more light there is, the more sugar they make; the more water that enters the cells, the more they swell up; therefore the wider the slit becomes. In the dark the reverse happens because the sugar solution is reduced, and the water is lost from the cell, by osmosis. All this operation causes the cells to deflate in proportion to the reduction of light, so that the valves of leaves become much smaller at night. Experiments show that when a bright light is turned off, the stomata will close in half an hour.

This seemingly unimportant function on the underside of the leaf may mean life or death to a good many plants. During dark hours the trees and other plants can build up a little surplus of water, but will not lose any because the suction pumps are closed; literally they are resting. With the facts of the tree water system in mind, there are many things that can be explained. A tree lives through the winter partly because it is not losing any water through leaves. Since the outlet of the leaves is gone, and the pipelines are full, the tree has just enough to live on through the winter, and also readies itself for the big spring push. We all know that the evergreen pine tree can exist very satisfactorily in dry sandy soil. Besides, its very name suggests that it stays green the whole year round. Because of the nature of its needles, which are really its leaves, the tree looses very little moisture even at the peak of its growing season. Thus it does not have to lose its leaves, in order to retain its moisture, during the winter. You have, perhaps, noticed that in the summertime, on hot, humid mornings, small plants will be covered with moisture. This is because the light before the sun, supplimented by heat and humidity, opens the stomata before the air-water equilibrium is found. These things did not just 'happen' this way; they were built so by the same God who created us and sustains our life every moment of our existence. The trees pay a living tribute, as silent testimony, of the care of our heavenly Father.

Dwight J. Monsma

BAD BARGAINS

A Sunday school teacher once remarked that he who buys truth makes a good bargain, and inquired if any scholar recollected an instance in Scripture of anyone making a bad bargain.

"I do," replied a boy. "Esau made a bad bargain when he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage."

A second said, "Judas made a bad bargain when he sold his Lord for thirty pieces of silver."

A third replied, "Ananias and Sapphira made a bad bargain when they sold their land and then told Peter a falsehood about it."

A fourth observed, "Our Lord tells us that he makes a bad bargain who, to gain the whole world, loses his own soul."

—Children's Friend"

MILITARY MAIL BAG

Contribution

THE FOLLOWING interesting letter was received by Rev. Hanko, from a young man, of our churches, who is a serviceman. It follows:

August 22, 1954

Dear Rev. Hanko:

I received your letter about the first of the month, but just didn't get to answer it sooner, for which I am sorry. I hope this letter finds you, and all those that seek and love the truth with you, content in the way of the Lord, and experiencing the abundance of His grace.

I am stationed about five miles from Stuttgart, on an old German army post. The barracks on the post, being German barracks, prove that the German army was one of the best treated. It is 100 times better than the American barracks back in the states. The huge cement and stone structure measures about 50' x 125' and is 4 stories high, and has from 20-25 rooms on each floor. The rooms have hardwood floors and plastered walls; the halls have tile floors. There is a central heating plant for all buildings on the post; therefore we have steam heat throughout. The water and light facilities are excellent.

Yes, I'm driving a two and one half ton dump truck over here in Germany. So far I've put on about 2,500 miles since I signed for it last March. Our job consists of care and maintenance of bridge parts and trucks, and the transporting of the bridge to the combat units who build the bridge a few times, for training. It's rather interesting when we move out of the Company area, and go to different places. We travel the Autobahn, which is a network of divided highways, connecting all major cities, like the Pa. turnpike. We also take a few back roads through small towns and along canals. This summer we've brought the bridge to different units in Ulin, Munchen, Nurnberg, Erlangen, Regensburg, and Hielbronn. Sometimes, while our trucks are unloaded at these units, we go on map problems with the trucks. Each driver is on his own and is given different points and places to go to, and return. The longest problem I was on, covered 100 miles. This is quite a lot of fun.

So much for my job over here. Now country and its people. Historic spots and ancient custmos give daily remnders that it is the Old World. The walled city in Nurnberg, the fortressed castles, and the big old cathedrals, all show scars of time and some show scars of the war. Most of them are still in use. Many of the old cities have winding streets and are so narrow that my truck can hardly squeeze through; and blind curves are abundant. The streets are laid with cobble stones which, although rough, hold up very good. The old towns abound with statues, fountains and roadside shrines. There are elaborately carved stone facades, iron gates, and cornerstones that provide footnotes of history. High chimneys, steep red tile roofs, and odd little gables and cornices are prevalent.

The country is very crowded, and therefore there are a lot of big apartment houses; yet everything is neat and clean. Even the big cities are clean; there are no slum districts here.

Farming methods are primitive because the typical German farm is small, and

its low income, makes tractors etc. uneconomical. So the farmers use methods and equipment used by their forefathers. Horses, or on foot, pulling big loads of wood or feed in small carts. It is not unusual to see old women, in their 60's, working in the fields all day, beside the men, because there are more women over here than there are men. Cows are used as well as oxen and horses, as draft animals Since the size of most farms make crop rotation standard practice, the strips of cultivated land gives the countryside a patchwork appearance. Not much corn is grown here. The main crops are wheat, oats, barley, potatoes, sugar beets, hemp, tobacco, and hops. The production of hops has made Germany one of the leading beer brewing countries in the world. They don't drink much water, coffee, tea, or milk. It's always beer, at work or leisure. They prefer beer.

Instead of living on the small farms, farmers live in hundreds of small villages clustered over the landscape. Therefore there are very few farm houses. Barns, such as those back in the states are a rarity here. Usually hogs, sheep, cattle, horses, and fowl are housed with feed, in various rooms or annexes of the farmer's house.

The forests are mostly evergreen, and they have the most rigid forestry laws ever conceived: prohibiting the felling of trees without permission. When we go on maneuvers, or field problems, and park our trucks in a forest, Uncle Sam pays for every tree we break, or even skin, and every ditch we mar, and every rut we leave with our truck wheels.

Most of the industrial transportation is done by boats and barges on the large networks of rivers and canals. They also have a fine network of railroads, and have electric as well as steam engine trains for passengers and industry. And then they also have the Autobahn, which connects the major cities, cutting through mountains, and bridging deep vallies.

In some localities, the people speak part Dutch. In any fairly large town, and some small ones, they can speak and understand a little English.

There is quite a bit of beautiful German music on the air.

The weather has been very wet, causing floods down in the Southern part. Stuttgart lies approximately on the same parallel as Seattle and the northern tip of Maine. The last of the summer sun does not fade until nearly 9 o'clock at night.

In almost every little town there is a church with a steeple, and a big clock in the steeple. Their religion is mostly Catholic or Evangelical.

I have about 7 more months to do, what seems like a wasted two years; but of course we know that every second of our lives is a means to an end. Each second is necessary, and fits into the eternal plan of God. Of course, I find very little spiritual food in the Army. I get the **Standard Bearer, Beacon Lights,** and Radio speeches, and of course I have the Bible.

Well Rev. Hanko, this is all I can write. Thank you for your letter, and I'll sign off knowing all is well with His people. Seeing we are His, thru Christ, by grace; not because of anything we, by nature, did, will do, or could ever do; but only by grace and the gift of faith by which we are tied consciously and willingly to Christ our Head. All glory be to God, who knew and loved His children from eternity to eternity, and unto hereafter.

Yours in Christ

Pfc. Rog Dykstra
38th Engr. Pan. Brg. Co.
A P O 154 c/o P.M.
New York, N. Y.

BIBLE OUTLINE

LESSON XXI

"Living and Walking by the Holy Spirit"

Galatians 5:16-26

1. THE "FREEBORN SONS," who have the Spirit of the Son in their hearts crying Abba Father are here admonished to walk in the Spirit, that is, to walk in faith that works by love! Evidently the believers in Galatia, who did not succumb to the error of the false-teachers, had not yet seen the meaning of faith working by love, as this faith manifests itself in the pleroma (fulness) of the law: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. What distinguished a living faith from a lead faith needed to be underscored! The "God forbid" that we, who have died to sin, should live any longer therein, here rings forth by implication! Confer Rom. 6:1. Hence, the admonition in the verses 16 and 25, which see.

2. What Paul says here in these verses 16-26 can only be addressed to the church, the sons of the heavenly Jerusalem, to those of whom Paul says in 4:31, "Now we, brethren, are not children of the bondwoman but of the free!" Only these have a "liberty" to stand in (verse 1) and for them only the law is the royal law of liberty! James 1:25. Here is not an admonition to mankind in general, but to those to whom Paul writes, "plucked out of this present evil world." Gal .1:4.

This implies:

a. That the twofold "laws" spoken of by Paul here in Gal. 5:17, (see also Rom. 7:15, 23) also is only applicable to the reborn children. One cannot on Biblical grounds speak of the "law of the spiritual mind" and the "law of sin" in a natural man. The "inner conflict" here spoken of is only true in the redeemed, free-born sons of Abraham! The "rest" simply are natural man, who knows not the things of the Spirt! I Cor. 2:14-16.

b. Here is a wonderful "psychoanalysis" of the children of God, which is basis in all "soul care" in God's Church. He, who does not understand this, cannot possibly admonish the church, nor can such a one understand the basic problem in his own behavior as long as he dwells in his "mortal body!" Unless this problem be seen in its true viewpoint, the Christian with a tender conscience will despair because the terrible "working of sin" in him! It is wretched enough to have sin in one, when one thoroughly understands this basic problem, but it is infinitely worse for those who cannot see that the Spirit triumphs over sin in the blessed: I thank God through Jesus Christ. Rom. 7:25.

3. The admonition proper here is: to walk by the power and operation of the Holy Spirit. So doing they shall not bring the lust of the flesh to full fruition.

a. For the basic elements of the steps implies in bringing the lusts of the flesh to full fruition; see James 1:14, 15. These steps are: lust — conception of sin — death! These basic steps we see in Eve's transgression: Lust — conception (looking at the fruit) — death (eating of it) Gen. 3:1-7. Now when we walk by the Spirit, even as we live by the Spirit, this spiritual-psychological process of the basic steps in a sinful life do not come to a terrible reality. These works of the flesh are then crucified. Says Paul: "Now

they who are of Christ Jesus, have crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts of it." Verse 24. This crucifixion of the flesh is an act of conversion **proceeding from a faith energized by love.** One does not convert himself to believe, but one converts himself by the power of the Holy Spirit, as a son of Abraham, through **faith!** We are also here: saved each moment by grace through faith. The latter reveals itself in conversion. We love our neighbor as ourselves in conversion. This is a basic Reformed consideration, and is the position four-square on the teaching of Paul here in Gal. 5:16-26.

b. There was indeed room for this "daily conversion" in these churches at Galatia. Certain very definite sins of the flesh were "manifest." This is implied by the type of conditional sentence in verse 15. "If ye bite and devour one another . . . ." This was happening in the midst of these churches in very deed. We notice the following:

1) This had its motive in "vain glory," a glory which is not subject to God in deep humility. It is seeking a purely imaginary glory of a god of man's imagination, our own carnal self. Vs. 26.

2) The we "provoke one another," that is, we walk with a chip on our shoulder, challenging one another to battle.

3) And so there is "envying of one another," being sick and miserable because we have a deluded evaluation of honor and glory! Compare James 4:1-12, which by all means read.

4. If this walk by the Spirit is not a reality in our lives this is not due to the fact that there is objectively considered, by the standards of the rule of faith, not a clear cut distinction between the "works of the flesh" and "the fruit of the Spirit."

a. The works of the flesh which are manifest are, and are not "hidden!" Paul cites these works of the flesh over against the "fruits of the Spirit" in explanation of the conflict spoken of in verse 17, to emphasize the command in verse 13 ff.

b. The two lists are as follows:

1) Works of the flesh: Four groups in which the manifest views appear.

a) Sensual sins like **fornication** (prostitution, harlotry) **uncleanness** (moral impurity) **laciviousness,** (wantoness), sexual vice of all kinds prevailed in heathenism.

b) **Idolatry** (worship of idols) **witchcraft** (the ministering of drugs, distilling the truth from herbs).

c. **Personal relations.** They are sins of the Spirit: **Enmities** (personal animosities) **strife** (rivalry, discord) **jealousies, wraths** (stirring the emotions then explosions) **factions** (day laborer for hire, party-spirit) **diversions** (splits in two) **heresies** (preferences) **envyings** (feelings of ill-will).

d) Drunkeness, revellings and such like.

Note: This list is not exhaustive. See further Rom. 1:29. But it is sufficient to Paul's point here.

2) **The fruits of the Spirit.** These are called "fruits" for they are the "normal outcropping" of the Holy Spirit in us. This is what belongs to the work of the Holy Spirit born from the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Eph. 6:4. Here too Paul gives a catalogue of fruits.

a) The basic fruits, underlying all others:

(1) Love (2) Joy (3) Peace

b) The actual manifestation this underlying fruit in **various relationships** and conditions.

(1) Longsuffering (long of breath)
(2) Kindness (usefulness)
(3) Goodness (opposite of being evil intent)
(4) Faithfulness
(5) Meekness (not bitter)

c) The great central fruit: self control! This is the virture only where love and

all its virtues are exercised. The boastful Stoic places "self-control" on the foreground: selfcontrol, prudence, fortitude and justice!

QUESTIONS:

Why can this admonition to walk in the Spirit only be addressed to the Church? See Romans 8:9. Why are those, who walk in sin, "under law?" Vs. 18. Is it wrong to speak of activity and act of faith working through the Spirit of love? Why do those not "inherit" the Kingdom in whose lives no fruit is found? Because they performed no "prerequisite acts of faith" or because their lives were unfruitful, evidencing that they were not sons by election? Did these know what is required of all who "confess" to be sons?

LESSON XXII

"Restoring the Fallen Brother or Sister"

Galatians 6:1-5

1. In these verses Paul gives a special exhortation to the Galatians as to how to deal with a brother overtaken in a fault. He shows how faith energized by love in such a case manifests itself in: love they neighbor as thyself! That is the liberty of the sons to help the fellow-brother to stand in his liberty in Christ; we are members one of another. We notice the following:

a. That Paul addresses the Galatian believers as "brethren." Vs. 1. See Verse 18 and also 5:13. In this term all the reality in Christ's redemption work and the motive of exhorting one another is summed up. Apart from this "brethren" there is no possibility of exhortation. On who the brethren are and how they must reveal themselves, see Matt. 12:46-50. Compare also I John 4:19-21.

b. It is particularly toward a brother overtaken in any transgression. Such a one must be restored in the spirit, the attitude of meekness. The reason is that if this work of restoration is not thus performed the consequence will be: that there are more that walk in transgression, due to being tempted of Satan. On "temptation" see James 1:13; Matt. 6:13.

2. Concerning this admonition in Verse 1 proper we notice the following:

a. That this admonition is one that must be applied irrespective of persons, whether bond or free, Jew or Gentile, male or female. (Gal. 3:26-28). We may not have the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons. James 2:8. Notice how this is related to the law of love which worketh faith! Hence:

1) If "any man" be overtaken in a fault. It makes no difference who!

2) It must be applied to "any transgressions" within the compass of the law. Every sin against any commandment calls for "restoration." Here too we must submit to the law of God and not simply go according to the dictates of our conscience. Conscience too must be guided by the royal law of liberty to be "free and have a good conscience!"

b. Such a one must be "restored." The term employed here in the Greek text "the very word used in Matt. 4:21 of mending nets, old word to make fit, to equip thoroughly. Such equipment and restoration contains the following elements:

1) Bring to a brothers' attention the nature and character of his transgression. The sin must be pointed out to a man together with the holy displeasure of God upon such.

2) He must be told that he should be sorry with a heart-felt sorrow, that he has not walked according to the rule of faith, (regula fidei) the new commandments in Christ, walking in faith working by love.

3) He must be assured that since God promises forgiveness, being faithful and just to all who confess their sins, that in this way of confession and sorrow he will

ever more experience God's Fatherly countenance upon himself, which experience is dearer than life.

c. This is indeed a delicate task. And there is only one way in doing this. It is in the "sprit of meekness, giving heed to ourselves lest we be tempted!" Verse 1.

1) The "spirit of meekness' refers to the attitude and entire conduct of those who make it their task to restore the brethren.

2) "Meekness" is that spiritual attribute of grace and love that fruit of the Holy Spirit whereby we are not harsh, bitter, provocative, but mild, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of good works, without partiality, sowing the fruit of righteousnes in peace! Only the holy can beckon to holiness.

3. In the verses 2-5 Paul warns each one of the sons of Abraham to be very critical of our own work in the light of those who make it their task to restore the brethren.

2) "Meekness" is that spiritual attribute of grace and love that fruit of the Holy Spirit whereby we are not harsh, bitter, provocative, but mild, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of good works, without partiality, sowing the fruit or righteousness in peace! Only the holy can beckon to holiness.

3. In the verses 2-5 Paul warns each one of the sons of Abraham to be very critical of our own work in the light of the rule: restore the erring in the spirit of meekness: He urges the following considerations:

a. That we "bear one another's burdens." The "burdens" in this case are all the difficulties and temptations which each has to bear in this life, causing us to pray: "Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil." And we are to use our talents to the advantage of our brother in the Lord!

b. It is only in this way (thus) that we will be fulfilling the law of Christ that is, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Thus the new nature, the new creature of the Israel of God, the Church, reveals itself only when we bear each other burdens do we fulfill the law of Christ! Thus a full cup of blessing is poured out before the Lord.

c. No one must deceive himself in this respect. He must beware, For:

1) If a man think to be something in the way fulfilling the law of Christ, and he doeth it not, such an one simply deceives his own mind. He does not deceive others at all. He deceives himself.

2) Each man must consider that the Lord tries His work. God will not judge the neighbor for our work; nor vice-versa. Each man will bear his own burden.

3) No one man seek boasting with God by comparing his work with his neighbors, but every man will have to be able to look at his work and say: Lord, I know that it stands approved! For the Lord, the righteous judge, will judge every man according to his own work!

QUESTIONS:

What is the difference between being "under law" and "filling up the law of Christ?" Why is the former bondage of sin and the latter liberty in Christ? Is restoring of erring brethren a miserable task, or is it a beautiful task in which we often learn how miserably incompetent we are spiritually? Does Satan love a shining mark to tempt? What should be our daily prayer?

LESSON XXIII

"The Proper Hire For Ministers of the Gospel"

Galatians 6:6-10

1. It certainly belongs to the new obedience in Christ that the "Ministry of the Word and the Schools be maintained."

(Heid. Cate., on 4th commandment.) For faith is wrought by the Holy Spirit in our hearts through the preaching of the Gospel; for how shall they believe whom they have not heard and how shall they hear without preaching? Rom. 10:14. The word of God, as preached by faithful men, is indeed profitable for doctrine, for correction, reproof, for the pedagogy in righteousness, that the man of God be thoroughly furnished unto every good work. II Tim. 3:16-17. Small wonder that Paul must insist that Ministers of the Gospel, and all who labor in it, be provided for in every good thing! In this connection we should bear the following in mind as the reasons for Paul's exhortation to the Galatians at this time.

a. The fact that the Galatians were listening, giving ear, as those "bewitched" to false teachers, no doubt was a contributing factor toward their neglect of true pastors. For then the true power of the Gospel is not manifested in life and conduct, faith working by love, but rather they walk as under law, which law is the power of sin in general, and of despising of the means of grace in particular!

b. This condition of neglect of the Ministry may not be allowed to remain, since thus the work of God is not directly advanced, and Satan will surely not be resisted by the Saints with the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Eph. 6:17. The true Israel of God can only stand in the battle when she thankfully recognizes the need of Christ's gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers — unto the building of the body of Christ, coming to the spiritual manhood in Christ. Eph. 4:12-16.

2. In verses 6-9 Paul gives the exhortation proper concerning "contributing" to those "catechizing" in the Word of truth. We notice the following:

a. That those being instructed ought to give to the support of Ministers. Compare I Cor. 9:5-14. Notice here the illustrations of the soldier (vs. 7), husbandman (vs. 7), the shepherd (verse 7), the ox treading out the grain (verse 8), the ploughman (verse 10), the priests in the temple (verse 13). What an abundance of proof for all who would walk in a free and good conscience in the matter of giving to the support of ministers!

Nota bene: Paul adds a limitation here! The Ministers must be contributed to "in all good things!" Not for luxurious living must they be provided, but so that they may be free from all worldly cares and avocations while dispensing spiritual blessings to the church. Compare further I Tim. 6:11-21, where Paul warns Timothy against being ensnared in the desire for riches and gain.

b. Paul adds a "threat" to this solemn exhortation — "Be not deceived, God is not mocked." Verse 7.

1) The term "to mock" means: to turn up the nose to anyone. This contempt of God will not go unpunished by the Lord. For whosoever withstandeth or neglecteth the ministry withstands God, turns up the nose at Him. Such is surely not a walk in the true faith energized by love.

2) Let no one be deceived by others or by their own heart.

c. Paul adds an illustration taken from a husbandman (farmer) to bring home this point, and thus to show how God will surely reveal that He is not mocked but stands very much behind His faithful servants. We notice the following:

1) That (vs. 7b) Paul states the general truth, that what we sow we also reap. Good works of faith God surely rewards with the reward of grace. See Matt. 5:12. And works which are evil God surely punishes in the wicked so that they come to ruin.

2) There is a "two-fold sowing": either "to the flesh" or "to the Spirit."

a) One sow to the "flesh" when one

only has in mind worldly advantage of riches, honor, luxury; wherein God and His service is lost out of sight. Then one comes to "corruption," morally and physically. One then falls into the sin of let us eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die. When this sin enters in the Church spiritual and moral corruption enters into all of the churches life. It is God, who will not be mocked, who reveals Himself.

b) One sows to the "spirit," when he has the preaching of the Word in mind, seeking the Kingdom of heaven and its righteousness, believing that all other things shall be added unto us. Here life eternal is tasted as a great reward of grace, as the fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

3. To this added a "warning!"

a. It is the warning against fainting in doing good. One faints when he is "overcome by evil," so as to loose courage, interest, zeal in God's cause! It is hard to keep giving when others shirk their duty. It then requires a great deal of grace to always be abounding in the work of the Lord.

b. And such not "being overcome by evil" clearly means that we seize every opportunity to do good. We must do this to all, but particularly to those of the household of faith.

QUESTIONS:

Does it make any "principle" difference whether the contributions in the church be given by "envelope" or withhout envelope? What does Rom. 14:23b teach in regard to the question of giving? Why can we not "legislate" good giving, but rather exhort to walk in our liberty in Christ in giving? The fact that sowing is "before" and reaping is "afterwards" does this make the sowing a "prerequisite act of faith and conversion" to the reaping? Or is it a requirement in us as **believers?**

LESSON XXIV

"Paul's sincere boast in the Cross contrasted with the Hypocritical ambition of False Teachers."

Galatians 6:11-18

1. In verse 11 Paul calls attention to the great amount of effort spent by himself in writing to these Galatians. So much energy, such a letter of profound, fundamental exposition of the Scriptures is, indeed, indicative of a sincere desire for the spiritual well-being of the church, the Israel of God. Wherefore these Galatians, and we with them, ought to give the more diligence to read this letter very carefully. With this end in mind Paul writes: Behold, how great a letter I have written you with mine own hand. Verse 11.

2. In matters where a fundamental decision must be made, and a righteous judgement must be passed, sinful men so easily say; there are two sides to every question, and where two are contending both are at fault, or each must have some element of truth in their arguments. This may be a dictum applicable about mere human contention, but it is not a rule that may be applied and cited when we must yield to the teaching of the truth of the Gospel. Then there are not "two-sides" to the question. Such is the position of Paul in Gal. 1:6-9. The church asks: what saith the Scripture. And they who teach the Scripture must be believed, and the others must be accounted false teachers. As the defender of the truth of the Gospel Paul, therefore, stands forth in that sincerity that only makes his appeal to the consciences of men in the sight of God. (Verses 12-14) Here we have a sharp and fundamental contrast given us between Paul, the Apostle of God, and the self-appointed false-teachers.

a. The **motive** of false teachers is **always an insincere one;** it cannot stand the light of God's searching eye. See

Matt. 7:15. Such come in sheep's clothing while inwardly they are ravening wolves. From their "fruits" they must be known. And what is the manifest "fruit," the evil works of these false teachers among the Galatians?

(1) They are **men-pleasers,** so that they may not be persecuted for the Cross of Christ. They are "two-timers." They will to pass for Christians, while they will to avoid the stigma of the Cross of Christ, suffering wth Him to also be glorified with Him. They know that for the truth of the Gospel of the Cross both amongst the Jews and the Gentiles all Christians suffer reproach of men. And so they try to avoid this offense; only it is at the **expense** of the believers. So they try to make a "fair show" in the flesh, making the haters of the Cross think that as Christians they can walk arm in arm with those who despise the Cross. "Such men," says Calvin, "pay no egard to edification, but are guided by an ambitious desire to hunt after popular applause." The price of this bribe is the laying of the work of redemption on the altar of man, works of law. What monsters!

(2) Those who have been bought with a price of the blood of Jesus must **in**deed be put just a little bit "under law." They can then say: see, we too do not depise the law, we are like unto you: good men — **because** we keep the law. They are silent about the only Sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross.

(3) But what is this insincerity? It is this: those who boast in the law do not at all keep it. This does not mean simply that their best works were polluted with sin, works of gratitude, but it means that they are very indifferent toward the law; they only use it as the occasion of pleasing men dictates. It is their subterfuge for avoiding persecution for the faith. They are traitors to God's cause, and are untrustworthy even for them who will to be saved by works of law. Even the enemies of the Cross cannot trust such. They are simply full of false ambition: "It is the usual practice of ambitious men merely to fawn on those from whose favour they hope to derive advantage, and to insinuate themselves into their good graces, that, when better men have been displaced, they may enjoy the undivided power. This wicked design he lays open to the Galatians, in order to put them on their guard."

b. Overagainst this Paul affirms the sincerity and the grandeur of his boast. It is the rock-bottom expression of the truth in his heart and mind: I have believed and, therefore, have I spoken! Conf. II Cor. 4:13. We here notice the following:

(1) That it is again a great **personal** confession of Paul, an exultant breaking forth of the faith in the Son of God, by which faith he now lives. See Gal. 2:19-21. Hence, the solemn "now to me be it far to boast except in the Cross of our Lord, Jesus Christ." Paul **is a believer,** and, therefore, he **believes.** He is **not** simply one who **has acts of faith**, and, therefore, is **a believer.** The latter is the lie of Arminianism, which knows nothing of "being a new creature."

(2) Paul has a great "boast." It is a boasting in the Lord, in Jehovah-God, the Covenant God, Whose promises are "yea" in Christ, and in Him "Amen" to the glory of God the Father. These promises are such in the Christ in His "Cross" and resurrection, where Christ was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification. See Rom. 4:25, Gal. 3:10-14. See former outlines on this passage. This "Cross" made a twofold separation; it set enmity between the "two seeds," the Israel of God and the Israel according to the flesh. Gen. 3:15. For Christ is set as a sign in Israel, a

sign of contradiction, which is for a fall and rising of many in Israel.

(a) Here is not the distinction of social, radical and national barriers. It wholly transcends these distinctions. See Gal. 3:27.

(b) But it is the separation of the children of God and the children of the Devil, of believers and unbelievers, of elect and reprobate.

(c) Because of this "enmity" those who confess their salvation alone in the Cross of Jesus Christ by sovereign free grace of election must suffer. Matt. 5:10-12; Phil. 1:29. In this suffering Paul will yet boast in the hope of the glory of God. Rom. 5:2.

3. Paul ends this wonderful epistle with the underlying truth of the work of the "Wonder of Grace" that the true sons of Abraham, the Israel of God, are "new creatures." (Verse 15, 16)

a. This **new creature** is, indeed, a miracle of God. It is not at all by the efforts of man for it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that giveth mercy, and, therefore, calleth irresistibly and efficaciously. Rom. 9:12, 16; Gal. 1:6.

b. And all who walk according to this "Canon," the rule of faith and godliness, walk as "new creatures." See Heid. Cate., Lord's Day 32. Upon such is the peace of Christ for they are the Israel of God's election. See Rom. 9:6.

4. So true is all that Paul says in this Epistle, and so absurd all that the false-teachers say, that Paul ends in the holy impatience: For the rest let no one be wearisome and bothersome to me; for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus! Verse 17.

5. Truly, therefore, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ shall be with the "spirit" of all the "brethren," the free-born sons of Abraham. It shall surely be such for thus are the words of the Testament of the Testator, Jehovah, God. Amen. Verse 18. Compare Gal. 3:15-18.

QUESTIONS:

Are false teachers ever sincere in heart and mind? What does Jesus say of such in Matt. 5:19; 7:15-20? Is an Arminian sincere in his arminianism? If so, why does he claim to be a Calvinist upon his knees in prayer? The sin lying close at our door to try to take the "sting" out of the doctrine of sovereign free grace of election and the efficacious calling? Why are the truly Calvinistic believers never popular in the nominal christian world? Why were Calvinists in history known of their purity in walk, their godly lives? Does Paul here give us the rudiments of a Protestant Reformed life- and world-view? George C. Lubbers

EISENHOWER CALLS FOR "MILITANT" PREACHERS

Washington, D. C. — President Eisenhower told 250 clergymen from the Washington area that he liked "militant preachers and chaplains."

"I so firmly believe that all free government is soundly based on religious faith that I feel no one teaching moral standards and spiritual ideals should do so apologetically," the President said.

He drew a chorus of "amens" from the members of the Washington ministerial Union and Ministerial Alliance who paid their annual courtesy call at the White House.

Turning to a group of chaplains who accompanied the clergymen, Gen. Eisenhower said: "I occasionally have had quarrels with chaplains. It was always because they were too diffident in their preaching. I think they should have been a little more belligerent in what they had to say."

CURRENT COMMENTS

"Are we missing the Point?"

LOOKING BACK at the month that has just passed, we have had occasion to commemorate the birthday of two of the greatest American leaders in the history of our country. In the classrooms of our schools, in our newspapers and magazines, and in the thoughts of the American people, the lives of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln were remembered. numerous pictures and illustrations of their famous past were seen; news editorials on their contributions to our country were written; dinners were held in remembrance of the political position which they held; and the youthful incidents uch as the episode of the cherry tree and the well known rail splitting contests were heard with enthusiasm by both young and old.

Let us take a few moments and look at the lives of two men who have no doubt played one of the most important roles in the life of each and every one of us, and ask ourselves personally, "Are we missing the point?"

On February 22, 1732, in Westmoreland county, Virginia, George Washington was born. Reared by wealthy parents, he was taught at an early age many wise and prudent ways. As he grew up, he advanced in knowledge, and at the young age of 20 years he was commissioned a major in the colonial army. For thirty one years he devoted his life to the army for the establishment and protection of American freedom. Then at the age of fifty seven, in 1789, he was elected the first President of the United States. This important event in his life is no doubt the most well known event with which we associate him. To the people of that day and to all the American people he became known as "The Father of our Country."

Ten years after the death of Washington, in the backwoods of Kentucky on February 12, 1809, Abraham Lincoln was born. He was a wilderness child, born in a clay floor cabin that had no windows and one door. Nevertheless, he also at an early age acquired much knowledge, and, especially, a deep sense of feeling for his fellow countrymen. He began practising law and in 1847 was elected to the House of Representatives. It was here where the dreadful practice of slavery aroused his innermost convictions. After taking an active part for thirteen years in the abolishment of slavery, he was elected the sixteenth President of the United States. One month after his inauguration, war broke out, and he become burdened with the dreadful horrors of a civil war. "A house divided against itself cannot stand;" and so the war continued, for four long years, and even though he did not live to witness the victory, he became known to all as "The Great Emancipator."

Looking back at the lives of these men, the question is often asked, are the works of these men great? Can we say that they are good in the sight of God?

The world honors these men as heroes, as men to be highly esteemed and honored for bringing freedom to this country. They proclaim a national holiday in remembrance of them so that the spirit of Washington and Lincoln shall live on for generations to come.

But as christians we do not honor these men as heroes. We ascribe all honor to whom honor is due; the Almighty God. Ps. 104:1, "Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art clothed with honor and and majesty." We do not honor any human being for the work he has performed, for, Job 7:17, "What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?" Realizing this fact, we then speak as the Psalmist does in Ps. 8:3-4 where we read, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

John H. Haan

Young People's News

Michigan

I HAVE RECEIVED the following news from Virginia Griffioen, a member of our Second Prot. Ref. Church Young People Society:

"We, of the Second Prot. Ref. Young People's Society once more reunite and reorganize to spend another session learning and studying God's Word. We are very thankful that God has made this possible by providing a Pastor to lead and instruct our group, and also a place where we may meet.

Although our gathering place is not the finest, we have fixed it up nicely to meet our needs. A heater has been installed, the walls, floor, and ceiling have been painted, a blackboard added, and also a piano to aid us in our singing.

We have chosen the following officers for our society. They are: Rev. M. Schipper, President, James Swart, Vice President, James Swart, Vice President, Betty Engelsma, Secretary, James Schipper, Treasurer, Paul Schipper, Vice Sec.-Treas., Virginia Griffioen, Reporter.

The members which constitute our society are all doing their duty in making this a successful and living society."

It was very nice hearing from our young people in our Second Churh, now let's hear from some more of our young people's societies.

Regional Staff Reporter.
Ruth Dykstra,

Music in the Church

THE TOPIC, "Church Music" is necessarily a very broad one. Just a few of the things that might be included are discussion and criticism of hymn singing, psalm singing, texts, music, choirs, instrumental music, etc. We also might enter the history of music as it is applicable to the church. It is our purpose, however, to limit our discussion to include only the actual music itself, its relation to the text, and its contribution to the church service. In order that the reader may more easily understand we begin with a brief history.

The problem of what to use for tunes has existed throughout the history of the New Testament Church. The "popular" music of the day has offered an immediate, though seldom satisfactory, solution to this problem.

The reader can easily imagine the commotion that would be created if we were to set the words of Psalm twenty-three to one of the latest, jazziest, and regrettably well known hit tunes. Does this sound a bit far-fetched? Nevertheless it has happened! The Roman Catholic Church (c. 1500) found that its liturgies were corrupted not only by the use of the popular tunes, but, in some instances, the words were included. One might have heard the basses singing a "Credo in Unum Deum" (I believe in One God).

while at the same time the tenors were singing a rowdy love song. The composer Palestrina helped in cleaning up this and other abuses. He also compared much music, some of which is still extensively used — even in Protestant Churches.

The Reformers, too, were faced with this same problem. The congregation was to sing, but what? Luther, a fine musician, arranged and composed many tunes. (A Mighty Fortress, The Lord's Prayer.) Calvin was not so gifted, but his ideas were realized in the Genevan Psalter through the remarkable talents of men like Claude Goudimel and Louis Bourgeois. The Genevan Psalter tunes are the ones used today in many European Reformed Churches and they are found (greatly altered) in the back of our psalter.

As years passed thousands of fine tunes were composed and it almost seemed as if the problem were solved, but . . .

The church suddenly found itself in the age of the "Evangelist" who, intent on "winning the world for Christ," (and often as much money and publicity as possible for himself) would seemingly stop at nothing to attract worldy crowds to his meetings. These Arminian supersalesmen soon learned that the closer their music was to that of the world, the more people they could attract. Consequently it was made livelier and rowdier, toe-tapping dance rhythms were introduced, and soon it was difficult to tell whether one was in church or in the tavern across the street. This music, with its overly sentimental words, soon found its way into the hymnals of even the conservative churches under the misleading name, "Gospel Songs."

Thus, churches today are faced with an ever growing assortment of so-called hymns which present in their texts a watered down theology offering a universal Saviour with a highly conditional theology. The dance hall element is continuing to grow more prominent. It has progressed to the point where professional players of popular music have expressed their admiration of so-called christian musicians. Some of these are even proud of having been offered jobs in "name" dance bands.

"But," you ask, "What has this to do with us? Surely our policy of prohibiting the use of hymns in our service has prevented such a situation from occurring in our midst! We aren't faced with this problem . . . are we?

The answer is that we most certainly are! Even our Psalter contains much musical "junk." Tunes borrowed from the Fundamentalists and even from the world have been adorned with the words of psalms. This, however, is realized by the ministers and, it is hoped, by the Psalter Revision Committee.

As for music in our circles outside of the church services. How many times have we heard young people, say, at a hymnsing, render a special number drawn directly from the cesspool of Arminian Fundamentalism? In how many homes does a copy of "so and so's Favorite Gospel Songs" occupy the prominent place on the piano? How often do we hear organists trying to imitate the style of the caller rink? And how often do they draw from the cesspool for their solos? The answer, of course, is that such is not always the case, but that it does happen quite often.

In our next article (D.V.), we hope to cover the problem more specifically and to discuss what can be done in the Protestant Reformed Churches to utilize music more fully in the praise of His name.

Roland Petersen

A QUESTION OF LOYALTY

MALTBIE D. BABCOCK

Many a sin is committed that friendship is expected to justify. It is not exactly what we would have done if we had been left to ourselves to decide, but, under the circumstances, we could not see what else to do. Rather than to be disobliging, rather than to be thought puritanical or "righteous over much," we yield, waive the obligation to conscience in favor of the desire to oblige a friend, and charge the debt of conscience to the score of kind feeling. But it is at bottom a question of allegiance. The Master asks an undivided heart, and we have no right to betray Him in the home of our friends. It is a question of loyalty. To please them would we displease Him? If so, we are not His followers, but theirs. No man can obey two masters. Solomon's building a heathen shrine to oblige a heathen wife was heathenism pure and simple; idolatry, root and branch. To neglect a duty, to compromise a principle, to pull down colors, to do a little wrong rather than to be thought a religious prig, bigoted, or at least peculiar, is a great temptation; but then is the time for the uncompromising, "the everlasting No!" to ring from us. friendship that calls for disloyalty to God needs destruction or reconstruction.

—The Religious Digest

VI. Objection to the Third Point —

1. It lowers the standard of moral, ethical good, and thus necessarily obliterates the distinction between good and evil, righteousness and unrighteousness, light and darkness.

2. It implies and impugnment, or calls into question the holiness of God.

3. It is a teaching of moral determinism and it destroys the freedom of man as a moral agent. According to the interpretation by the leaders of the Christian Reformed Churches, man is presentation of the third point and its no moral agent at all in performing the god he does and for that reason he can lay no claim to any reward.

4. It attacks the justice of God. God's justice is always manifest in this that He strictly rewards the good with good, and He punishes the evil. The third point would have us adhere to the view that he natural man performs much good in this world for the which he is never rewarded.

However, the principle objection is that it is Pelagian in that when one sets aside all sophistical arguments by which it is atempted to defend the third point and to show that it is in harmony with the Reformed view of the truth, it is nothing but a denial of the total depravity of the natural man.

VII. The Dangers of the Three Points —

The theology of common grace and the three points are very dangerous in that they imply all the fundamental errors of Arminus and Pelagius. The first point is principally a denial that the grace of God is particular, since it teaches that the preaching of the gospel is grace to all that hear the gospel; the second and third points are fundamentally a denial of the Scriptural doctrine of the total depravity of the natural man. And these errors are all the more dangerous because they pretend to be in conformity with the Reformed Confessions. It is no exaggeration to maintain that they are the wolf in sheeps-clothing; the devil presenting himself as an angel of light.

Gordon A. King

The end of or prayers is often gained by an answer very diffreent from what we expect. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" was the question of Paul; and a large part of the answer was, "I will shown him how great things he must suffer."

Attention all Young People . . .

THE ANNUAL SPRING MASS MEETING

APRIL 12, 1955, 8 o'clock

AT OUR HUDSONVILLE CHURCH

You won't want to miss the inspiring speech by Rev. M. Schipper, nor the thought provoking debate: "Resolved That Racial Segregation is Christian."