AN APPEAL TO PARENTS

This is the age of the child. Every parent must give his child the best of everything, so he buys him countless toys and the latest and most expensive clothes. In many homes the child holds the most important place, sitting as ruler, while his parents bow to his every whim. Too often today the children decide what they are going to read, how late they are going to stay out at night, and what they or their parents should buy. The whole attention of our age is focused upon the child.

For further proof of the attention that children get today, notice how many parents pick up the children’s slang expressions and how often they will laugh at children’s “pranks.” Notice how many parents will buy things for their children so that they can take part in the latest fad.

In spite of all the attention that children are getting today, there is a tremendous increase in juvenile delinquency in this country. There is a serious lack of respect for authority sometimes even among our own children. Children today act like adults with a child’s reasoning power. They seem to lack the sharp distinction between right and wrong that characterizes their parents. Often children do not feel the horror for crime that one would expect of a Christian. What causes these problems in the “age of the child”?

There are a number of reasons for this.

One of these reasons is the fact that parents no longer spend time at home with their children. Many parents are too busy with their jobs and their social engagements to spend time with their children. The time seems to be past when the family was a closely knit group going places together, enjoying the same things, and taking part in a family altar. The family is hardly together long enough to read the Bible together at the table. Some parents hardly give themselves time to know their own children.

Parents no longer have time to teach their children the things that used to be a part of home training. There was a time when parents taught their children to sew and cook, and the boys to handle tools; now the job has fallen upon the schools. Not long ago it was unheard of for the school to teach the children manners; now it is expected of them. The parents no longer have time for these things.

We should never forget the fact that
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at all times to let them read anything without restriction. It is necessary to watch their reading habits very closely to see that they read only material that Christian young people should read. There could be far more discussion on the reading of Protestant Reformed children.

I am appealing to you, Protestant Reformed parents, both present and future. Stop and consider how far these evils have crept into our Protestant Reformed homes. These evils are a constant threat; are we opposing them properly? Today we are bringing up the Church of tomorrow. What kind of Church is that going to be? If the family can be drawn closer today, if parents can arouse in their children the moral values that they themselves hold, then we need have no fear for the Church of tomorrow. If we can instill in the children, by the grace of God, the love of God more than the love of the world, these children will never depart from the truth that their parents have struggled to preserve.

F. Hanko

FORGIVE

Dear Lord, forgive
The evil passions that within me live,
Make my whole heart
Of Thine a part,
And let Thy spirit rule and reign in me
That I may perfect be, complete in Thee.

I do hate sin
And all the wretched work it does within;
I cannot rest,
When in my breast,
I see its motions and its mad desires,
Oh purge me, Lord, e'en though it be
through fires.
television has a tremendous effect upon children. A generation ago people were shocked at the very idea of attending a movie; now they and their children watch them every evening. Television is producing a generation of children whose knowledge of right and wrong is limited to the question of whether or not they can "get by with it." Some children who have television in their homes are no longer repelled by the thought of crime. Why should they be? They see it every day. Not many of the children from Protestant Reformed homes would ever think of committing a crime, but how much are they losing their repulsion for such things? Ask your children about the stars on television and they will be able to tell you their names and much of their corrupt lives. Then ask them about last Sunday's sermon or their catechism lesson. There is no repulsion for the things of the world and desire for the things of God. We are in danger of losing the distinction between the church and the world. Unless this distinction is drawn very clearly for children today, what will happen to the next generation, the Church of tomorrow?

Modern psychology has made more inroads into our thinking than we often realize. Even though few parents buy psychology books and try to bring up their children on the basis of what they find in these books, the principles of modern psychology often take hold nevertheless. The authors of these books maintain such principles as these: That the child has the right to develop in the way that his own instincts or desires lead him, that the parent (or anyone, for that matter) may not place too much emphasis upon sin or the child will develop a guilt complex, that he should not even insist too much upon his own opinions because "the child has the right to decide these things for himself," and that the parent's duty is to guide the development of the child, rather than to require that he live in conformity to the Law of God. What happened to the principle of total depravity? Are we in danger of losing it as one of the principles for the raising of children? Sometimes we make these principles a part of our policy without realizing their inconsistency with our doctrine.

Another thing that strongly impresses our children is the emphasis upon material gain. Sometimes people talk as though one who does not have a new house and a fine car is not bringing up his children properly. One question that is asked regularly in school is, "Why should I take this subject if it will not help me make money when I get out of school?" Too often when a child is asked to do something his first thought seems to be, "What is there in it for me?" Many children, when asked what they would like to be when they grow up, choose the occupation which has the highest income. Is a person's income the only standard of success? If we judge a person's success in terms of material possessions, how much more quickly will the children adopt the same standards.

It has been said that our whole nation is a nation of children. There may be some truth in this when we think of the fact that we admire physical strength and proficiency more than intelligence and Christian character. Everybody knows the leading sports figures in the country, but who admires the learned person? Often we assume that when a person is physically mature he is an adult, never stopping to think of the emotional immaturity that may lurk underneath. Too many physically mature people still let their emotions rule their judgment.

With all the pulp literature on the market today it is necessary to watch very closely the reading habits of children. It is better not to let children read
In three past articles we have discussed the means of grace in relation to our regular subject of Preparation. In two articles we have discussed the means of grace in general, and in the last article we have discussed the preaching of the Word as a means of grace. In this article we will say a few words about the sacraments. Two questions we will face: How are the sacraments a means of grace? and, How are they to be viewed as a means of preparation for us as the covenant youth to make us ready to take our place in the church?

In general, as we have remarked in a former article, the sacraments have no meaning apart from the ministry of the Word. That is, they are not and never can be a means of grace except they are added to the preaching of the gospel. The sacraments themselves are the preaching of the Word. They are the preaching of the Word in the same sense that that Word is preached from Sabbath to Sabbath. Only in the case of the sacraments, the ministry is accompanied by signs which are instituted by God to seal the promise which is preached. This promise is sealed by the Holy Spirit, and therefore is also sealed as the Spirit operates in the hearts of the elect even when the gospel is preached. But it is sealed by the Spirit with the signs that are used because the congregation in faith takes an active and visible part in the celebration of the sacraments in a way that they do not under the preaching of the Word. This is not to say that the congregation is not active when the Word is preached; for listening itself is and should be a very active work of the saints. But in the sacraments they visibly take an active part as they drink the wine and eat the bread of communion, and as they present their children for baptism.

These signs are therefore given by God in order to strengthen the faith of believers by means of visible tokens of the work of grace which God has wrought. In the sacraments is visibly portrayed what God has done in Christ for the salvation of His people. Whenever a believer sees the signs of the sacraments, then he also sees the work of God's grace which was accomplished in the suffering and death of Jesus Christ upon the cross of Calvary. And this is even true of the participation of the believers. Never is the matter to be presented as if the sacraments are an objective offer of the work of God which is left up to the members to appropriate or leave according to their own choice. For even when the saints of God partake of the sacraments and appropriate the blessings of Christ’s sacrifice, they always confess that because the sacraments are the representation of the work of God's sovereign grace, therefore, even their participation is always an act of faith. And the faith which they have, and by which they appropriate the blessings of the atonement of Christ is also signified and sealed in the sacraments; that is, the faith by which they receive the sacraments as a means of grace is the gift of God exclusively, and is not the result of an exercise of their own free will. Often the matter is presented just the other way around. Even in so-called reformed cir-
Satan, the Super-Salesman

If we were to make a survey of the methods of propagation used by both the Church and Satan, we would find the Church lagging sadly behind as one who has ignored most of the opportunities put at her disposal.

Satan uses every means possible to spread his lie, while to our shame, we use very few. Through this lazy attitude, we have lost the effective use of many of the media that are now carrying on an effective advertising campaign for the devil.

As children of God, we know that all things are for our good, and that ALL opportunities are to be used by us, not just a few that we fall into easily.

A few years ago, for example, television became a popular medium of mass communication. The world of sin snapped up this opportunity to gain another channel of filth, while to our shame we sat back in complacency, allowing the most powerful medium of our day to slip thru our fingers, unused.

The same situation was present when radio was just being developed: instead of being eager to grasp another opportunity to spread the truth of God's kingdom, we let it slide until television was almost ready to crowd radio out of its listening audience, and it became necessary for the youth of our church to start a movement to put our broadcast on the air.

This is not written to start our young people thinking about television, necessarily, but to remind all of us that when a new opportunity develops which could be used to further the cause of the Church of Christ, we may not sit back when the world uses the opportunity for his own ends, and say to ourselves in smug complacency, "Television is of the world; stay away from it." God has created these modern inventions for His own glory; not to be completely ignored by His church, but to be used by them.

We find the same general situation existing in our catechism classes; for while secular education is helped by such modern inventions as visual aids, models, demonstrations, and excursions, our catechism classes are limited to a blackboard and chalk which is only one step better than the stick and sand method used hundreds of years B. C. If scientific and technical principles can be taught better by these methods, wouldn't it be possible that the principles of doctrine and ecclesiastical law could also benefit through the application of these modern aids?

Our very young children learn social and community procedures by "playing" store, school, etc., and moreover this is recognized as a very excellent means of instruction. Many of us learned courtroom procedure in junior high school by "acting out" a hypothetical trial; couldn't these same endowed talents be used to instruct our children in the proper synodical procedure?

The application of these opportunities and talents which have been so sorely misused by the world will only be accomplished with much prayer for divine guidance.

It is the calling of the child of God to use every means at his disposal to accomplish the purpose for which he was created, that is, to glorify his Creator. We may not ignore any talent. Even

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God Revealed

BY WHAT MEANS GOD IS MADE KNOWN TO US

"We know Him by two means: first, by the creation, preservation, and government of the universe; which is before our eyes as a most elegant book, wherein all creatures, great and small, are as so many characters leading us to contemplate the invisible things of God, namely, His power and divinity, as the apostle Paul saith, Romans 1:20. All which things are sufficient to convince men, and leave them without excuse. Secondly, He makes Himself more clearly and fully known to us by His holy and divine Word, that is to say, as far as is necessary for us to know in this life, to His glory and our salvation." (Confessio Belgica, Art. II)

We shall attempt to set forth a few principles of the truth concerning the revelation of God and our knowledge of Him by it over against the many prevailing misconceptions of this matter which confuse the knowledge of God with knowledge about Him. The latter is purely a matter of the mind but the former is a spiritual matter of the heart. To know about God one has need only of an average intellect and a copy of the Bible while knowing God requires a regenerated heart and the gift of faith. Mere knowledge about God aggravates the judgment of those who hold the truth under in unrighteousness while knowing God is life eternal. (John 17:3) It ought to be evident, therefore, that in speaking of these two things we must carefully distinguish them for they are by no means the same. They are related only because knowledge about God is essential to knowing Him but they should never be confused. Too many mistakenly identify the former with the latter and even a great deal of the so-called mission endeavor of our day proceeds on the supposition that knowledge about God is adequate to salvation. This, according to the Lord's own words in Matthew 7:21, however, is plainly in error for many who know about Him will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven in the last day. Others mistakenly connect these two by an act of man's will and thus reveal ignorance of the truth concerning "knowing God." Say they, "All men must be given the opportunity to know about God in order that they may 'make their decision, accept His offers, surrender to Him, etc!'" We will readily discern the sheer nonsense of this error when we understand the truth concerning the knowledge of God.

To arrive at this truth, we shall attempt very briefly to enumerate several principles of fundamental importance. For sake of clarity we will enumerate and paragraph these principles:

1. The first principle concerns a correct conception of God. He is not a cold, abstract power or a deaf and dumb being as are the idols of man. God is the living God. He is Triune Being,—Father, Son and Holy Spirit in one Divine Essence. He is the I AM, the self-existent, independent, infinite One. He knows Himself and all things perfectly, having no need of any object outside of Himself, for He is all Wisdom. God is a Knowing God!

2. From this it follows that God is also a Speaking God. He speaks of Himself
cles, the sacraments are presented as an offering of God to the people of the work of Christ. And it remains up to the people whether or not they will accept the sacraments and partake of them. This necessarily follows from the position of the Christian Reformed Church who make the preaching of the gospel an offer of grace. This is the position of all those who make the promise general and the acceptance of the promise dependent upon the condition of faith, that is, because the promise is general, upon man's act of faith.

But we must always emphasize that when the sacraments are the signs of God's work, they are the signs of God's completed work of salvation. And that therefore, also the faith, whereby the believers partake of the sacraments is the gift of God signified and sealed in the wine and the bread as well as the water of baptism.

Let us take a little closer look at the two sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The entire doctrine of baptism rests upon the doctrine of the covenant. Because we believe that God establishes His covenant and gathers His church in the line of generation, that God has chosen His elect among us and our children, therefore we baptize. If this were not the case, we could not baptize at all. Those who maintain the doctrine of adult baptism, and deny the truth of infant baptism, make it absolutely impossible to baptize at all. They say that that is the only way that baptism can be properly administered; but they make baptism absolutely impossible. But it is not my purpose to go into this whole question now.

Of what is baptism a sign and a seal?

According to the form which we use, it is a sign and a seal of three things.

1) It is first of all, a sign and a seal of the complete depravity and corruption of the members of the church as they are by nature. And it is stressed that this depravity is so complete that "we cannot enter into the kingdom of God, except we are born again." This means that our corruption is so extensive and all-embracing, that we can do nothing at all with respect to our salvation at any time or under any circumstances. All that we can do and do actually do is increase our condemnation and increase the wrath of God. We may notice that this is also important to a correct understanding of the true nature of baptism as a means of grace. If this is not seen in the sacrament, then we miss the entire point of the whole sign. For this is fundamental, Deny this point in any respect and the entire form loses its meaning. Compromise this in any way, and there is nothing left of the entire significance of the sacrament as a sign and a seal of the promise of God.

2) In the second place, this sacrament is a sign and a seal of the washing away of our sins through Jesus Christ. It is a sign and seal of the everlasting covenant of grace which God establishes with us. It signifies and seals that God adopts us as children, provides us with every good thing, averts all evil or turns it to our profit; it signifies that He applies unto us that which we have in Christ in all the pathway of this life "until finally we shall be presented without spot or wrinkle among the assembly of the elect in life eternal." And this is all an elaborate and beautiful description of the washing away of our sins in the blood of our Savior. For even as water cleanses the filth of the body, so does the blood of Christ cleanse from all spiritual impurity till we are completely righteous and holy.

3) Thirdly, this sacrament is a sign and a seal of our obligations to walk in a new and holy life, to cleave to our one

(Continued on page 25)
The Conversion of Saul
Acts 9:1-31

The importance of this section need hardly be stated. Here we have related the early preparations for the fulfillment of Christ's own Word just before His ascension: "Ye shall be my witnesses . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth." For the conversion of Saul, spectacular and significant as it is by itself, has certainly its chief end in this, that the Lord prepared His chosen vessel to bear His name unto the Gentiles.

The story itself is rather well-known, — so well-known that we may be inclined to pass over it hastily. Let us not do this. But rather let us make a careful study, comparing this passage with other passages concerning the same event, and especially trying to note the real character of this conversion. The apostle Paul makes several references to his own conversion, and more than once speaks of his state before and after his conversion. As far as the history of his conversion and the events connected with it are concerned, there are, first of all, two references in th book of Acts itself, both of them records of Paul's own account. There is his defense at Jerusalem, immediately after his capture, recorded in Acts 22:1-22. And there is his speech before Agrippa, especially the portion in 4-20 of Acts 26. Then there is the passage in Galatians 1:11-24, where Paul speaks of these same events especially from the point of view of his right of apostleship and from the point of view of the way in which he received the gospel which he preached. There is a further historical reference in II Corinthians 11:32, 33. And there is the reference to the fact that he saw the risen Lord, found in I Corinthians 15. Significant as to the nature of this conversion are also such passages as Philippians 3:3-11 and I Timothy 1:12-16. Hence, there is an abundance of material to study.

The record of Acts 9 divides itself quite naturally into the following sections:
A. The events as such:
1. Where was Saul going?
   a. Locate Damascus geographically. Is it referred to elsewhere in Scripture? Was there a church there? Was it begun through persecution?
   b. Was Damascus under the jurisdiction of the Jewish high priest? What was the relationship between the authorities at Jerusalem and the Jews and Jewish synagogues elsewhere?
2. What was Saul's purpose?
   a. Had the scattering of the church in Jerusalem put an end to the persecution?
   b. What was Saul's own attitude at this time? vs. 1.
      2) If you trace what we are told of Saul beginning with his appearance
and to Himself. Certainly His speech must be distinguished from the speech of man. The latter's is imperfect and limited by countless factors. The former's is perfect and eternal, expressing the entire fulness of the infinite mind of God.

3. Now then, it has also pleased God to speak concerning Himself outside of Himself. Suffice it to say in this connection that this is solely an act of His own Sovereign good pleasure and purposes to manifest His own eternally perfect and infinite self-glory. To this speech of God belongs all of creation which is before our eyes as a most elegant book, “The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork.” (Psalm 19) To it belongs also the preservation and government of the universe for it is because God speaks that the world continues to exist for He upholds all things by the Word of His power. (Heb. 1:3)

4. More, however, must be added. Without anything additional there is as yet no revelation. All this implies that there must also be a creature who is capable of hearing, interpreting and understanding the speech of God. Such a creature does not exist by himself and, therefore, revelation implies the creation of such a being. That creature is man whom God has made in His own image and likeness and endowed with many excellent gifts whereby He is able to hear and grasp the Word of God and by the power of speech to express that Word and thereby declare the glory of God. This is the purpose of our creation and all our existence in time and eternity.

5. The important change, however, that is effected through the entrance of sin into the world may not be ignored. Firstly, it may be said that in addition to the speech of God declaring His power, glory and majesty, another speech of God is heard declaring His holy wrath against sin. (Rom. 1:18) The whole creation is made subject to the bondage of corruption and death. The curse of the Lord is pronounced and evidenced everywhere as God speaks of His justice and holiness. There is no common grace!

Secondly, as far as man is concerned, it may be said that he can no longer perceive the truth of God in the things that are made for the light in man has become darkness, “The natural man cannot understand (discern) the things of God.” (1 Cor. 2:14) It is true that man retains glimmerings of natural light but even these he is incapable of using aright even in things natural and civil. (Canons III-IV, 4) What is more, man, being perverse, speaks the lie concerning God and all things. Man distorts the true conception of God and bows himself before an idol of his own making.

6. Finally, we must mention one more change that is effected through God's speaking once more through Jesus Christ our Lord. That speech is the content of the inspired Holy Scriptures, the testimony of the Holy Spirit through the prophets, apostles and holy men of God. Even this speech the natural man is incapable of understanding. In Christ a marvelous change is effected in the hearts and minds of His people whereby they are re-created after His image and the eyes of their understanding are opened. This is the wonder of redemption. Through the wonder of regeneration, effected by the quickening Spirit Who bestows the gift of saving faith, the children of God are made capable of hearing, understanding and interpreting the speech of God concerning their salvation and to declare the praise of His glorious grace. That is our salvation for “This is life eternal that we may know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent.” (John 17:3)

G. Vanden Berg
2. Who was the author of this conversion? Saul? Jesus Christ? Or perhaps Saul and Jesus cooperatively?

3. Is such a sudden and spectacular conversion experience the ideal for which we should be desirous? Is it the rule in the sphere of the covenant? Should you doubt whether you are truly a child of God unless you have very suddenly been converted and can point, as could Paul, to the exact time and place of your conversion?

4. Can we say anything as to the divine purpose in converting Saul in exactly this way? Is there any connection between this and his being destined and prepared to be the apostle to the Gentiles?

II. At Damascus. Chapter 9:10-22.

A. Visited by Ananias:
   1. The vision of Ananias:
      a. What is a vision?
      b. What was the contents of the vision of Ananias?
         1) Why does Ananias receive such exact instructions?
         2) What is the significance of the fact that "behold, he prayeth"?
         3) Is there connection between Saul's praying and his seeing a vision?
         4) Why are there complementary visions at this occasion, one of Ananias and one of Saul?
         5) What is Ananias' objection? (Incidentally, does his language show that he had personal experience with the persecution at Jerusalem, or rather that he had been in Damascus prior to the persecution?)
         6) How does the Lord answer that objection? What does this show of God's "choice"?
         7) What things did Paul have to suffer for the name of Christ?
         8) Who spoke to Ananias in this vision? Who is meant by "Lord"?
      c. Why must Ananias, an ordinary disciple, carry out this mission? Why not one of the apostles?
   2. Ananias visits Saul:
      a. How does Ananias address Saul?
      b. What miracle is performed upon Saul?
         1) What is the significance of the "scales" falling from his eyes?
         2) What is the connection between the physical and the spiritual in this miracle, if any?
      c. What does it mean that Saul is now "filled with the Holy Ghost"?
     d. Why is he baptized? Was not his circumcision sufficient?

B. His Stay at Damascus:
   1. What is the effect upon Saul of this conversion and the visit of Ananias?
   2. What does he preach of the Christ? Is this significant?
   3. Where did he preach?
   4. What was the fruit of his preaching?
   5. What reaction did this reaction of his hearers have upon Saul? Was there development for Saul?
   6. Why does not Saul immediately go to the Gentiles? Why must he first he in Damascus and have contact with the Jews?
   7. How long was Saul in Damascus? See also the other passages of Scripture which speak of this early history of Paul.
at the stoning of Stephen up to this point, is there any development evident?

3. His conversion:
   a. Its visible aspect:
      1) The bright light:
         a) Compare Acts 9, 22, 26. Do they agree as to what was seen and by whom it was seen?
         b) When did this light shine? How bright was it?
         c) What was the cause of this light? Did Saul see only the bright light, or did he see Jesus Himself? What did the men in his company see?
      2) Its effect:
         a) What effect did this light have on Paul? on those with him?
         b) Why was Saul smitten with blindness? why not the men with him? Did they not behold the same light?
         c) Was there any significance in this blindness? Explain.
   b. Its audible aspect:
      1) What did Saul hear, vs. 4? Did those with him hear anything? Explain.
      2) What does Saul's question indicate, vs. 5? What did he mean by "Lord"? Why did Saul recognize this voice?
      3) What is the meaning of Jesus' answer, vs. 5?
      4) What is the result of this voice upon Saul, vs. 6?

4. The end of the journey:
   a. Does Saul continue to Damascus? What became of his purpose to persecute? Was he able to persecute at this time?
   b. Why does the Lord let him wait for three days?
   c. What is the significance of the fact that he neither ate nor drank during this period of three days?

B. Significance:

Note: Even though the personal conversion of Saul and his conversion to the apostleship are closely intertwined, also in the narrative, we may nevertheless distinguish them. Theoretically speaking, it might have been possible that Saul became a Christian without becoming an apostle. We have here, therefore, not only an instance of the calling to office, but a most striking instance of the wonder of conversion.

1. What was the nature of the change that was wrought in Saul at this time? Compare his "before" and "after" state. Make this comparison on the basis of Scripture.
   a. Was it merely a change from the old dispensational view of things to the new dispensational view and understanding of things? Was it much like the change wrought on the apostles and the church at the day of Pentecost?
   b. Was it a case of Saul's being converted from a "mis-guided love," which was nevertheless a true love of God?
   c. Or was it a radical, spiritual "about face," so that at this time Saul was "translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son"?
Speech of God

“A tornado has been sighted southwest of Grand Rapids and is moving toward the northeast sector of the city. Seek shelter in the southwest corner of your basement.”

“Hudsonville has been badly hit!”
“Standale is leveled!”
“Comstock Park is badly demolished!”

These were the words that echoed into the homes of many Grand Rapids residents on April 3, 1956.

Out of a turbulent and black sky came death and destruction at Hudsonville and other towns surrounding the city of Grand Rapids on that momentous Tuesday night.

The impressions of the tornado which devastated parts of West Michigan were varied. Here are a few.

“It was like rolling smoke moving in on you.”

“It sounded like a freight train going by.”

“It looked like a big, black spinning top.”

The force of the tornado was tremendous. Houses were lifted from their foundations, never to be seen again. Huge slabs of cement were lifted and deposited again without being cracked. Automobiles were tossed about like toys.

Do we understand it? Can we imagine it?

Hardly. It seems almost unbelievable. One must have seen the devastation to really observe the tornado’s tremendous power.

Mayor-elect Paul G. Goebel of the city of Grand Rapids expresses what I would like to say. He was touring Europe when the disaster occurred. He says, “From European news reports I had no idea the damage was this terrible.”

When we think of the greatness of our Sovereign God as He reveals that greatness and power in nature we confess with the psalmist:

“My soul, bless the Lord! the Lord is most great;
With glory arrayed, majestic His state;
The light is His garment, the skies are His shade
And over the waters His courts He has laid.
He rides on the clouds, the wings of the storm,
The lightning and wind His mission perform;
The earth He has founded her station to keep,
And wrapped as a vesture about her the deep.”

Michigan received little consolation from the state meteorologists after the storm. They rather predicted that we in Michigan could expect more of the same storms.

If this be true we inquire concerning their cause.

It is above all true that they are sent by God because of His wrath against the children of men and to chastise His people. God, in his providence, also controls the storms of nature, too.

God uses the elements of nature to accomplish His purposes, however; so let us discuss these things in more detail.

There is much confusion (undoubtedly less since our most recent experience) about the distinction between tornadoes and other types of violent storms. In order to understand properly these things we must first make a few observations.
III. To Jerusalem:

A. Escape from Damascus:
   1. To what does the "many days" refer? Cf. Galatians 1.
      a. What was the purpose of this period of three years?
      b. Was it merely a period of waiting, of prayer, of meditation?
   2. His escape:
      a. Who sought to take Saul's life? Cf. II Cor. 11.
      b. How did he escape?

B. To Jerusalem:
   1. What was the reaction of the disciples at Jerusalem to Saul's attempt to
      fellowship with them?
   2. Who took Paul to the apostles?
   3. Which of the apostles did Paul contact?
   4. Here we read of Paul's preaching and of his coming and going at Jerusalem.
      In Galatians Paul tells us that he was unknown by face to the churches at Judea. Harmonize these elements.
   5. Why is it especially mentioned that Paul disputed with the Grecians?
      What was the reaction of these Grecians? Significance?
   6. In vs. 30 do we have the full account of Paul's departure from Jerusalem and

C. Rest for the church:
   1. Is this period of rest connected with Saul's conversion?
   2. Can there be found a reason in the history of the relation between the Romans and the Jews that might also account for this period of rest?
   3. What was the purpose (and result) of the period of rest for the church? H.C.H.

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**Tornado Victims in our Churches**

Disaster is no respecter of persons, and a number of our people suffered virtual total material loss along with hundreds of others in the recent tornado. At the time of this writing, John Huizenga of Hope Church is being treated in the hospital for injuries sustained in the storm.

The family of Ernie J. Miedema (Hudsonville) suffered a double disaster when fire consumed what the tornado had left of their possessions. Although the house was rented and therefore not a direct loss to the family, their clothing, furniture, and car are total losses. Mr. Donald Dykstra, who operates a flower farm in the Hudsonville area, lost his barn, wash coop, most of his tools, part of his crop, and suffered extensive damage to his house and greenhouse. Arnold Dykstra's car was also demolished by the winds.

The Henry Boer's home was demolished, together with most of their furniture and household goods.

Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Vander Kooi lost their garage, breezeway, car, and all the windows out of their house. Mr. Jake L. Schut also suffered some damage to his house, and lost completely his barn, chicken coop, onion storage shed, wash coop, and silo.

Others in the Hudsonville and Hope areas suffered damage to greater and lesser degrees.

According to Rev. M. Schipper of Second Church, Mr. and Mrs. M. Vander Wal lost everything, but escaped without serious injury when their house, garage, car, and barn were wiped out.
per is removed in a washbowl. The result is a terrible whirling wind. Another explanation is: Tornados usually form along a cold front when a mass of cold air forces its way under warm moist air. This causes the warm air to rise rapidly. As the warm air rises along the cold front the moisture in the whirling air forms tiny drops, or condenses and forms a great black cloud sheet. Suddenly a finger-like or funnel-like projection drops from this cloud sheet which is whirling air and the tornado is formed ready to do its lethal work.

Which is the proper assumption and explanation, I do not feel qualified to say. There seems to be considerable dissension among scientists on this point but this should serve to show us all the more how finite we are before our infinite and great God.

The tornado months, technically speaking, are just beginning. The months April through July are considered to be tornado months.

Tornados rarely hit in mountainous regions or where there is little moisture in the air.

The U.S. Weather Bureau has not made a practice of forecasting the occurrence of tornados because it is not possible to predict the exact location but it has forecasted conditions which are favorable for the formation of tornados. The main reason why it has not forecasted tornados is because this information might create much needless fright and panic in the minds of many people.

A hit of advice if you don't already know. If you see a tornado cloud get into a storm cellar if there is one. In a frame house go to the southwest corner of the basement as such a house will likely be removed from the foundation intact. In a brick or masonry structure, that basement is most dangerous, since the tornado may rip such a house to pieces and whirl the pieces into the basement. Seek shelter under something or outside the house.

Considering all these things, we as people of the Most High God should remember above all:

"Though hills amid the seas be cast,
Though foaming waters roar,
Yea though the mighty billows shake
The mountains on the shore.
The Lord our God is on our side;
Our safety to secure;
The God of Jacob is for us
A refuge strong and sure."

A. Lubbers

EDITORIALS

(Continued from page 4)

though the world may have corrupted that talent (as far as he himself is concerned) it can never corrupt it as far as God's church is concerned.

In the light of history, it is the youth of the church who usually are the first to sense a new medium for the spreading of the Gospel. This is also the calling of today's youth who, like the young people of all ages, are blessed with vivid imaginations and a zeal for any project they decide to undertake. The application of new inventions and the development of long misused talents, humanly speaking, rests with you.

Do not be discouraged if the world misuses the talent or opportunity you would seek to apply to His kingdom; just remember, the child of God is the only one who can use all things correctly, and his success is assured because he does these things with the favor of God, who not only made all things, but wills that all shall glorify Him.

Chuck Westra.
Tornadoes are often mistakenly called cyclones, or hurricanes and the truth of the matter is that they are neither. Tornadoes are not cyclones but occur within cyclones.

A cyclone is an area of low pressure. Its opposite is an anti-cyclone or an area of high pressure. A low is a great circular area of air which has a barometric pressure lower than that of surrounding areas and usually less than 30.0 inches. A low may be as large as two thousand miles across; yet it rarely extends more than four or five miles above the earth's surface. Cyclones (lows) are followed by anti-cyclones, or highs. These are also great whirlpools of air. In them barometric pressures are higher than those of surrounding areas and are usually 30.0 or more.

The winds of a cyclone, or low, are not necessarily violent. They will occasionally reach speeds of 100 miles per hour. At that speed much damage can be done. The air currents in a cyclone move counterclockwise and are constantly rising from the center of lowest pressure while the air currents of an anti-cyclone move clockwise and are descending currents.

We said that a tornado is often confused with a cyclone. As we have already stated and want to re-emphasize, tornadoes and cyclones are not the same. A tornado occurs within a cyclone, or low. The tornado is usually a slender funnel of violently twisting and whirling air. This revolving motion is the basis for the name tornado, a Spanish word that means twister. The whirling is so fast at the center of the tornado that it sets up a small area of low pressure, which is nearly a vacuum. (You can see the reason for the confusion before referred to. A tornado might be called a miniature cyclone. A barometric pressure reading would register very low.)

The whirling air reaches estimated speeds of 300 to 500 m.p.h. on the surface of the cone creating as we said a partial vacuum on the inside. (Scientists have never been able to accurately measure the speed of the winds because their instruments are always smashed or rendered useless by the tornado. Houses or buildings caught in the vacuum set up in the tornado virtually explode from their own internal pressure; therefore the advice to open doors and windows. This advice is given so that the pressure on the inside and outside will possibly be equalized; thus possibly preventing some destruction.

Unlike hurricanes, typhoons or cyclones, tornadoes are small, localized violent storms. The funnel usually ranges from 100 feet to half a mile in diameter.

The tornado moves across the country with the cyclonic low in the general direction from southwest to northeast, in somewhat the same way that an eddy in a river travels with the current. The tornado itself does not move rapidly. It can easily be outrun by an automobile in uncongested areas because they seldom travel much more than forty m.p.h.

A tornado usually occurs after a period of warm, calm weather. Weather in the Grand Rapids area was a record-breaking April 3 temperature of 78 degrees.

There are several explanations for the formation of tornadoes. One is: The air next to the earth becomes heated but convection currents (the method by which heat travels in water or air by means of currents) are delayed. As a result, there is a layer of warm air close to the earth's surface. Above this, like an invisible roof, is a stratum, layer, of cold air. Finally the pressure of the expanding warm air becomes great enough to break through a thin portion of the colder stratum above. Immediately the warm air is pushed from every direction toward this hole, in much the same way water is pushed in every direction toward the drain when the stop-
tioned once in the newspapers, is God alone. He it was that started it, guided its exact course, and used it to show His power. Though such a disaster may seem unnecessary to us, we know that our all-wise Heavenly Father had a divine purpose in causing this tornado.

What can we learn from this? Two very important things. First, our insignificance. Though man may boast that his power is well-nigh boundless and his might is great, he stands as less than nothing before the all-powerful God. Man's power fades into emptiness as God reveals his might. Man is helpless and can do absolutely nothing to avert disaster. To have been in this storm or to have seen its effects can only humble us before God and cause us to say with the psalmist of old, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?"

The second thing we are taught is that God's controlling hand rules over all things. Nothing happens merely of chance. Although the tornado may seem to pick its victims at random, God is controlling its every action. This is a great comfort to us, for we know according to His Word that all things work together for our good and therefore we never need fear. He is constantly with us, watching over us every moment. Nothing can separate us from His love. He will never leave or forsake us, but always will avert all evil or turn it to our profit. And "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Jim Jonker.

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO**

**“BEACON LIGHTS”**

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**Sunday Driving**

As soon as you, our "Beacon Lights" readers, see the title of this article, immediately the thought will come to your mind, "Oh, here's another sermon on the do's and don't's of Sunday Driving." But hold on a little. Read a little further before you decide to close "Beacon Lights" and put it away.

There is no one who can say you may drive here and not there. We cannot draw definite lines as to Sunday driving. However there is something we as Christians can and must say about Sunday driving.

Do you read the "Standard Bearer"? If you don't you should. When you pick up the "Standard Bearer" next time, look for the rubric, "In His Fear," and even go back to where the Rev. Heys begins his articles on "The Sabbath in His Fear." I don't think we could improve on his articles which deal with keeping the Sabbath Day holy. In the course of the articles, Rev. Heys mentions Sunday driving or travel. In the Feb. 1 issue of "Standard Bearer," Rev. Heys writes to the effect that there is much legitimate travel on the Sabbath. Even the apostle Paul must have spent much of his time in travel on the Sabbath and that too on ship. If there had been cars at that time Paul undoubtedly would have traveled by car.

Immediately you see that some Sunday driving is necessary and therefore justifiable. Such driving would include traveling some miles to attend church or society or maybe seeking communion and fellowship with friends after church. There were times you know when driving to church was considered almost as bad as you would consider one taking a motorcycle to church nowadays. Today it is expected that many drive to church as is seen by the parking lots built around the church.

Besides necessary driving on Sunday,
Tornado!

“There is a tornado in Grand Rapids,” intoned the voice on the radio. “Please go to the southwest corner of your basement and keep tuned in for further developments.”

Yes, there was a tornado although Grand Rapids itself was not touched. Of the many tornados on April 2 and 3, sweeping through several states, one came through western Michigan. Hudsonville, a small town about 15 miles from Grand Rapids, was hit the hardest. Standale, a commercial suburb on the northwest edge of Grand Rapids, also suffered severe loss. The toll, exacted in a short time by the tornado, was very great. Nineteen people were killed, over 300 were injured. About 200 houses were demolished, leaving six or seven hundred people homeless. 200 automobiles were wrecked; 120 house trailers were smashed. Many commercial buildings were destroyed, 29 in Standale alone. Damage was estimated at 10 or 11 million dollars.

Although the path of a tornado is fairly regular, it has no rhyme or reason in its actions. It would seemingly pick its victims at random, completely destroying one house, but not even touching the next one. At one location it removed almost exactly one half of a house, leaving the other half intact. It took away the refrigerator out of the kitchen but left the kettle unmoved on the stove.

One family, who was riding in its car when the tornado struck, had this story to tell. The windows of their car were sucked out, the car was set upside down in the ditch, and a couple of seconds later was placed upright on the road heading in the opposite direction from which they had come. Aside from bruises they escaped injury.

Another family, huddled in one corner of their basement, saw their house carried away and a car thrown into the opposite corner of the basement.

The havoc created by this storm was a sight to behold. Buildings, both large and small, lay on the ground like piles of kindling wood. Giant trees were uprooted or twisted off like toothpicks. Many automobiles were scarcely more than twisted steel.

What caused this tornado? The natural cause is that of an air clash, a fast moving cold front hitting a thick moist air mass primed by high temperatures. And the temperature that Tuesday of 78 degrees was a record high.

Although the outer edge of the funnel reaches speeds of 500 miles per hour, the tornado itself travels slowly, between 25 and 40 miles an hour on the average, cutting a path usually about a quarter mile in width. It has a terrific, rumbling roar like a huge freight train. It generally comes from the southwest and travels in a northeasterly direction.

Although no one is really safe in a tornado, safety measures can be taken which can save lives. If you’re at home, head for the southwest corner of the basement, provided your house is not brick. If you’re in the open, run at right angles from the funnel or take shelter in a culvert or ditch. It is well to note that the majority of those who were killed did not know the storm was coming, were caught unawares, had no basement to flee into, or simply panicked.

But we must never forget that the real cause of this storm, though never men-
JOB SYMPOSIUM

Where we should go to find Work

"I'm so tired of my work, I wish I could do something more interesting." Most people say this at one time or another. How can this attitude be overcome? First of all it means you must do work that you are interested in and capable of doing well. Choosing a vocation is a difficult job. Undoubtedly, the highest vocations are those in which a person teaches or preaches the truth of God's Word to His people through the means of classroom or pulpit. But only a small percentage of the majority is qualified for this work. Furthermore, if everyone decided to be teachers and preachers, there would be a great surplus. No, there are many other types of work, and laborers are needed in every sphere and walk of life.

Every person shows a certain ability in one thing or another. Usually the things we like to do and show interest in are also the things for which we have ability. Some like to work with figures, others like to work with their hands, using delicate instruments or fitting together intricate parts. Some like to work with people, others are interested in merchandising, buying and selling, others enjoy working with the soil, close to nature in the out-of-doors.

Each and every kind of job takes preparation and training. If you are to like your job you will have to spend a certain amount of time educating yourself for it, in order that you may perform it well.

In choosing a job there are certain things that must be taken into consideration. First it must be located near the church, near enough that you and the members of your family can attend the services and week-day meetings regularly. Secondly, it is preferable to find a job that has a Christian environment. It would be ideal to have a Christian "boss" and co-workers who are church people. Finally, it must be a job that pays well enough to meet the high cost of today's living.

There are some things that automatically make a job unacceptable. An example of this is compelled union membership, or work that is contrary to our Christian principles.

When we have considered all of the elements that compose an ideal job, then we must look about and try to find a job that comes as near to these ideals as possible. But then the battle is not yet won. After you have landed the job, the hardest part is still ahead of you. How to be happy and satisfied with the day by day routine.

First of all, we must remember that we can be happy only if we are in accordance with and content with God's plan and way for our life. Then only will you look at your job in its proper perspective. The smallest, most unimportant task will then become a calling.

Neither must you look for or expect perfection in any job. Every job has its disagreeable side, and if we let these smaller details over-shadow the whole, then no job will be pleasant. Do you think of the starchy white dress and cap of the nurse with her pleasant smile, and forget the long hours of actual physical labor? Or perhaps the nice clothes, good wages and pleasant hours of the downtown office worker and forget the moody, ill-tempered "boss," or the twenty-five page long typing assignment? Or again the farmer plowing his field on a beautiful balmy spring day and forget the early morning trek to the barn to feed the cattle?
I think there is also some unnecessary driving that COULD be justifiable. I am thinking of a ride in the country on a quiet peaceful Sunday afternoon, maybe in the summer or fall.

Let's take a ride once on such a Sunday afternoon.

As we get into the car, we first of all realize that our life is not our own. It belongs entirely to God who has created and now preserves that life. As we begin our drive, we also realize that the car we are riding in is not something of man's intelligence and ingenuity but that each part has its own significance and was designed by God. The metal, though processed by man, is a product in nature which God put there. The rubber parts and tires, cloth, etc., were all from God.

Now we come to the country. Immediately our eyes come to rest on some beautiful flowers in a farmyard. As we ride by we see God's handiwork as He forms each and every petal of the flowers. He forms the leaves and stem and roots of the plant, making them beautiful beyond description.

As we continue our ride, in an open field we see a lone dead tree. As we fix our eyes on it we think not of just the dead wood but what that dead tree represents. It shows us that sin is ever present in the world. We are living in a world of corruption and death.

Next we look at the colors. Green would be the first color our eyes behold. Green, which represents the budding and expression of hope, is seen especially in the spring when all things blossom forth in fresh hopeful beauty. We also see blue, white, red and yellow, all having their own significance. I could go on and mention the sky, which contains the heavenly bodies, the sun and a small fingernail of a moon. We could think of the air and the water, and even the road we are riding on.

What could be a more blessed afternoon than that. No, we mustn't identify God with creation as the Pantheist, but we must realize and believe that God created all these things with a purpose, His Glory.

In connection with this ride however we must say more. How many of us would go for a Sunday drive with only those thoughts in mind? I would venture to say none of us would. Instead, what we are more inclined to do, is to get together with other young people and waste the entire afternoon! We race down the road like fools, not thinking for one moment of the evil of desecrating the Lord's Day. Or maybe just ride aimlessly to get from under the rule of the folks who are pressing us to read our church papers. This pertains not only to the fellows but also to the girls.

What do you do with your Sunday nights? Are you engrossed in discussion with yourself and others on the sermons heard that day? You fellows, do you take a Psalter along with you when you go on your dates and sing some of the numbers or if you can't sing, take a Bible along and discuss a portion of Scripture? In some circles this is a very common practice and we might do well to adopt this practice. Have you read the "Standard Bearer" and our own "Beacon Lights"? When do you prepare for catechism and Young People's Society? Surely if all you can do with your Sunday is drive around in your cars then certainly you can't possibly find time during the week either because you will be too busy flying around as much during the week as on Sunday.

In conclusion let me say, that cars are an invention that God put in the minds of men with a purpose: the glory of His name. We cannot use them for our own pleasure. They were not made to abase God's name; instead we must re-

(Continued on page 23)
who could make more money if he or she had an AB degree, it would mean formal training, training that would be beneficial to both the teacher and school. In the case of a factory worker, the training would probably be both formal and informal. A certain amount could be learned from training manuals, but most of this educational process would be in the form of on-the-job practical application. It is certainly our calling to do the best job we can for our employer. Therefore we should always be developing and becoming more proficient in our work. In the long run, this will mean increased income to us.

Naturally, when we are seeking employment, we must look for a job in our own field. A person who is a top-notch truck driver will not open a retail business or vice versa because one will give him a better income. We must use the talents which God has given us to the best of our ability. We shouldn't invent talents of our own. By that I mean, we aren't all qualified to be school teachers, tool and die workers, business men, farmers, etc. But, we all have talents of one form or another, and it is those talents that we must develop. In this connection there is also the serious question of principle to be considered. This matter is being discussed in the other articles of the Job Symposium so we won't discuss it in detail here. However, we cannot talk about the comparative importance of wages without talking about principle, too. The union question, for example, is of paramount importance. We are all acquainted with our objections to becoming members of a worldly union. Moreover, all occupations are not fit for a Christian to perform, such as becoming an actor, a professional entertainer, etc. Besides, if a given job, no matter how well it pays, makes it necessary for us to live away from the church where we feel the truth is presented in its purest manifestation, we must decline such a position. Closely related to the question of location is that of the hours of employment. If some employment makes it impossible for us to be active in church work or to attend the regular services of the church, we cannot with clear consciences accept such employment. We may not consider wages to the exclusion of all other factors.

Underlying this whole question is our motive. In all things we should be motivated by a desire to glorify God and not by the love of money. As stewards of God here on earth we are accountable for the way in which we use the wages He gives to us. You have probably heard that it is easier to be a poor Christian than a rich Christian. Too many times, a rich person becomes greedy and is interested only in money. This could also be true of one who does not make as much. So, all of us should continually pray for strength and wisdom that we may do all to the honor and glory of God's name.

Charles E. Kregel

What Considerations should be given to Working Hours?

Since the fall of Adam, man has had to work in the sweat of his brow and naturally there has been and always will be the question of working hours. The working day was at one time much longer than today's working day. Man, however, has the tendency to do less and less work and to desire to do even less work than he is doing; so that after many years have gone by the working day has been decreased and decreased to the present standard eight hour day and still industry and laborers are trying to decrease the day even more.

The society we live in is constantly changing and also the mode of living. We cannot remain living in the past but must
with the temperature at zero, or the years - when there is no harvest?

This is where determination and "stick-to-it-ive-ness" is necessary. Once you have made up your mind what you want to do, don't let small failures change your mind. Every time you change your mind and start off on something "different," you take a step backward. Many people look for a job that is easy and takes little thought, and then wonder why they tire of it so quickly. A difficult task offers a challenge and brings a sense of satisfaction when accomplished.

We said before it would be ideal to have a job with a christian "boss" and co-workers. We see just as much of the people we work with as we do with our own families, and we cannot enjoy ourselves when we are continually in the company of unbelievers. But sometimes we have no choice, and then we must use the opportunity to let our light shine. We should be prepared to speak of our heavenly heritage and the wonders of our God if the occasion arises. In cases where our co-workers are hardened to religion, or show an unwillingness to listen, it is better to let our lives be a silent testimony. Although we should be sober, it does not mean we cannot smile and show that we are happy with our christianity. We cannot separate ourselves and sit in a corner. When we join the group for lunch, our opening prayer will speak a word. When we don't laugh at the off-color joke, it is an unspoken testimony.

Finally, the choice of vocation or search for a job should be made a matter of prayer. Not that we should pray for a wonderful job and all earthly joys along with it, but only that God will give us strength to perform any work that He sees fit to give us.

Mrs. B. Woudenberg

What Consideration should be given to Wages when Looking for Employment?

"Increase Your Earnings"; "Earn More Money After Taking Our Training Courses"; "Double Your Income." These and many other such articles and advertisements hit our eye when we pick up the newspaper, read a magazine, or check the circular mail advertisements addressed to us. Everywhere we turn, increasing our standard of living is used as an incentive to sell a given product, induce us to register for a course of study, or to read certain articles on how to be more successful. Or, in plain English, how to make more money.

With money, or rather the amount of money one has, becoming the criterion of success, the question comes before us as young people, What consideration should we give to wages when looking for a job or when determining what type of work we will do? This question is very practical because after all money is very basic in our daily life. And yet, instinctively, we hesitate to make money the sole consideration in looking for a job or choosing a career. Therefore, let us look a little more closely into this subject and decide just how large a part money should play in that determination.

Wages or income should be an incentive at least partially in choosing an occupation or profession. People are generally qualified in more than one field of endeavor. When this is the case and other things being equal, one should prepare himself for the job or position offering the most money. By so doing, he will be better able to care for the needs of his family, support his church with larger contributions, and be better able to help the poor. Wages could also be an incentive to get the most education available in your field. This does not necessarily mean formal education. In the case of a teacher
the week and its importance to working hours. Now I would like to ask what consideration should be given to Sunday labor? The proper approach to the questions concerning the Sabbath is not so much in what may we not do as what must we do. If we know the proper things to do the things to avoid are easily avoided. The basic fact is that God provides a Sabbath for man. God did that in Paradise, he does it now, he will do it in heaven and throughout eternity when we have the eternal Sabbath of which our Sabbath is now the symbol. The principle controlling our Sabbath should be devotion and consecration to God. Upon this day we must consecrate ourselves as directly as possible to God and engage in doing things pertaining to God's kingdom. It is true that this holds for every day of the week but on the Sabbath we set aside all else as much as possible. But even Jesus left room for necessary things as when he told of an ox fallen into a well on the Sabbath (Luke 14:5). Even as that was necessary, there is some necessary Sunday work but this work must be done with the awareness that it is the Sabbath.

I would conclude that the most important question and consideration we must give our job in relation to working hours is: “Will my working hours keep me from serving my Master to the best of my ability?” Clara Buiter
Oak Lawn, Illinois

SUNDAY DRIVING
(Continued from page 18)

member, they are an invention to God's Glory.

The car has its place, even on Sunday. We may not say, you may do this and may not do that, but must ask what is our attitude to God with our car. Is it to God's glory and His alone. If not, then think twice. REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY TO KEEP IT HOLY.

Jim Schipper

Mass Meeting Reports
MICHIHead

On the evening of March 27, the Young People's Mass Meeting was held in Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church.

After a few Psalter numbers had been sung, Gise Van Baren opened with prayer and read Scripture. Ruth Dykstra thereupon gave a reading on “Life Through Death” and Mrs. Fred Peterson favored us with a solo, “The Palms.”

Rev. R. Veldman was our speaker for the evening and, in connection with the Easter season, chose for his topic, “Jesus and Mary at the Cross.”

Rev. Veldman opened his timely and interesting speech by showing that the course of events at Calvary provided for a farewell by Jesus' friends. Finally room was made for the friends of Christ to catch a possible last word of His and to comfort Him by their very presence. There were four women and only one man at the cross. The only disciple of the twelve was John. All the others were absent from the scene. Salome, the mother of John; Mary, the wife of Cleophas; Mary Magdalene; and Mary, the mother of Jesus, were the four women present.

Rev. Veldman went on to point out that Mary, Jesus' mother, must have been suffering greatly. No doubt she realized that now was fulfilled the prophecy of ancient Simeon long ago, “Yea, and a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also.” Mary realized more than anyone else that Christ was more than a son; He was the Son of God. And as she watched, not understanding, but believing still; Jesus, in the hour when all the mercy of God was laboring to redeem His people, turns and says, “Woman, behold thy son.” Christ's last gift is a new son to His mother. And yet He goes on and says, “Behold thy mother.” For Mary the meaning is that she is forever set aside as His mother. Now the only relation
adapt ourselves to living in the period in which God has placed us. We must work to live and so also we must give our working hours today some considerations.

The week contains working hours, rest hours, and leisure hours. The relation of your working and leisure hours has a great influence on your social life. There are some jobs in which it is necessary to pay special attention to this relationship. A job which requires evening labor would be such a case. Before taking a job with evening or night hours it is especially important to take into consideration the schedule of your family, friends, and planned church activities. Daytime has always been the recognized working time. With an evening job you will have to work while others are enjoying their rest or leisure hours and then enjoy your rest and leisure while the others work. Now naturally there is time between and it is possible to work out a good schedule but not very probable. Often the night worker is tempted to do too many things during the day, work all night and end up with very little rest. Under such a schedule, you are not able to do anything to the best of your ability.

Beside the physical balance or lack of balance there is a very important factor. Evening is the time scheduled for church activities such as society meetings, catechism, Sunday school teachers meetings, etc. Participation in these activities is a very enjoyable use of your evenings and also profitable and necessary for good spiritual growth. Even aside from the great spiritual benefits in these activities, there is the formation of Christian friendships as a result of working with other young people. Evening work hours would eliminate these things for you.

Another job which concerns your social life is that of the traveling worker such as the traveling salesman. Here again the same thing holds true. It is impossible to both be away on your job and attend church activities. In a traveling job, instead of putting in an eight hour working day, you must give your work twenty-four hours in that your job keeps you away from home and normal living. In the case of a father, it would be necessary to sacrifice his home life and responsibilities as a father.

Your economic life in view of working hours is related to your social life. I do not wish to discuss wages as such but rather things such as working overtime or working wives which are generally economic in nature. Once again the danger lies in the possibility of working hours interfering with your spiritual life. There is no real harm in occasional overtime which almost any job will demand, but what I mean is constant overtime which gradually causes your life to revolve around your job rather than your church and home. In young people this can lead to making friends among the world rather than among God's people and in adults this can break the unity of the family. The lack of a good sound home can cause a poor relationship between parents and children and then the Christian soundness of the home is also lost.

What about working wives? Today a great percentage of women are married, have families and are holding a job outside of their home. Their working hours keep them away from their home and children nine or ten hours a day. What considerations should these women give to working hours? They should consider whether they can and are placing their duties to their home and family first. A mother must realize her responsibilities in raising her children and running her household. This cannot be left to Grandmother or nursery schools, because it is her home, her children, and her task.

Our social and economic life are closely bound, and inseparable from both is our religious life. I have tried to bring out the importance of Christian living during
scene of the Spring Mass Meeting. Rev. R. Veldman brought the audience an Easter message and the after-recess program consisted of a series of impromptu speeches.

The staffing of Beacon Lights has also kept us rather busy. In January our Editor-in-Chief, Rev. James McCollam, found it necessary to resign, and as you see by the masthead, Mr. Charles Westra has now filled that position. We also lost our Nature Study Editor, Dwight Monsma, recently, and he has been replaced by Agatha Lubbers. Two other new writers are Jim Jonker as Current Events Editor and Dave Engelsma as Regional Staff Writer for the state of Michigan.

And now most of our time is occupied with matters concerning the Convention. Our latest letter from the societies at Hull and Doon informed us of the speakers and topics, and this information will soon be published for all our young people. Just make sure that you start planning now so that August 14, 15, and 16 find you in Doon and Hull, Iowa, attending the 15th P. R. Y. P. Convention.

CHRISTIAN LIVING
(Continued from page 6)

God, trust in Him, love Him with all our hearts, forsaking the world and crucifying our old nature.

All of this is signified and sealed by the sacrament of baptism. We may also add in this connection that the questions which are asked of the parents who present their children for baptism are questions which are asked of the whole congregation and which are also answered in their hearts as their own confession and faith.

Finally we must notice that because this is a means of grace and because the promise is sealed by means of this sign by the Holy Spirit of Christ, therefore this is a sign and seal only for the elect. It is a sign and seal only for those whom God has eternally chosen and in whom He has willed to work His grace and His salvation.

The question remains, How is this also instrumental to prepare us for our place in the church of Christ? What should be our position over against this sacrament as covenant young people.

But this must wait for another issue.

H. Hanko

“All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” — Romans 3:23

When our penitent hearts approach Christ for forgiveness, His love removes the one prime and basic cause for all suffering, sorrow and death: our sins. Without the admission of all our transgressions in thought, word and action we cannot have pardon and peace. It is not a pleasant task, as every Christian pastor will admit, to assert, “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”; to repeat, “There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not”; to tell this age, which leans back in self-satisfied approval of its own greatness, “All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.” We would find it easier to soften this universal indictment of the race. The Church could have had more publicity, if the ugly hideous evidences of sin in our lives were hushed in favor of a current-topic discussion or a rosetate round of optimistic generalities. The Church of Jesus must preach “Christ and Him crucified”; and Christ cannot be preached without preaching sin. You cannot tell men that they are saved unless they recognize that they need to be saved.
between Christ and Mary is that of Saviour and saved. For Jesus, the meaning is that all earthly ties are broken before He plunges into the depths of spiritual agony. All the bonds of this earth are of no avail as concerns the covenant.

After the speech, Arnold Dykstra rendered a solo, “The Unveiled Christ” and a short recess, complete with refreshments, was taken.

Following a collection for “Beacon Lights,” a duet, “Jesus Saviour Pilot Me,” was given by our Grand Haven church.

To round out the evening, five extemporaneous speeches were given. The speakers were Agatha Lubbers, Jim Jonker, Jim Schipper, Shirley Dykstra, and Dave Engelsma.

Rev. C. Hanco closed the enjoyable meeting with prayer.

Dave Engelsma, Reporter

NORTHWEST IOWA

Friday evening, March 29, Hull and Doon held joint Good Friday services in the Doon church.

The Choral Society of Doon and Hull rendered an Easter program, Sunday evening, April 1, at our Doon church. I am sure, this well attended program was enjoyed by the audience as well as by those who rendered it.

The Doon and Hull Young People’s Society is busy planning for the convention. Right now we are getting ready to tell the other young people all about it, or at least, give them a peek behind that “corn curtain” which you have read about in our February issue of “Beacon Lights.”

We are trying hard to make our Convention a success. Keep the dates open, August 14, 15, 16. We are looking for you all, from far and near.

A Report of the Activities of the Federation Board

Perhaps some of you have been wondering about the activities of the Federation Board, the group of people which is elected each year at the Convention. This short article will outline just a few of its activities for you.

We began this year by making two tape recordings which we sent to all our young people’s societies. The first one consisted of some of the highlights of the past convention including excerpts of all the three main speeches. The second one carried the message of Beacon Lights, and how it goes all the way from writer to reader.

The Federation Board Library has also been one of our projects this year. Each month our Librarian receives many exchange copies of religious publications. At our Board meetings she divides these magazines among the members and we each take several home with us. During the interim between meetings, we look over the magazines and cut out those articles which we think will be useful in the clipping file of the Library. We are also trying to acquire a complete set of Beacon Lights, a copy of every issue since it was first published. To complete our set we asked our people to help by contributing all their back issues. We have received many copies but still lack several issues including the first year of publication. If you have any of these magazines and are willing to contribute them, please send them to Jeannette Faber, 929 Worden S. E., Grand Rapids, Mich.

Mass meetings too have taken up some of our time. In the Fall, the Reformation Day Mass Meeting was held at Hope Church. Seminarian Al Mulder was the main speaker for the evening and the after-recess program included a debate. Hudsonville Church was the
mements, but where is his proof? He shows me none.

Can Mr. Jonker prove that we sing Arminianistic hymns in the Christian Reformed church? Does he realize that all hymns are not Arminian and that we also sing the psalms in our churches? Had he read the hymns in our Psalter Hymnal, he would soon realize that we have changed the words to fit our doctrine. What does he have against hymns like "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," "Have Thine Own Way, Lord," and others. I'm sure Mr. Jonkers has sung these hymns also. As for what hymns they sing in schools I do not know.

The growth of the Christian Reformed church is not due to lowering of denominational walls as Mr. Jonker says. Has Mr. Jonker ever evaluated the growth of the Christian Reformed Churches? I don't think so; otherwise he would not make such a statement. Allow me to quote a few figures from our 1956 yearbook.

Children baptized, 6,871. Deaths, 1,099. Net gain in membership 5,772. Can Mr. Jonker say that a 5,000 member gain is due to lowering of denominational walls? This is internal growth. He didn't even suggest the possibility of internal growth.

We received from other denominations 1973, less than 1%. This includes people coming from Protestant Reformed, Reformed churches, etc. Another factor which caused our churches to grow rapidly which Mr. Jonker did not mention is that since 1946 we have received approx. 33,000 members from Reformed churches in the Netherlands. By accepting these 33,000 members did we lower our standards?

The Christian Reformed church received 506 people through our program of evangelism. The Protestant Reformed Church has not active mission fields and such a program. This figure is about \(\frac{1}{2}\) of 1% of our total membership. Does this suggest lowering our standards to accept members.

Mr. Jonker is also inclined to believe that a split makes a church better and purer. How does he prove this? When I read the Standard Bearer and saw the names that people called others I shuddered. How a true Christian can call a brother a liar and heretic when a week ago he was worshipping with him is beyond me. Is this brotherly and Christian love? If it is, I don't want any part of it.

I believe in constructive criticism, but this article cannot be considered such. It can be classified as fault finding, with the Christian Reformed church, and on the other hand praising the Protestant Reformed church for how good and pure it is. It might be a good idea for Mr. Jonker to have proof and investigate the things he writes. And another idea that might be good is that he evaluate his own church before criticizing others for faults that cannot be proved. I'm sure that the Protestant Reformed Church is not 100% pure and all its members holy. I'm sure that all is not pure and undefiled in the Protestant Reformed Church. There are signs of becoming liberal in some aspects. We are not blind in the Christian Reformed Church, but we don't go calling others liberal and running them to the ground as Mr. Jonker's article does.

I hope I have enlightened you and not offended you, if I did please pardon me. It is hard for one to let such an article as Mr. Jonker's pass without comment.

Sincerely,
Neal De Young
843 Logan, S. E.
Grand Rapids 6, Michigan
Letter to Editor

April 10, 1956

Mr. Charles Westra
Editor—Beacon Lights
1722 Alto Ave., S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Dear Sir:

I have recently seen a copy of your April issue of “Beacon Lights.” One article drew my attention and I could not leave it go without making some comment. This article is entitled “Christian Reformed Church Grows,” by Jim Jonker.

First of all I must say that Mr. Jonker is biased and seems to write to degrade the Christian Reformed Church. There is little or any good in this article about the Christian Reformed Church. Being a member of the Christian Ref. Church I wish to defend my church against his attack which I believe is untrue and is not proved.

Mr. Jonker seems to think that the Protestant Reformed Church has a claim on the truth. He allows for no difference in opinion or doctrine. Everyone else is wrong except the Protestant Reformed church.

He states that the issue of Common Grace is a heresy of the Christian Reformed church, in his opinion, yes, but we as Christian Reformed of course are wrong, because we don’t have the truth. The Protestant Reformed Church is the only church with the truth. We cannot have anything in our doctrine that is different. This makes our whole system corrupt and a heresy. Mr. Jonker seems to argue in this fashion, he leaves no opening for difference in doctrine. If you don’t believe like the Protestant Reformed church you are wrong.

Mr. Jonker brings up the union issue which the Christian Reformed Church leaves an open question. Our Synod has said that the Church members may belong to unions, but I’m sure this decision was not made to avoid trouble. Can Mr. Jonker prove that Synod’s decision was based on the issue of avoiding trouble? I don’t believe he can. He also fails to realize that members of the First Protestant Reformed church in Grand Rapids belong to the IGA. (Independent Grocers Assoc.) This is a union of grocers. It may be called an association but is was organized so that grocers could buy things cheaper to compete with the chain stores such as A&P. A working man cannot belong to the union to gain advantages, but a grocer can belong to the IGA and such organization for his benefit. Is the IGA employing union help? Remember that an IGA member supports their policy and pays for its operation. It seems to me that there is an inconsistency in the Protestant Reformed churches on this issue.

Mr. Jonker also comments at the theatre attendance of Grand Rapids Christian High School students. Has Mr. Jonker conducted a poll to find this out or has he heard the students talking. Is he judging the youth of the Christian Reformed Church by the acts of a few hundred at Grand Rapids Christian High School. Is Mr. Jonker so sure that there are not young people of the Protestant Reformed Church attending movies also?

The Back to God Hour and The Banner show that our doctrine is impure and corrupt. Yes, this is true to anyone who doesn’t agree with our doctrine. I could say the same about the “Reformed Witness Hour.” He uses no proof to back his rash statements, he cites no program or article in The Banner.

I would like to know how Mr. Jonker can say that we have women suffrage in our church. We don’t have women elders and deacons. Women have no voice in congregational matters. How can Mr. Jonker make such a brash statement without proof. It is easy to make state-
There's still room for You...

at the Spring Banquet!

- TUESDAY, MAY 8! 6:30 P.M.
- FIRST CHURCH PARLORS!
- ALL YOUNG PEOPLE INVITED!
- CONVENTION PLANS UNVEILED!

WATCH YOUR BULLETIN . . . FOR FURTHER DETAILS!
When I get big,
Can I go to the
P.R.Y.P. Convention
too?

Aug. 14, 15, 16, Hull and Doon, la.