In this issue . . .

FEATURE—page 1
Giving Thanks Always
Rev. M. Schipper

EDITORIAL—page 4
Confession of Sin . . . A Tonic not a Telling
Mr. C. Westra

CHRISTIAN LIVING—page 5
Doctrine and Practice (2)
Rev. H. Hanko

TRUTH vs. ERROR—page 7
Thankfulness
Rev. G. Vanden Berg

BIBLE OUTLINE—page 9
Acts 12:25 to 14:28
Rev. H. C. Hoeksema

NATURE STUDY—page 13
The Living Watchtower
Miss A. Lubbers

PENCILS AND CHALK—page 15
The Path of Uprightness
Miss A. Reitsema
Arithmetic: How Protestant Reformed
Mr. H. Woudenberg

MISCELLANEOUS—
Lot's Wife—page 17
Mrs. S. Feenstra

Letter to the Editor—page 19
N. Dykstra
Giving Thanks Always

With the appearance of this issue of *Beacon Lights* we will be in the year of our Lord 1957 and in the eleventh month of that year. And the last Thursday of this month has been designated Thanksgiving Day. With this in mind the editorial staff has asked me to pen a few thoughts about thanksgiving, which we gladly do.

Originally our national Thanksgiving Day was a home festival and not without religious character. Until well into the 18th century two church services were held on that day in which the mercies of God were recounted. And after these services a grand dinner was partaken of by separate family units. Today, the President of the United States each year delivers a Thanksgiving Proclamation. Hereby we are exhorted to attend our respective houses of worship, as it is generally said, to give thanks to “kind providence,” after which the nation gorges itself in fatness, feasting and amusements. The idea of the day has been greatly lost and the special day has deteriorated into a time of pleasure and the worship of the gods Bacchus and Mammon.

It is well then that we again pause to consider the real idea of thanksgiving.

There are several passages of Scripture which emphasize that we are to give thanks always for all things. We read in II Cor. 4:15, “For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.” Again, in Eph. 5:20 we read, “Giving thanks always for all things unto God, and the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” In Phil. 4:6 we read: “Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” And to quote more, we read in I Thess. 5:18, “In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God concerning you.”

From these passages it is clear that nothing is to be excluded from our thanksgiving. Because Thanksgiving Day was instituted with a view to the in-gathered harvest, there is a danger and that is that we concentrate our attention on material things only. This danger is more than imaginary. The President’s proclamation generally emphasizes thanks for material prosperity. Many sermons are dedicated to the proposition that we are to give thanks only for an abundant harvest. And the danger is that we also begin to distinguish between the material things in which we rejoice and the things we regard as evil. The attempt is made to
make us believe that we are to give thanks only for the good, not for the bitter.

But notice the all inclusiveness of the Scriptural mandate. It enjoins us to prostrate ourselves before God and to express gratitude for whatever He sends us, — nothing excluded. There is nothing that limits the idea of everything. Surely the meaning is not that we give thanks for everything we consider good. But the word “everything” must stand in its full force. It includes whatever we receive. It includes all our experiences in this life. Regardless whether they are pleasant or unpleasant to our flesh. To be sure, this includes all that is good: our life, our gifts, our powers, our talents; our health and strength to labor; our daily bread, clothing; our homes, our schools and churches; our prosperity, peace and plenty. Yes, but life is more than these. Our Baptism Form speaks of “our life is a continual death.” There is also suffering, pain and death. There is war, poverty, and famine. There are also tears, sorrows and sadness. Thanks for everything does not exclude these things that are usually denominated evils and which we know always work for good to the children of God.

Nor is thanksgiving a matter for a special occasion. Our Thanksgiving Day comes only once a year. As we already mentioned, it was originally intended as a harvest feast day. And we might conclude that thanksgiving is also a matter for special occasions, after some special good providence, such as, the end of a war, or the end of a catastrophe such as flood, famine or pestilence. Or, as it is, at the end of a successful and plenteous harvest.

Notice, however, the Scripture says “always”! Not only for all things, for the good and the bad; but all the time. That includes our entire life and walk, every day of our life, every moment of our existence.

To give thanks always for all things presupposes that we consider all things that we received were good. It means that we point to everything and say it was from God without any merit of us. It implies that we point to the Giver of all and praise His Holy Name. That we give thanks for everything always means that we give thanks because of everything and that we rejoice because of everything always, not only when the way is bright and smooth, but also when it is dark and impassable. It means that we behold in all, always, God’s mercy, love and grace to us.

But isn’t this impossible? Isn’t this quite contrary to our natural understanding?

Indeed this is quite impossible of understanding or fulfillment for the natural man. To him this is sheer foolishness. He is like the rich man in the parable whose portion is in this life. He boasts himself in the multitude of his riches. His god is his belly. In fact he does not and cannot give thanks at all. He can and does rejoice in things, but not in the Lord.

This is possible only for those who have this grace of thanksgiving, and they do it with great difficulty.

But does this mean that the child of God, the recipient of this grace, rejoices in things that are evil? Does he then set his face like flint in the midst of pain and suffering? No, of course not! When he is in agony he groans. When the clouds of evil lower he is anxious. When he is in sorrow he weeps.

But he belongs to Christ.

So the apostle would also have us give thanks for everything always, — in the Lord. That is the only answer to how it is possible to give thanks always in everything. Because Christ is Lord of all, all things have their reason in Him. To belong to Him means He is our Lord in everlasting love. We were in Him when He died and rose again. All things therefore must work for our good.

Thus, and thus only, the true believer in Christ gives thanks always for all things. He understands that what is considered evil is in reality good. He knows that evils are
chastisements of love. He believes all things must be subservient to God's eternal purpose of love and his own salvation. Thus the believer can and is unto the praise of God in all. Thus he can truly rejoice in all things, and in everything always give thanks.

Rev. M. Schipper

Beacon Lights for Protestant Reformed Youth

Published monthly, except July and September, by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies.

Charles Westra Editor-in-Chief
Jay Kortering Associate Editor
Tom Newhof, Jr. Business Manager
Garretta Lubbers Finance Manager

Staff:
Elaine Veltman Clerk
Marilyn Wiersma Asst. Clerk
Dave Engelsma Chairman
Clarice Newhof Public Relations Staff
Marcia Newhof
Tam Lubbers

Jim Jonker Proof Reader
Seymour Beilour Photo and Art
Don Faber Subscription Managers
Elaine Hanko Karlene Oomkes

Contributing Editors:
Rev. Herman Hanco - Christian Living
Rev. Gerard van den Berg - Truth vs. Error
Rev. H. C. Hoeksema - Bible Outlines
Miss Agatha Lubbers - Nature Study

Regional Staff Writers:
Beverly Van Meerene California
Dave Engelsma Michigan
Joan Rutgers Illinois
Beverly Hoekstra Northwest Iowa and Minn.

All material for publication should be addressed to MR. CHARLES WESTRA, 1722, Alto, S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Grand Rapids subscribers please forward subscription due to KARLENE OOMKES, 1312 Rosewood Ave., S. E., Grand Rapids 8, Mich.
Subscribers outside of the Grand Rapids area please forward subscriptions due to MISS ELAINE HANKO, 1221 Bates St., S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Subscription price: $3.00
Entered as Second Class Mail at
Grand Rapids, Michigan
Confession of sin doesn’t make sense—at first. Doesn’t God know our sins better than we do ourselves? Why should we tell him something He already knows and condemns?

Reasoning in this manner has led many of us to shrug off the privilege of confession onto some simple and all inclusive phrase as “and forgive my sins for Jesus’ sake” which completely misses one of the greatest benefits of confession.

Obviously, the confession of sin is to remind us of our dependence on Christ, and of our repeated shameful conduct, but the method in which we conduct our confession can add or detract immeasurably from the spiritual comfort derived from our confession.

The confession of sin is not to inform God of our corruption, but to remind ourselves. We are the ones who need to be told, not Almighty God.

With this in mind, the worn out phrases we easily revert to lose their application and a confession of sin begins to take on the nature of a personal, spiritual inventory.

Progressing then, from a general confession, (recognizing only the weakness of the entire human race) to a personal accounting, forces us to bring into the cold light of the law, the sins we may have been guilty of that very day or hour; such as a covetous attitude towards a friend’s attractive personality, or the repeating of an off-color story, or the greedy bit of conduct that frequently shows itself. Mention these—one by one.

As we “tell” God of these failings, the tonic of true confession begins to work in our hearts, for the recognition of an evil is the first step in its defeat. The act of exposing these various deeds as the sin they are, points out our weaknesses and by God’s grace, we learn to build defenses against them.

For example, if an itemized confession reveals that we tend to use profanity in certain situations, we will, by grace, be more conscious of that particular weakness when the situation occurs again.

Just as “a good cry” will often ease the tensions built up in a troubled mind, a sincere confession of our sins, one by one, in the knowledge of Christ’s forgiveness, washes the guilty feeling from our soul, causing an aura of relief to envelope us and give us the comfort necessary for another attempt to conquer our ornery human nature.

Don’t deprive yourself of the tonic and comfort of confession by a quick, off-hand repetition of a few trite phrases. Rather, bring these short-comings into sharp focus, when on your knees before God—your reward will be quick, comforting, and heartening.
Last issue of the *Beacon Lights* we noticed that sometimes the preaching in our churches is said to be too doctrinal, with the result that practical emphases are lost. We noticed that this happens in many churches today outside the sphere of our own, where the extreme is that the Word of God is no longer preached and all kinds of social problems become the subjects for sermons, and themes embracing every problem that arises in the world are substituted for themes taken from the Scriptures. But we have decided to examine once the criticism that our own churches go to the other extreme and only instruct in formal doctrine without telling people how they ought to live. We have no problem with much of modern preaching today. There is no one, I am sure, among us who would ever be in favor of preaching that strayed from the Bible and introduced in the pulpit sermons that were made by man and not Scripture. We have no difficulty with sermons so-called which are based upon divorce and juvenile delinquency as problems in America without any reference to Scripture or any of the truths of God's Word mentioned. We have no sympathy for a minister that uses a text as a nail on which to hang a long discourse on the United Nations and our need to support that institution.

But, is it true that our churches place too much emphasis on doctrine so that the practical life of the Christian is ignored? Is it true that we neglect to tell people how to live, and only tell people what they ought to know? Is it true that we do not preach God's Word practically, but only theologically? That is the question before us.

Before we go on, I would like to say that there is often a misconception about practical preaching. I think that it may sometimes be said that people do not know what they are talking about when they charge us with ignoring practice and clinging only to doctrine. They have an idea in their mind that practical preaching consists exclusively of a sermon in which either the whole congregation or part of it are severely reprimanded for some wrong that exists in the church to their mind. They have an idea that practical preaching is accomplished when the minister uses the pulpit to "get at" some certain sin which they have noticed in some one else. The result is oftentimes that they wrap their garments about them with an air of piety and think in their own minds concerning who and what the minister has in his mind. They do not apply what they hear to themselves but rather whisper, "I know who is getting it now," and "It is probably about time." Or perhaps they like to have their minister constantly talk about such problems as theatre attendance, card playing, television, cosmetics, and such like. If this is not mentioned, then the sermon is not practical, and therefore not to their liking.

Yet this is hardly the case. And such a thing is certainly not practical preaching. I do not say that there is not a time in the ministry of a man when he cannot mention some of these things and warn against them and their dangers. But if his sermons are to be limited to them, he will soon have reached the end of the line, and he will
have nothing more to tell his people after very few sermons.

But at the heart of the matter lies the fact that to distinguish between practical and doctrinal preaching is a mistake. I do not think that sermons can be divided neatly into two parts and labelled either doctrinal or practical. It is impossible in my conviction to make a separation between the two so that the impression is left that doctrine is one thing, and practice another. One may make sermons which fall into either of two categories: doctrinal subjects or practical subjects, it is thought; and it is the minister's calling to create a balance between the two. He should perhaps see to it that his sermons are divided about fifty-fifty, or maybe even forty-sixty; but these two groups embrace all the sermons a man can make. That, I think, is impossible. Such a division does not exist at all, and it is perhaps a mistake even to draw a line between the two and insist that such a line is in keeping with Scripture.

That is true because of the fact that there is nothing more practical than doctrine; and vice versa, there is nothing more doctrinal than practice. That may sound like a conundrum, but it is nevertheless the case. Let me explain what I mean, and then perhaps give a few illustrations. In the first place, it goes without saying that Scripture is doctrinal. That must necessarily be the case, for Scripture is the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. And if God is revealing Himself through Jesus Christ in the Scriptures, then God is speaking of Himself — of His glorious being, of the infinite perfections of His attributes, of the power and sovereignty of His works. He is speaking especially of His great work of the salvation of His church through the blood of the cross of Christ and the perfected body of Christ which He creates to His own everlasting praise and glory. Now this is all doctrinal, and this is the main theme of Holy Writ. In fact, this is the only theme concerning which Scripture speaks. Every sermon that is preached off from every pulpit should have this same theme for its sermon. That immediately makes every sermon doctrinal. If the theme of Scripture is the sovereign salvation of the elect through Jesus Christ, this must also be the main theme of every sermon which is to be based upon the Bible. Another type of sermon there is not. If a so-called sermon is not a development of this theme, it is not a sermon at all, but a pretension.

In the second place, this is also true of the life of the people of God in this world. Those churches which emphasize "practical preaching" and to talk only of all kinds of problems that arise in this world, usually also insist that salvation is nothing more than moral reform. If a man reforms his outward conduct, and tries to live as good a life as he possibly can, seeking the good of his fellow man, and of humanity as a whole; if he does not run amuck of the law and exercises his duties as a citizen; if he contributes of his time and money to the well-being of culture and civilization, nothing more can be expected of him. Or perhaps it is sometimes stressed that what he needs to do is accept Christ as His personal Savior, make a commitment for Jesus, enter his name on the rolls of a church organization, allow Jesus to enter his heart as he kneels before his television set or radio, and everything will be well and good. He has a reserved seat in a future kingdom of peace. If this all were the truth, then I could well understand how that only subjects that deal with the problems of this world and society would be worthy of titles of sermons.

But this is not true at all. In fact, it is against all this that our churches make their protest. They constantly warn against this in their preaching in the pulpit and on the radio. Scripture teaches us that not mere outward and moral reform is ever sufficient to save anyone at all. Nor is it possible for the sinner to open his heart to

*(Continued on page 18)*
November is the month of the year in which the Day of Thanksgiving is traditionally observed in our country. The President issues an annual proclamation. Churches proclaim special services. Civic and social organizations bestow upon the needy and afflicted in the community bounties of food and clothing in an attempt to leave no one to murmur the just complaint, "We have nothing for which to give thanks!" Then we may add to all this a remark regarding the customary festivals and celebrations in which moderation is cast to the wind and overindulgence is lauded as a virtue. Such is the accepted observance of the Day of Thanksgiving!

A national tradition has degraded into a conglomeration of truth and error, mostly the latter!

To be sure the thought of giving thanks is not only a proper one but it is emphatically enjoined and emphasized in the Word of God. It is not the idea that is in error but rather the practice of it. How little there is of the Scriptural exhortation practiced, "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. 5:18). And much less of this: "O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever" (Psalm 107:1).

Yes, we know, and that is not our concern in this present writing, that the wicked who know not God are incapable of giving thanks even though they do presume to do so and are even explicit in following the tradition. Surely the Psalm quoted continues with this: "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so . . ." Only they can! They who have tasted the Lord's mercy are capable of praising Him for it and that is giving thanks!

Our concern, however, is that they (you and I, reader) so often don't or at least the evidence of gratitude is so little visible while tokens of ingratitude are ever-glaring!

Why is this so?

It was once said, "As physicians judge of the condition of men's hearts by the pulse which beats in their arms, and not by the words which proceed from their mouths; so we may judge the thankfulness of men by their lives rather than their professions."

_How true it is!_

Let me relate a story from _The Book and Its Mission_, which tells of an example of thankfulness. We may not agree with every detail of it but the main idea is simple to grasp. It goes like this:

"The room is clean, even airy; a bright little fire burns in the grate; and in a four-post bed you will see sitting up a woman of sixty-four years of age, with her hands folded and contracted, and her whole body crippled and curled together as the disease cramped it, and rheumatism has fixed it, for eight and twenty years. For sixteen of these years, she has not moved from her bed, or looked out of the window, or even lifted her hand to her own face; and also is in constant pain, while she can not move a limb. But listen! She is so thankful that God has left her that great blessing the use of one thumb. Her left hand is clenched and stiff, and utterly useless, but she has a two-pronged fork fastened to a stick, with which she can take off her great old-fashioned spectacles, and put them on again, with amazing effort. By the same
means, she can feed herself; and she can sip her tea through a tube, helping herself with this one thumb. And there is another thing she can accomplish with her fork; she can turn over the leaves of a large Bible when placed within her reach. A recent visitor addressed her with the remark, that she was all alone.

"Yes," she replied in a peculiarly sweet and cheerful voice, 'I am alone and yet not alone.'

"How is that?"

"I feel that the Lord is constantly with me!"

"How long have you lain here?"

"For sixteen years and four months; and for two years and four months I have not been lifted out of my bed to have it made; yet I have much to praise and bless the Lord for."

"What is the source of your happiness?"

"The thought that my sins are forgiven, and dwelling on the great love of Jesus my Saviour. I am content to lie here so long as it shall please him that I should stay, and to go whenever he shall call me."

Young People, there is a lesson here for us that I want you to seriously consider with me especially in this season of thanksgiving! Let's introduce it with the question: "How much gratitude do we show?"

This old lady with difficult, painful effort turned to her Bible. We, isn't it so, with the vigor, strength, and irrepressible vitality of youth, so often turn away from ours. We have opportunities in our societies and catechetical classes which we shun and skip in preference to pleasures, social engagements, amusements, etc. To study and prepare is overtaxing our strength, not to mention the foolish ways that we waste away our time and efforts.

IS THAT THANKSGIVING?

This old lady utilized every means at her disposal and put them to the best service and advantage. What do we do, young people, with the almost unlimited means we have today? Most of us occupy, upon the completion of our schooling, good positions in which we make more than any young generation of the past. These are means the Lord gives us and with which we are called to serve his Cause. Yet, is it not so that we often prefer to spend our lucrative gain on flashing cars, entertainments, things — things and more things for self, while various needs in the Kingdom program suffer lack? How often do we dig into our own personal resources to aid our schools, our publications, our radio missions, institutions of Christian mercy, etc. It is so much easier to leave the support of those things to our parents!

BUT, IS THIS THE GIVING OF THANKS?

I know that it is not always so. I know of young men who served in the armed forces and were away on foreign soil for long periods of time but they did not forget the church and her needs but sent to her their contributions as though they were at home and oftentimes exceeded the usual budgetary requirements. Such commendable, unsolicited deeds bespeak of a gratitude unto God that does not lie on the lips but is rooted in the heart.

Thanks . . . giving!

Let's not talk about it but let it be seen in our faithfulness, diligence, obedience to the Word as we, with all the strength of youth, manifest a real, concerted striving to seek first — above all and through all and with all — that which is good, the Kingdom of heaven.

That is true thanks . . . giving!

REV. G. VANDEN BERG
BIBLE OUTLINE

THE BOOK OF ACTS
Chapter 12:25 to 14:28

The First Missionary Journey

I. Sent by the Antioch Church, 12:25 - 13:3.

A. The Return of Saul and Barnabas to Antioch:
   1. When did they return from Jerusalem?
      a. To what "ministry" does the text refer?
      b. Does this imply that they were in Jerusalem during the persecution by Herod?
         1) Is this very likely?
         2) Would this harmonize with the date of the famine in Palestine in comparison with the date of Herod's death?
      c. At about what date, then, can we place the first missionary journey?
   2. Who returned with Saul and Barnabas to Antioch?
      a. What relation was Mark to Barnabas? Cf. Col. 4:10.
      b. Of what did Mark become the occasion later on?
      c. Can the divine purpose and plan be seen in these events?

B. The Sending Out of Barnabas and Saul:
   1. The appointment by the Holy Ghost:
      a. Which prominent officebearers are mentioned as of the church at Antioch?
         1) What is the difference between a prophet and a teacher?
         2) Why is special mention made in this connection of the prophets?
         3) Who was Simeon? Why was he given the Latin nickname Niger? Might this indicate that he too was from Cyrene? Was he possibly the man who bore the cross of Jesus? Cf. Mark 15:21, Rom. 16:13. Give reasons pro and con.
         4) What can be said of Lucius of Cyrene?
         5) Who was Manaen? What is another translation for the expression "which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch"? Why is this mentioned here? What truth is evidenced by these two men brought up in the same home?
      b. In what activity were they engaged, according to vs. 2?
         1) What is meant by "ministered unto the Lord"?
         2) What is meant by fasting?
         3) Who were engaged in this activity? the entire church or only the prophets and teachers?
         4) Is there a connection between this ministering and fasting and the revelation by the Holy Ghost?
      c. What did the Holy Ghost command them?
         1) How was this command communicated to the church? Cf. the special mention of the prophets in vs. 1.
2) Why was a special command of this nature necessary for the church?
3) Is this comparable to a "call"?
4) Why were Barnabas and Saul to be appointed?
5) Why did this command come at this exact time?

2. The sending of the two missionaries:
   a. Why did they again fast and pray? What do you suppose was the content of their prayers? Is such prayer necessary? Cf. 14:26.
   b. Why did they lay their hands on them? What did this signify? Did it mean that they ordained them as missionaries?
   c. Why was this ceremony on the part of the church necessary? After the Holy Ghost had spoken, would it not have been sufficient if Saul and Barnabas had immediately made their departure?
   d. Who sent Saul and Barnabas, — the church of Antioch or the Holy Ghost? Cf. vs. 4, a.
   e. Is this point of any importance today?

   A. Cyprus, 4-12.
      1. John Mark, vs. 5.
         a. What position did he fill on this journey?
         b. Was he also appointed by the Antioch Church to accompany Saul and Barnabas?
      2. At Salamis:
         a. Where was Cyprus?
         b. Is there any significance in the fact that the two missionaries visit this island first?
         c. Where was Salamis located in Cyprus?
         d. What did they do at Salamis?
            1) Why did they first of all visit the synagogues?
            2) Was there also a practical reason why this preaching to "the Jew first" was a regular feature of their labors?
         e. Do we read of any positive fruit at Salamis?
      3. At Paphos:
         a. Where was Paphos located? Are we to suppose that Saul and Barnabas labored at only these two cities, or possibly also during their journey from Salamis to Paphos?
         b. Whom did Saul and Barnabas meet here?
            1) What is the meaning of the name Bar-Jesus? Elymas?
            2) What nationality was this Elymas?
            3) How is he described in vs. 6?
               a) What is a sorcerer?
               b) What is a false prophet?
            4) Who was Sergius Paulus? What was his nationality?
               a) How is he described in vs. 7?
               b) What is meant by: "he desired to hear the word of God"?
         c. What did Elymas attempt to do?
            1) Why did he do this?
            2) How does Paul address him? Why such severe language?
            3) What is the meaning of the blindness with which Elymas was stricken?
4) What was the purpose of this blindness? vs. 12.
d. What is said concerning Sergius Paulus in vs. 12?
   1) Was he the only convert in Paphos?
   2) Why is no other fruit mentioned?
e. Explain the significance of this incident at Paphos, especially in connection with the fact that we read nothing about the establishment of any church here, nor, in fact, of any other converts except Sergius Paulus.
   1) Contrast the respective positions of Elymas, a Jew, and Sergius Paulus, a Gentile.
   2) Do these two men possibly symbolize something which was to be true throughout Paul's labors?

4. It is interesting to note here also that Saul is here called Paul for the first time in the narrative, and that this name is used from now on. Any significance in this?

B. Perga, 13.
1. Where was Perga?
2. Who left Paul and Barnabas at Perga?
3. What possible reasons for his leaving can be mentioned?
4. Why did John return to Jerusalem instead of to Antioch?
5. Of what did his desertion later become the occasion?

C. Antioch of Pisidia, 14-52:
   1. Locate this city on the map.
      a. To what Roman province did it probably belong?
      b. In which of Paul's epistles were the saints at Pisidian Antioch probably included?
   2. How did they obtain the opportunity to speak?
      a. Did they intend to worship with the Jews at the synagogue, or was this merely to obtain an audience?
      b. How did they conduct themselves at the synagogue?
      c. How is it to be explained that they were asked to speak?
   3. Paul's sermon:
      (Note: Rather than call attention to all the details of this sermon of Paul, we will try to emphasize in our questions the main lines of it. Each society can inquire into the details as they see fit.)
      a. Who were included in the audience, according to the address? Who are meant by "ye that fear God" in distinction from "men of Israel"? vs. 16.
      b. What is the main thought in the first part of the sermon, vss. 16-22?
         1) What testimony of Scripture does Paul combine in vs. 22?
         2) Why does he continue this historical line only to David?
      c. What is the central thought of the second part of the sermon, vss. 23-37?
         1) How does the apostle present Jesus in vs. 23?
         2) Why is John the Baptist introduced in vss. 24 and 25?
         3) What two elements does the apostle mention in connection with Christ's crucifixion?
            a) Concerning those who crucified Him?
            b) Concerning the divine purpose of the crucifixion?
4) What line of reasoning in regard to David and Christ does the apostle follow when he speaks of the resurrection?

5) What Scriptures does he quote, and how does each apply?

d. How does the apostle apply his gospel in the last part of the sermon? vs. 38-41.

1) What, according to the apostle’s preaching, is the central significance of the resurrection of the Crucified One? vs. 38, 39.
   a) Why is the forgiveness of sins so closely associated with the resurrection?
   b) Who, according to the sermon, are justified?
   c) Why could they not be justified by the law of Moses?

2) Why does the apostle conclude with the negative warning of vs. 40, 41, rather than a positive exhortation to faith?
   a) Would not a positive invitation have been more proper?
   b) From which of the prophets does he quote in vs. 41?

4. The Fruit, 42-52:

   a. What happened immediately after this preaching?
      1) What was evidently the reaction of the Jewish leaders?
      2) What did the Gentiles request?
      3) Was there no fruit at all among the Jews?
      4) How did Paul and Barnabas exhort the Jews and proselytes?

   b. What took place on the following sabbath?
      1) How is it explained that almost the whole city came to hear them?
      2) What moved the Jews to envy?
      3) How did their envy come to expression? What is meant by “blaspheming” in this connection?
      4) Is there a connection between this reaction of the Jews and the last part of Paul’s sermon in vs. 40, 41?
      5) How does Paul characterize this reaction of the Jews according to vs. 46?
      6) At what point do they turn to the Gentiles?
      7) How do Paul and Barnabas justify their turning to the Gentiles, vs. 47?
      8) What was the reaction of the Gentiles at this point?
      9) What fruit was there among the Gentiles? vs. 48.
     10) What was the extent of the preaching in this region? vs. 49.

   c. Persecution:
      1) How did the Jew react further against Paul and Barnabas?
      2) Did Paul and Barnabas act properly in shaking off the dust of their feet against the Jews? vs. 51.
      3) Why did they leave when this persecution arose?
      4) Did the persecution at all succeed to obstruct the cause of Christ?

5. Why does Luke give a detailed report of the apostle’s preaching and dealings with the Jews at Pisidan Antioch?

   (to be continued)
If I could speak with you today and should be able to ask each of you to name the animal that most amused you during your last visit to the zoo, you would undoubtedly answer most unequivocally, the monkey. If I should ask what animal impressed you the most, I would certainly get a variety of answers. Some would say the elephant, another would answer the lion, someone else the buffalo and there would certainly be one who would concur in my opinion that the giraffe is the most impressive animal to be seen.

The giraffe impresses one because of its gracefulness in spite of its tremendous size. As you watch you will see it switch its tufted tail from side to side and languidly search out the freshest, tenderest leaves with its gray, wet and serpent-like tongue.

Where will we find this "living watchtower"? Let's imagine ourselves being transported to the scene of the giraffe's native land. We step upon the carpet of our imagination and are whisked away across the broad Atlantic, across the dark African continent with its steaming jungles to the eastern border of the continent. Here we come into the golden infinity of Kenya's Athi Plains. Here we will be in the land of parasol-topped trees with their sparse thorny foliage, the zebras, the wildebeests, the lions, and — the giraffes. Yes, this is the land of the giraffes and suddenly we see them with their long, sinuous, spotted necks arching above the trees. They seem to have such a laissez-faire attitude and approach toward life as they stand gently chewing their cuds. And those gentle brown eyes — they have that seeming, soul-searching quality.

Yes, Africa is the land of the giraffe. Here stands a creature that symbolizes Africa perhaps more than any other of the Dark Continent's magnificent animals. Nothing like it roams any other part of the world. It is and always has been confined to Africa.

What are the classifications and names of the giraffe?

The giraffe has been called the Nubian giraffe. This comes from the word Nubia. Nubia was once a part of the ancient kingdom of Ethiopia, the land of the giraffe. The family of the giraffe is giraffoidae. There are several easily distinguishable types of giraffes. There is the Masai giraffe, with its brown maple-leaf blotches against a background of beige. Then there is the reticulated or Somali giraffe, with its red coat and network of immaculate white. And the Uganda giraffe has three bony protuberances in addition to the two bonafide horns, which have caused it to become known as the “five-horned” giraffe.

One important characteristic of the giraffe family is that it belongs to a class of animals known as the ruminants. Those of you who live on farms are well acquainted with ruminants. They are animals with split hoofs and chew their cuds. A cow is an example of a ruminant. The food is taken into the mouth where it is mixed with saliva and swallowed without chewing. The food goes through the esophagus to the stomach. The stomach is not like the stomach of most animals, however; but is divided into 4 sections. The undigested food goes to the first stomach which is called the rumen or paunch. Here the food collects and is stored after being swallowed. The food nest goes to the reticulum, the
second cavity which has tiny pockets in the walls. It looks like a honeycomb. Here the food is softened and made into small masses called cuds. When the animal is resting the muscles in the reticulum send food back up the esophagus to the mouth to be chewed and mixed with saliva. It is at this point that we say the animal is chewing its cud. The ruminant chews with a roundish motion as those who live on a farm have observed. The food goes from the mouth to the third cavity called the psalterium. From the psalterium it goes to the abomasum where the food is mixed with gastric juice. Upon leaving the abomasum the food goes to the intestines where digestion is completed and the digested food is absorbed through the intestinal walls into the bloodstream.

What are some of the other characteristics of the giraffe?

The giraffe's most amazing characteristic is that it is the largest of the quadrupeds (animals with 4 legs). It owes its tremendous height to its extremely long neck. This is all the more amazing when we consider that the giraffe has the same number of vertebrae (seven) in its neck as the tiny field mouse. This neck serves the giraffe in good stead. It constitutes the giraffe's watchtower. This long neck, combined with good vision, sense of smell, and hearing, enables it to observe potential danger from a considerable distance. Unfortunately the giraffe's judgment of what constitutes danger is poor.

The giraffe has a short body which slopes sharply to the tail and ends in a tuft of hair. The front legs of the giraffe always appear longer than the hind legs at first glance. They are all the same length. As we have said, the giraffe has cloven hoofs.

Not only is the giraffe possessed with a long neck and long legs but its head is also proportionately long. Its long slender head is topped with two ears of moderate size and usually two bony projections resembling horns which are covered with hairy skin.

The giraffe has a long upper lip and an 18 inch tongue which helps it tear leaves from trees; the leaves of the acacia tree being its chief source of food.

The giraffe, like the camel, has the ability to close its nostrils while it eats and to keep out drifting sand. We have said before that the giraffe has beautiful eyes which are surrounded with long lashes.

The hair of the giraffe is short and smooth. It is characteristically marked by brown spots or patches separated by a network of whitish lines. It is interesting to note at this point that because of its appearance, it was once called the camelopard. This was because of its combined resemblance to the camel and the leopard.

Because of its long front legs the giraffe is compelled to throw both caution and grace to the winds when it drinks. When it does drink it spreads its forelegs, stiffly and straight, at right angles to one another, and shifts its front feet farther and farther apart in shuddering jerks until at last it can reach the water. At other times it places the feet slightly ahead of the body and bends its forelegs forward and down, spider fashion, until the head is low enough to reach the water. In either case, the process is a slow and uncertain one. And once the animal's thirst is slaked, the recovery of its normal position is equally slow and awkward. Because of its awkwardness the giraffe is known to have forgone drinking for several days.

One of the myths most commonly thrown about concerning the giraffe is that it has no larynx or voice box. This is far from the truth because the giraffe does have a larynx, which is poorly developed and seldom used. Giraffes in captivity have been heard to make a soft moo.

Giraffes have one of the most remarkable habits. Some authors say that it is nothing more than an old wive's fable. Others say that they have seen one mature giraffe cow surrounded by as many as nine

(Continued on page 20)
A few lines from the Psalter number which our pupils are learning in school this week go like this:

"Teach me Thy way to know  
I have no God but Thee.  
By Thy good Spirit led  
From trouble and distress  
My erring feet shall tread  
The path of uprightness."

Modern educators often stress the fact that education must prepare for life. Well, the Psalms do too. Our pupils must be taught to know God's way so that, led by the Spirit, their erring feet shall walk the path of uprightness.

To teach our pupils the words of this Psalm is one thing. To teach them to know God's way and to walk in it, is another. Together with the Psalmist we call upon the Lord to do this. We pray that the Lord will use our teachers and our schools to teach His will and His way to the children of His Covenant, that we may help in a small measure to prepare those children to live this life "seeking a heavenly city not made with hands." Learning is placed in its proper perspective when it is viewed as a means toward preparing us to live this life as citizens of the Heavenly Kingdom.

Although it is emphasized in our Protestant Reformed System of education that all the instruction should be permeated with Protestant Reformed principles, we should not minimize the importance of the Bible instruction in our schools. It has been said that the Bible instruction "is only a small part of the school—a part which could be left entirely to the church and home," and that we hardly need schools of our own merely to correct the Arminian-colored Bible instruction of other Christian Schools. (St. Br., Vol. 28, p. 236)

I feel, however, that even if this were our only mark of distinction, that we teach each day's Bible lesson in the light of the doctrinal truths as we are taught them in our churches; that this alone would make our school movement worthwhile. It is a matter of directing "erring feet to tread the path of uprightness."

It is, however, quite impossible that sound Bible instruction could be our only mark of distinction. A proper understanding by the teacher of the Word of God will have its effect upon the entire curriculum. A teacher who interprets each day's Bible lesson in the light of our Protestant Reformed truth, will undoubtedly also allow that light to guide her in all the instruction which she gives regardless of the subject matter.

Often amongst our pupils, we find that Bible is a favorite subject. Interest in the Bible lesson is easily aroused. The Covenant child has an inherent interest in it because he is a living member of the Body of Christ. He sees his own name on the pages of that Book as sinner and as saint. From it he learns to know God and his relation to Him. By God's grace he feels the need for studying the Word of God because it speaks to him of his personal state.

In a similar way children must be made to feel the need for studying all the subject matter presented to them in the course of a school day. As regenerated children they must be made to feel the need of knowing God's way so that their erring feet may tread the path of uprightness.
Our goal in teaching history must be:

"Let children thus learn from history’s light
To hope in our God and walk in His sight."

A history lesson will be vitalized if the child can read his name on the page of his history book as a living member of the church for whose sake the whole world exists from beginning of time to the end of time. The study of the world about him will have meaning and purpose in so far as the child can feel God’s revelation of Himself, His wisdom, His power, His might in all these things. Learning to know God is the great privilege of God’s people.

By faith we will continue to teach ourselves and our pupils to know God as He has revealed Himself to us.

We must continue to teach them the Words of the Psalms. And we must learn to make all our teaching a continual testimony to these words:

"By Thy good Spirit led from trouble and distress
My erring feet shall tread the path of uprightness."

ALICE REITSMA

**ARITHMETIC: HOW PROTESTANT REFORMED**

We as Protestant Reformed people believe in having school societies for distinctively Protestant Reformed education. One of the benefits from this is our confidence that our children will not be taught in History about some mythical prehistoric man or in Geography how someone believes the earth was formed some billions of years ago.

We see from these examples how certain subjects are made truthful or orthodox. But to make these subjects distinctively Protestant Reformed is a more difficult problem. We have yet a long way to go to have the type of education we desire. In a subject such as arithmetic the material cannot be changed too radically. It is true certain story problems might be changed because they tend to be too “money minded.” Though everyone including the world would say that it is not good to be “money minded.” So if this was the only change made in an arithmetic book its general nature would remain unchanged and not be distinctively Protestant Reformed.

If arithmetic is to be made distinctive it could be done by the way the material is presented rather than by the material itself. For the numerical computation will be the same for the world as well as the Christian. On the other hand if the method of presentation is examined we might find our answer.

The usual arithmetic book today is divided up into sections of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, addition of fractions, subtraction of fractions, etc. . . . including decimals and finally ending with percentage. In examining a section for example on division it is usually found that first there are story problems on division then a few pages of arithmetic computation in division with explanation of how to do it and finally more story problems. The first set of story problems gives the students two tasks to do. The student must decide what the problem wants done and finally he must struggle through the computation without having been drilled or instructed in how to do that type of computation.

If the authors are asked the reason this is done their explanation is of this nature. Story problems are given, they claim, because it is necessary to convince the pupils that something like division is necessary for everyday life, that they will have to use division to make a living and therefore it will be for their benefit to learn how to divide. The authors then claim that the problems are given the pupils in order for them to see the necessity for the computation used.

The result of this type of instruction is
In Genesis 19:26 we read, “But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.” This is probably one of the shortest biographies in the Bible. It is nearly all we know of Lot’s wife; yet that single sentence has made her one of the outstanding examples of the Bible.

Thousands of years after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot’s wife was remembered by Jesus. It is the only mention of her in the New Testament. When Jesus was warning His followers of the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, He instructed them to fly to the hills when the time of danger should come, telling them not to pause even to take up the goods from their houses. “Remember Lot’s wife,” He said.

That is all that is told us of Lot’s wife, that she looked back and became a pillar of salt, and that Christ made use of her doom to illustrate his sermons. But from that single sentence quite a bit more can be said. Lot’s wife looked back because the world she had come to love was in Sodom. There was her treasure and there her heart also.

First I would like to review some of the history of Lot and his family before this event, when his wife perished as Sodom was burning. Lot was the nephew of Abraham. His herdsmen had fought with the herdsmen of Abraham over places of pasturage. Instead of continuing the quarrel, Abraham suggested that he and Lot and their followers and flocks should separate, each choosing a section of the country as his dwelling place. With generosity Abraham gave Lot the first choice. Lot saw that the most fertile part of the country was the valley of the Jordan. He must have known that it bordered the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, but he no doubt felt that he could take care of himself and keep his family uncontaminated by the wickedness of those cities. Therefore he chose the land toward the south and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

Mark that! He pitched his tent toward Sodom. He did not take up his abode in Sodom, neither did he settle down close to its walls; but he pitched his tent toward Sodom. That was the section where he chose his territory and that was the general direction in which his encampment looked.

There are a lot of people who are not yet in the Sodom of wickedness and denial of God. But there is a certain set of the sails of their life, a certain tone and color, and inclination—a pitch of their tent, which is in the direction of Sodom.

And so it was with Lot and his wife. No doubt the life in the city appealed to Lot’s wife far more than the roving existence in the black tents, with the smell of sheep and goats and camels always about her. And no doubt she urged her husband to choose this place for their home. It did not matter to them that the cities of the plain were full of iniquity. All that mattered was that life was going to be easy and profitable.

When the cup of Sodom’s iniquity was full to overflowing God sent the angels to tell Abraham of its approaching doom. Abraham pleaded with God to spare the cities and got from God the promise that if Sodom could muster ten righteous men he would not destroy the city. But that many, or that few, righteous men could not be found in the place and God sent the thunderbolts of his wrath and judgment.

The one righteous man, however, that there was in Sodom, and his family, received a warning in time to be saved. When Lot learned the coming doom of the city he at once went to speak to his sons-in-law, and said to them, “Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city.” But his sons-in-law would not take him
seriously and, “He seemed to them as one
that mocked.” So all Lot could persuade to
leave the city with him were his wife and
two daughters.

It is hard to imagine what that day in
Sodom and Gomorrah must have been like.
The peasant was plowing with the oxen in
the fields near the city; the baker was at
work before his oven; the priest was
ministering in the temple before his idols;
the merchant was counting his money and
taking inventory of his goods; the scribe
was writing with his pen; the rich man was
driving by in his chariot; the beggar had
his hand out for an alms; the thief, the
drunkard, and the adulterer were in the
midst of their sins, when death overtook
them. An appalling disaster and judgment.
And yet, was there anything singular about
that? Is not that the way death always
comes? It stops men in their tracks. Just
as we are death takes us. Then there can
be no change, no alteration, and what we
have written we have written. Let us live,
then, in the light of this truth, and be ready
for the touch of that hand which, so far as
this world and its opportunities, its hopes,
its sorrows, its disappointments, its ambi
tions, arrests and stops us forever.

We read the angel took Lot and his wife
by the hand and led them out of the city
and said, “Escape for thy life; look not
behind thee, neither stay thou in all the
plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be
consumed.” But as they journeyed toward
the mountain Lot’s wife, disregarding the
command of the angels, stopped, and turn
ning looked toward the doomed cities. That
moment she became a pillar of salt.

She is spoken of as a “socialite who be
came salt.” She is a type of those who
start on the Christian life, accept in general
the great truths of Christianity, but, because
their hearts have never been changed, go
back and perish.

Lot’s wife had many advantages, yet she
was lost. She had a godly husband. She
had the memories of her association with
Godly Abraham, yet she was lost. She had
the warnings of the angels and the plead
ings of her husband, yet she was lost. She
had too the special intervention of the
angels. They took her and her husband by
the hand. Yet Lot’s wife was lost.

We too have many advantage as Prot
estant Reformed people, for we have the
truth; yet are we any better than Lot’s
wife? How often aren’t we inclined to go
along with the world? Having the truth
and being Protestant Reformed certainly
doesn’t assure us of our salvation. It is
God’s grace alone that keeps us from also
turning back and being lost forever.

Our plea is that the angels will take us
by the hand and lead us out of the plains
of sin and danger to the high tablelands
of peace and safety. Lead us from our follies,
our waywardness, our transgressions, into
the presence of God, our Father.

MRS. SHIRLEY FEENSTR

CHRISTIAN LIVING

(Continued from page 6)

Jesus and to accept Christ as his Savior and
Redeemer. This denies that man is sinful
and wicked in all his way. This denies that
man is incapable of doing any good and in
clined to all evil. Scripture always empha
sizes that God must make a radical change
in the heart of His people by the Spirit of
Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches that salva
tion is only possible when God creates a
new creature by His grace and power and
destroys the power of sin and death. It is
not an outward and superficial change that
is needed; it is an inward and radical change
of the heart. The Bible never speaks of an
acceptance of Jesus as a condition of salva
tion, but rather that Christ must Himself
take up His abode within the hearts of His
people even against their will first of all.

But this must be continued later, if the
Lord wills.

H. HANKO
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

Will you please give me a little space in regard to an article written in the July-August edition under the title, "Godliness or Narrowmindedness" by James Veldman.

Now if the meaning of narrowmindedness is understood to be "Intolerance or prejudice," it is never justified but it is sometimes confused with strictness or steadfastness then it is allowed, yea even demanded of us.

Truth can never be mixed with untruth, therefore we Protestant Reformed only have the truth. Consult Rev. Vandenberg's articles in the April and May editions.

True believers in Christ and His Word are those that believe the Bible and all its teachings and not only believe certain parts and deny other parts thereof.

The discourse Paul makes in Romans 14 and I Cor. 10 is about Jewish customs and does not refer to our New Testament sabbath. For concerning the New Testament sabbath all churches originally were very strict or conservative. Ask old people and they will confirm this.

All other denominations differ with us, not because they have changed their confessions but are become worldly minded.

Attending a major league baseball game to the glory of God I would like to have made clear to me. I have asked this question many a time and as answers I have received the following: 1. What's wrong with it? 2. I can't see any wrong in it. 3. It does me a lot of good. 4. If I go to a baseball game I don't go to a place of ill reputation or a saloon and get drunk.

At first I was a little shocked to hear such an answer as under number four and that from a youth of one of our churches, but after meditating on this answer it revealed a lot to me. It means, I don't care about any society life in our churches. I don't like to study the Bible or confessions. I have a lot of spending money and an enormous lot of idle time so the best place to spend it according to my opinion, is at bowling alleys, baseball games, basketball, etc. Proof for this is the small attendance at our societies and the poor preparation of those that still attend. See also Rev. Vandenberg's radio address of Sept. 8.

If I understand Mr. Veldman correctly, he means to say we were narrow minded in our recent controversy, but this is far from the truth and weighed all arguments for and against till it became very obvious and even today more so, that they were heretics and schismatics and we must thank God that He saved the truth for us in giving us leaders that are strict and steadfast, yea unmovable in the truth.

In the last portion of Mr. Veldman's contribution I read that a Catholic is just as convinced of the truth as we are. I have never met such a one. They are always more or less in fear and doubt and no wonder for believing is a gift of God worked in our hearts through the Holy Spirit and the Spirit does not assure us when we err.

In closing Mr. Veldman mentions our glorious truth. Question: "Why is our truth glorious if others have just as much right to their opinions as we have to ours?" To me this seems to be somewhat of an apology for criticizing our steadfastness and others' worldlimindedness.

May God give us grace not only to believe in theory but also to live the truth and say with the Psalmist, "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand," singing with unfeigned lips, "Oh, how love I thy law, it is my meditation all the day," walking the narrow path that leadeth unto glory.

Thank you.

N. DYKSTRA
giraffe calves. This habit is known as the communal nursery. This seems to be the only solution to this problem because a giraffe has never been known to have "novemtuplets" and the gestation period of a giraffe is approximately 15 months.

One final characteristic. The giraffe has no means of defense unless, as one zoo worker put it, "you would say it is the only animal that can kick in all four directions at the same time." This is a slight exaggeration but it illustrates the truth that the giraffe is possessed with tremendous agility in spite of its size.

And now, after our arm chair adventure, we leave the Dark Continent, the home of the giraffe. – A. Lubbers

that present day pupils are not as accurate, far advanced, or as interested in arithmetic as pupils before the present method.

It is understandable that if a pupil doubts the wisdom of his parents sending him to school or that what he is being taught is important and time is spent trying to prove this to him necessarily subject matter will suffer.

Therefore we as Protestant Reformed people must assume our children to be elect and regenerate. It follows that what the parent considers important the child must learn. He may not doubt in his role as the covenant child. Here, I believe, lies our distinctive Protestant Reformism.

H. Woudenberg

--- NOTICE ---

To all secretaries of member societies of the Federation:

Please send the name and address of the treasurer of your society along with your own name and address to the secretary of the Federation Board: Miss Ruth Dykstra, 439 Barth St., S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Please do not delay.

The Board needs this information now.
It's a date to remember!

P. R. Y. P.
SINGSPIRATION

* Sunday, Nov. 10
* Fourth P. R. Church
* 9 p.m.
* Ed Ophoff, Song leader
* Special Numbers.