BEACON LIGHTS

for

PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

June 1960

Purchasing a Degree

REV. J. A. HEYS

Whosoever Will

REV. R. VELDMAN

Music Young People Should Listen To

RICHARD BLOEM

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PURCHASING a DEGREE

REV. J. A. HEYS

The time of graduation is here.

There may be a few of our readers who graduate this month from the eighth or ninth grade. More numerous, however, will be the number that graduate from the twelfth grade. This is simply due to the fact that the age-group to which *Beacon Lights* is directed is the high school level and higher. Although, of course, we welcome the younger readers and even recommend to our parents that they train their children early in reading the pages of *Beacon Lights*.

But graduation-days are here regardless of who the readers of *Beacon Lights* may be. And therefore we have been requested to write a few lines in connection with graduation.

We have one thing which we wish to say in that connection, and that is this: Congratulations, graduates! Congratulations whether it be from the eighth, ninth, twelfth grade or even college, university or seminary that you graduate.

Another thing which we wish to say about graduation is expressed in our theme. That theme is not as far removed from graduation as it might at first seem. When you consider that gradual means by small steps or degrees, you begin to see that to speak of a degree at graduation time is not so far fetched. And a graduated scale is one that ascends in marked degrees or steps. So also a graduate is one who has reached a certain degree of scholastic attainment. We sometime speak of a child passing or of being promoted to the next grade. Well, actually he has graduated. He has gone up a degree, a step in his formal education. And when one has continued to go forward degree by degree, class by class, course by course, in due time he also is given a degree of Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Law or any of the other degrees conferred by institutions of higher learning. But the kindergarten child who has done his work well also gets the degree of First Grader, the First Grader in process of time receives the degree of Second Grader. And thus it continues as long as he continues his formal education.

But for that very reason our title above may seem out of place. In these days of payola and of underworld rackets, of rigged quiz programs and the like, we are inclined to be suspicious of a title that speaks of *purchasing* a degree. No, rest assured, we are not advocating "polishing the teacher," bribing the school board, buying one's way into a profession. Such advice would not be a beacon light for covenant young people. It would be sin to recommend this even to the world. Our title, however, is borrowed from Scripture, even though it is not used in the same way and concerning the same thing. Paul writes of it to Timothy when he is speaking of the office of the deacon in I Timothy 3:13. He says, "For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." He speaks even of a good degree.

Paul does not teach us here that we can purchase anything from God. Salvation by grace is the theme of all his teachings. And he emphasizes in his epistles that it is not of our works, not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth but of God Who showeth mercy. In that light, what he means is that a man obtains a good degree. And the youth who graduates also obtains a degree.

Whether the graduate obtains a good degree or not depends upon the instruction that he has received and has accepted. Not all are privileged to attend a Christian high school, college or university. And even those who are so privileged do not always

appreciate this fact. Intellectual progress seems profitable. To get a degree in respect to knowledge of earthly things is considered worth the effort. The knowledge of the truth, to know God and Jesus Christ Whom He has sent, is not placed on the same level with the knowledge of this world and life in this world from a natural viewpoint. Yet the Word of God declares that the Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. One does not obtain a good degree without that wisdom. It may seem to be a good degree to mankind in general. It is sought after and deemed essential for many types of work and positions. But without the fear of the Lord this is a foolish degree and not a good one. It is not a degree that God calls good. It is not attaining something that He judges to be worthwhile. To know all the things of creation and not to know the Creator in love is nothing short of folly. And the more one learns of this world without the fear of the Lord in his heart the more he graduates into folly upon folly. Degree by degree he obtains knowledge. But degree by degree he also progresses in folly.

Well, maybe some of our readers have been taught the folly of the world. Some may have put the spiritual in the background and concentrated upon the natural. And let us understand that to obtain a degree and to graduate in our catechetical instruction is more important than our obtaining of a diploma in regard to natural things. We can place so much emphasis upon school and upon graduating from school. But how much do we place upon the catechetical instruction in the truth of God's Word? Let us be concerned, also in the days of our youth, with graduating and obtaining a degree in these things of spiritual instruction. It is too bad that it is our custom to place children in a catechism class according to their ages. They graduate and go a degree higher according to their birthdays and not according to how well they have assimilated the truth. And now especially we have in mind our young people, our *Beacon Lights* readers. Be concerned with a good degree in this catechetical instruction. Apply yourselves faithfully and as before God's face to the memorization of the truth placed before you and listen carefully to the lesson explanation. Be as much, yea more concerned with making progress in these things as you are in making the grade in regard to the earthly things. For without this fear of the Lo[rd] there is not even the beginning, the principle of wisdom. And that fear of the Lord He works in us through His truth.

Having that fear of the Lord your graduation from grade school, high school or college will mean that you are purchasing or obtaining a good degree, one pleasing in God's sight and one for your own spiritual good. Otherwise your graduation is not an occasion for rejoicing.

If you have neglected these things, let these lines be an admonition to turn from this way. By God's grace resolve to apply yourself so that you obtain a good degree in catechetical instruction. Frequent the house of God faithfully on the Sabbath and listen attentively to the proclamation of His Word. Be an active and faithful member of your Young People's Society, being prepared for the Bible discussion. And apply all this spiritual knowledge to the natural things of which you have learned in school. Then you have purchased to yourself a good degree. You have attained to something worthwhile. And do not st[op] there. Always we must be graduating. Always we must be going forward in our knowledge of the truth until God calls us home and we obtain the good degree of glory that He has prepared for us in His Son. May you graduate to that glory.

All those of you who would like to have an opportunity to be a patron for the 20th Annual P. R. Y. P.'s Convention should either contact the representative in your church or send your contribution directly to—

LAM LUBBERS
1125 Franklin St., S. E.
Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

editorial

A CRITICAL LOOK AT YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY

Apparently, the Young People's Society is vigorously alive. It has formed an association known as the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies; the affairs of this Federation are constantly being conducted by a regularly elected Executive Board. Each society has an integral part in the publication of the monthly magazine, *Beacon Lights*. Each society participates in an annual convention. Varying societies across the United States take turns at hosting this convention, to which each society sends delegates and to which all society members are invited. The individual Young People's Society is the source of all youth activity within the Protestant Reformed Churches. And here, as elsewhere, it is true that the source is determinative of all which proceeds from it. Inevitably, the various activities will be as healthy, as vibrant, as alive as is the source. At present, this source, the individual society, is showing signs of an increasing sickness, an increasing apathy, an increasing deadening.

There may be exceptions. There may be societies which are not very dangerously diseased. They are urged to examine the symptoms of their ailing comrades so as to better revive them and to avoid a similar condition. Even then, the germ may be present. For the sorry state of young people's society is due to the attitude of the individual young person. Just as the whole structure of Federation, *Beacon Lights*, and conventions depends upon the individual society, so the society depends upon the individual member: YOU.

Society is lowly esteemed. It has come to be regarded as a sort of grown-up Sunday School, and a Sunday School for "grown-up youths" is not highly regarded. One goes because his parents force him, one becomes a part, an active part, inasmuch as the leader begs him, and one remains as short a time as a rather inactive conscience will allow. Frank admission of dislike is becoming more common, although active hostility is not the characteristic trait of those who lowly esteem society. The sure sign which heralds the crisis of young people's society is lack of involvement on the part of the members. It is not that society members are actively opposed to society, it is that society members are not active at all. The lifeless attitude and action of the society member in regard to Bible discussion, after-recess programs, to society in general cannot but be reflected by feebler efforts on the part of the Federation Board, *Beacon Lights* staff, and convention committees.

Our present situation should be seen as part of a much broader problem. The low ebb of interest on the part of the young people toward anything spiritual is a Protestant Reformed reflection of a 20th century movement. Professor Homer Hoeksema commented on this pathetic movement in his Mass Meeting address and called it the "entertainment craze." The entertainment craze has roared head-on into society life, shattering it to a million bits. Has it shattered ours? It has already demolished many societies in other churches, some not too far removed from us. They still have a society, that is, the young people still meet. But this society life has become a social whirl of roller skating parties, films, and athletic events with just a touch of "painless" Bible-teaching thrown in. Such a solution is akin to pumping leukemic blood into a person in order to cure him of leukemia. It is absurd — and futile.

The cure which is to revitalize our societies must be one which is in harmony with the purpose of society. Young people's societies exist for the sake of young people who have become mature enough to realize that the whole of their life will be centered around the Bible. Besides, these Bible-centered young people in the course of their education have come to see that the teach-

ings of their life's standard must be discovered. A child is not born with a knowledge of the Bible; he must investigate. That opportunity is provided in society.

Any suggested cure must maintain that it is, first of all, a duty of the young person to attend society, and, after becoming a member, a duty to become part. There is no claim on your life which exceeds the demand that you be about your Father's business. Yet, it is probable that members have legitimate complaints to raise against the external form of society. Society should not be a stiff, stilted, forced thing. Rather, it should be informal to a degree that church service or catechism can never approximate. The physical aspects should reveal this informality. The meeting place should be free from tables and rows of seats. *Mutual* investigation of the truth is enhanced when participants face each other. At times, the leader should permit discussion between members directly. Smoking may very well be allowed. This, of course, although more important than usually thought, is a rather superficial improvement. In a reconstructed society, the brutally mistreated after-recess program becomes a brilliant opportunity for a young person to express to a sympathetic audience some pet peeve, some doctrinal or practical opinion at which his elders might laugh, some problem which puzzled him at school, or some research on ancient Church History. For a moment, a young person can be creative, active, convincing.

Nor should the secondary benefits of society be disregarded. For once a boy may ask (O rare occurrence) to take a girl out as a result of a society discussion instead of as a result of her cute face and figure.

Young People's Society is in the realm of that which really counts. Its purpose is lofty. Perhaps, it does not achieve its purpose as well as possible because of stiffness and restraint. If so, change the society, but – do not change the purpose. The entertainment craze will not slow down, once it has demolished your society. The Church itself is next. d.e.

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

WHOSOEVER WILL

REV. R. VELDMAN

"And whosoever will, let him take the waters of life freely." REV. 22:17b

Let him take, drink, receive, believe, appropriate, and live forever!

The waters of life! Christ Himself, crucified and risen from the dead! The Spirit of Christ, through Whom all the blessings of redemption are bestowed! Those blessings themselves of knowledge and wisdom, life and glory, righteousness and holiness, as administered in and through the living Word of God!

Freely! Without charge! Without money, good works, virtues of your own! Salvation is free, or there can be no salvation at all.

Whosoever will!

The Arminian says: that's a general invitation, meant for all men.

You know their line of reasoning. God alone must give the power to will. All of salvation, redemption in Christ, faith – all is of grace alone. The Arminian, too, knows that it is written: "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Listen to his own confession: "Man has not saving grace of himself, nor of the energy of his free will, inasmuch as he, in the state of apostacy and sin, can of and by himself neither *think*, will, nor do anything that is truly good (such as having faith eminently is); but that it is needful that he be born again in Christ through His Holy Spirit, and renewed in understanding, inclination, or will, and all

his powers, in order that he may rightly understand, think, will, and effect what is truly good, according to the word of Christ, John 15:5: "Without me ye can do nothing." Again: "This grace of God is the beginning, continuance, and accomplishment of all good . . . . so that all good deeds or movements that can be conceived must be ascribed to that grace of God in Christ." Quite sound, don't you think? The Arminian of 1610 would be deeply ashamed of his present-day brother. All is of God alone!

However, God gives that grace, that power to believe, etc. to all men; at least, to many who are never saved. You see, it's up to you to use it. We have the power to will; but we can also not will. The grace of God is abundant, universal. There is great plenty for all. The divine welcome mat is out. The great decision, however, is yours.

Just what men mean is clearly indicated by these words of MacClaren on this very passage: "Whosoever will, that is all. If you choose you may. No other conditions are laid down. If there had been any which were beyond the power of every soul of man on earth, then Christianity would have dwindled to a narrow, provincial, sectional thing. But, since it only demands the need, which is universal; the sense of need, which every man may feel; and willingness, which every man ought to, and can, exercise, it is the Gospel for the world, and it is the Gospel for me, and it is the Gospel for each of you. See that ye refuse not the offered salvation." However, the latter is entirely possible. It can be resisted, rejected. Notice: "You know the old proverb: One man can take a horse to water, ten cannot make him drink. We can bring you to the water, or the water to you, but neither Christ nor His servants can put the refreshing, life-giving liquid into your mouth if you lock your lips so tight that a bristle could not go in between them. You can thwart Christ, and when He says, "Take, drink!" you can shake you head and mumble, "I will not!"

Isn't it terrible?

Then there is no sovereign God and no sovereign redemption; no unconditional predestination and no limited atonement; no *total depravity and no* irresistible grace.

All depends on the human will. If man accepts, it's simply his choice. If he doesn't, it is not due to any incapacity of the will or darkness of the mind, but simply to the abuse of his free will. He can will as he pleases, and please as he wills. He can will to accept, and will to reject. God stands with abundant grace in His hands, but millions simply refuse to be "graced."

What comfort is there in that? Then, if you do will, you're only doing something any natural man can do; something millions who are in hell today have done at one time or another. Then, too, your willing today is no guarantee that you will still be willing tomorrow. The great decision is yours, not only at the beginning, but throughout life. You must continue to accept Christ to the end of your life — or still perish in your sins. Destroy sovereign grace and you destroy the perseverance of the saints. That's the curse of Arminianism.

Whosoever will! The call is most particular, most exclusive.

To will means: to desire, to need, to thirst; to feel deeply that we cannot do without those waters, that Christ, that Spirit, that salvation. It implies three things: the profound awareness of our sin and lostness; sorrow for that sin and an earnest longing for forgiveness and deliverance; recognition of Christ as the only Fount of living water, the fulness of all righteousness and life.

Who is able so to will?

No man, by nature! Let there be no mistake about that. We are dead in sin, children of the devil. There is nothing we care about less than God and His covenant. All that is spiritual and truly good is repulsive to us. By nature man does not and can not will! Hence, no man is here invited to the banquet of our Lord. Our text is not all-inclusive; it could not be more exclusive. "Whosoever will" means with equal force: if you don't will, you keep hands off! This is not an invitation to all, or even to a few. It bars, hopelessly and irrevocably, all natural men.

Only the born-again can will. God must renew the heart, raise from spiritual death, call by almighty grace! Then we see our sins and lostness, feel sorry for sin and yearn for deliverance, turn to Christ as the Fount of all life. "To hunger and thirst after deliverance from misery, and after life . . . .

is peculiar to the regenerate and those that are called blessed." Canons, Head III, IV. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. "It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Philippians 2:13. That's truly comforting, for then our willing is proof positive of regeneration and eternal life. Human conditionality destroys all hope! Only sovereign grace guarantees salvation to lost sinners!

And only the chosen are born again. That stands to reason. Sovereign grace must rest on equally sovereign pre-determination. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Again: "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God Who sheweth mercy."

WHOSOEVER will! Yes. Man or woman, old or young, rich or poor, bond or free — it makes no difference.

Whosoever WILL! Of course! We must will, desire, need; take, drink, believe! God saves us as living, moral, spiritual, responsible beings.

Yet, it is not OF him that willeth! It is the gift of God!

TRUTH VS. ERROR

A Letter to a Retired Chaplain

about: EVIL AND WAR

REV. R. C. HARBACH

Dear F. L. R.:

Although Satan was instrumental in bringing so many afflictions, including the greatest of all evils, death, upon Job, yet he recognized it all as the work of the *Lord*. He said, "shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?" (2:10). But it is more than hasty to conclude that our (Reformed) interpretation either excuses Satan, by virtue of his having some association (relation) to God, or that it makes God the responsible doer of the evil. The Reformed doctrine does neither. Take the crucifixion, for example. As it proceeded from Christ's murderers (they did it), it was the most heinous crime ever committed. But considered as ordained and ordered by God, and performed by Him ("It pleased the *Lord* to bruise Him"), it was the most gracious and glorious of all events. Evil men by wicked hands slew Him. But also God put Him to grief. The difference between these doings, man's and God's, lies in the purpose and intent of the act, and in the manner in which it was done. Man's purpose and end was evil. God's was His own glory. They did what they did in the way of murder and hate. God did it in the way of a propitiatory sacrifice. Yet God did sovereignly determine beforehand that their wicked deed be perpetrated (Ac. 2:23), but that it be done, not according to their design, but according to *His* eternal counsel (4:27f). Why, for another example, did not Sihon let the children of Israel pass? Because the "Lord thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate." And what was *God's* purpose in this? "That He might deliver him into thy hand" (Dt. 2:30). Why do men thus go out of the way into evil? Is it not that God sends them strong delusion that they should believe the lie? Is this not Scripture: "O Lord, why hast Thou made us to err from Thy ways, and hardened our heart from Thy fear?" (Is. 63:17)? Is it not because "He turned their heart to hate His people" (Ps. 105:25)?

Pursue this thought further with me. Why were the nations around Israel hardened? Because they hardened their own hearts? No! but because "it was of the Lord to harden their hearts." Why? "*That* (in order that) they should come against Israel in battle, *that* (so that) He might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favor, but that He might destroy them . . ."

(Josh. 11:20). This proves that God is the ordainer of "whatsoever comes to pass." All happens, whether good or ill, according to His determinate counsel and foreknowledge. "Out of the mouth of the Most High proceedeth not evil and good?" (Lam. 3:38). This is a question requiring an affirmative answer. But that does not mean that God is both the Truth, and the Liar! It means that from His mouth issues the sovereign decree of both evil and good; and that the evil He has decreed is made subservient to His justice; He makes it serve His glory; makes it work together for the good of His people; and is therefore subordinate to His holiness and election. So with, "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (Amos 3:6). True, "an enemy hath done this" evil. But also God did it. But God has a different end in view, and does it in a different manner from that of His sinful secondary agents.

I notice that you, in this connection, have recourse to the term "permissive" relative to the will of God. I, too, at one time, made use of the term as you do. But I have come to believe that both this word and usage are extra-biblical, and detract from the intent of Scripture. Therefore, it should not be used, as for example it is often used with respect to Pharaoh's heart-hardening. It is not Pharaoh's hardening his own heart which is first, but rather God's will that he be hardened (Ex. 3:19). "But *I will* harden his heart *that* (with the result that) he shall not let the people go" (4:21). His heart was not hardened by a bare permission of God, but by God who *willed* to harden him. There is as much initiative in this "I will" as in the "I will establish My covenant with you" of Gen. 9:11. The problem of Pharaoh's hardening is not "solved" by "permission." We must not say that God *permitted* Pharaoh to harden himself, when the Scripture neither says nor implies this. For when we read that "Pharaoh . . . hardened his heart," it neither says nor means that he permitted himself to be hardened. "Hardening" does not denote "permission." No less than 10 times does the Exodus acount speak of God's hardening Pharaoh's heart; but only three times does it mention Pharaoh's hardening *his own heart*. Five times we read of Pharaoh's heart being (passively) hardened, which implies this was not by his own act, but by God's sovereign operation (7:14, 22; 8:19; 9:7; 9:35). Thus the sovereign will and work of God is in view, nothing of "permission." The term "permission" implies that there is some dualistic power over against God. Satan's dark power and all evil are in God's hand and control. There is no power but of God. What was said of a wicked king, may also be said of the Devil. "Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it be given thee from above!" (John 19:11). So you see, what I meant by God's relation to evil is nothing more than that expressed in Scripture.

The same applies to the Divine deception of Ahab. This did not occur merely because God permitted it to happen. Things do not happen by chance – not with the sovereign Triune Jehovah on the throne! "Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee" (I K. 22:23). It is plain from this that God arranged this trial, although Satan and his emissaries were God's agents. So when David had to suffer the cursing of Shimei, he took it as coming from the Lord, "the Lord hath said unto him (Shimei), 'Curse David!' " (II S. 16:10). God ordained the evil act, and brought it to pass, according to His own purpose. So, whether false prophets, devils, bad kings or wicked men, they all do whatsoever His hand and His counsel foreordained should come to pass (Ac. 4:27f, ASV). "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water, He turneth it whithersoever He will" (Pro. 21:1). And also, "if a prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet, that I might destroy him out of the midst of Israel" (Ezek. 14:9). You must be ready by now to agree that evil as well as good is embraced in the plan of God. Joseph said of the sin of his brethren done against him, "But as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive" (Gen. 50:20). But this should be sufficient to show we do not make God responsible for sin!

Will you then contend that wars of aggression are not of God? i.e., not of His sovereign will and counsel? Will you claim

that wars are not just as much ordained as Judas' betrayal? Or the murder of the Prince of Life? Perhaps your problem is, If such a war is ordained of God, then how may the aggressors be held responsible? However, it is, and they are! "The Lord hath opened His armory, and hath brought forth the weapons of His indignation, for this is the work of the Lord" (Jer. 50:25). "The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes; for His device is against Babylon (the aggressor), to destroy it; because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance *of His temple!*" (51:11). Wars are then one of God's ways of destroying the wicked, of taking vengeance for His elect (Lk. 18:7f) and of building His Church. "Thou art My battle axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces man and woman; and with thee will I break in pieces old and young; and with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid" (51:20-2). All this is according to the doing, devising and purposing of the Lord: "the Lord hath both devised and done" it; "for every purpose of the Lord shall be performed" (51:12, 29). Why is it that the great rulers of the earth make foolish moves, fatal to themselves and their country? "Through the anger of the Lord it came to pass . . . that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon" (52:3). God orders the tumults of the peoples and the rebellions of the masses. But it is often the case, as here, that God raises up an aggressor to punish another aggressor. The Assyrian was an aggressor against Israel, used of God to chastize Israel. Then God punished him for so chastizing Israel (Is. 10:5-17). This is the biblical view of God, of the living God who is really *God!* The God who does whatsoever He pleases! God need not give any account of His matters to puny man. Nor need man attempt to justify God. Only little men, who themselves need excuses, attempt to excuse God. Great men bow before Him who "is in one mind (and who can turn Him?) and what His soul *desireth,* even that He *doeth*" (Job 23:13)! God is as Scripture and Calvinism represent Him!

INSPIRATION AND INFALLIBILITY

REV. B. WOUDENBERG

The word "inspiration" is found only once in the New Testament Scriptures. It is the well known passage, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." II Tim. 3:16. The word here is very fitting and meaningful. Literally translated it means "God-breathed." When so translated within the text, it adds another facet of beauty, "All scripture is breathed by God." It makes us think of the way in which we express ourselves. We speak and the breath of our mouth carries forth the words that go out from our lips. So is it also with God when he speaks to you and to me; He breathes forth His Word and by His breath His thoughts are carried into our hearts.

By what we have said, however, we do not mean to imply that "inspiration" in II Tim. 3:16 is a poor translation. Rather, it is most fitting. In the original language of the Bible the word for "breath" and the word for "spirit" are the same. The breath of God is the Holy Spirit. It is through the Holy Spirit that God breathes forth His Word. In the creation of the world, it was the Spirit of God Who brooded upon the waters, called forth the creatures, and wrote the glory of God across the heavens. In salvation, it is the Spirit of God that regenerates the heart and writes the law of God

within it. And so when the Scriptures were written, God breathed and through the Holy Spirit His Word was written with pen and ink for the saints of all ages to read.

In trying to understand this, however, we should not picture the Spirit taking up a pen and starting to write; it is the Spirit that has revealed the Word of God, but always He did so through the agency of men. That is *inspiration*. In this the Spirit's work has been very complete and thorough. We can distinguish four different steps that were followed. 1) In the first step, the various authors were prepared individually for the particular aspect of revelation which they were ordained to record. So in Scripture we read that Moses was brought in a very miraculous way into the court of Pharaoh. There he was educated as a prince to be a ruler and a judge of people. Why? So that he would be enabled to receive the laws of God and to record them clearly and accurately. We find that David was sent in his youth to care for the sheep in the field. There he tasted of the beauties of nature and was prepared as a poet to write the songs of the Church. Saul of Tarsus was educated in the logic of the Greeks and the laws of the Hebrews – so that he could set forth the doctrines of Christianity. Each author was prepared as to his very nature to perform his own peculiar work. 2) Then after each man was prepared, God took His Word and Truth and implanted it within his heart. These were not to be mere stenographers taking dictation from God. God gave them hearts that could appreciate the Truth, know it and understand it as they wrote. With all of the love of their hearts they wrote. 3) Once they had received the truth God gave to them the desire to write. As Peter said, "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." II Pet. 1:21. Moses heard the law of God and in love was constrained to record it. David saw the glory of God and overflowed with the desire to have it sung in the Church. John, thrilled by the visions of Patmos, was compelled by the Spirit to write to the seven churches. 4) Finally, that the work might be perfect throughout, God guided the hands of those men as they wrote. He enabled them to observe and remember all that they had seen and heard. He enabled them to write the Word in terms that were clear and exact. Thus we have the Scriptures, breathed by God through the agency of man.

But, can we be sure? Can we be sure that the Scriptures are true and accurate? Is there any proof?

The Scriptures themselves give us abundant proof. They say repeatedly of their own record, "Thus saith the Lord." One portion of Scripture quotes from another and ascribes to it absolute authority. Jesus Christ, the very Son of God, assured his disciples that the Scriptures cannot be broken. Martin Luther, noting all this, concluded, "It is established by God's Word that God does not lie nor does His Word lie."

For many, such proof is not sufficient. They want proof apart from the Scriptures themselves, proof that is scientifically valid. But this is quite impossible. We cannot prove apart from Scripture that Moses actually talked with God and did not write from his own imagination. We cannot go to Palestine and show that Jesus actually lived and walked upon the earth and spoke only that Word which He received from the Father. We cannot give visible demonstration that the Bible is the Word of God and not the word of man, that it came through the Holy Spirit and not from the mind of man. But neither is this necessary, not for the child of God. Certain earthly facts may require visible demonstration to be believed, but not the inspiration of Scripture. This we receive by faith. When God swore an oath to Abraham, He swore by His own Name because there was none greater. In a similar way the Scriptures testify of themselves and we believe, "All Scripture is breathed by God."

For us this immediately implies that the Scriptures are infallible – that is, they are completely without defect in all things of which they speak, whether of doctrine, life, history, or nature. This follows directly from inspiration, for the Scriptures are breathed of God. God does not lie, and His works are not subject to error.

However, for you who are being raised and educated in this modern age, this presents its difficulties. In school you are taught "the scientific method," and it does

seem to work. It has built cars and airplanes; it has placed satellites in orbit and sent rockets around the moon. Almost unconsciously, one begins to assume that science and its methods are a pretty reliable thing. But then suddenly there are brought to you certain "scientific proofs" with which you do not know what to do. You are told of a certain Dr. Libby, who with Carbon-14 has shown that certain pieces of organic material are one thousand, five thousand, twenty thousand, and even fifty thousand, years old. It is explained to you that the stratas of rock in the Grand Canyon must have taken millions of years to be formed. You are shown the stars which are billions of light years away. And when you turn again to your Bible you read that the heaven and the earth were created at a time which cannot have been much more than six thousand years ago.

For the serious Christian student this all presents a problem. You are taught these things in your science courses, and you want to learn your lessons well. But you also are a Christian, and you believe the Word of God. On which are you going to stand? Are you going to insist that Dr. Libby and his associates be scientifically refuted before you will question what they say? It is not likely to be done very soon. But what then? Are you going to push and pull and twist the Scriptures to make them fit into the new scheme of things? This is only too often done; but you may not play with the Word of God. But the question remains very real for you, what are you going to believe?

There is one simple answer that will have to suffice. The conclusions of science, no matter how brilliant, are at best the wisdom of man. The Scriptures are breathed of God. As Luther aptly put it, "When Moses writes that God made heaven and earth and all that is in them in six days, let the six days stand . . . If you cannot understand how it could have been six days then accord to the Holy Spirit the honor that He is more learned than you." Believe the Word of God. It is the way of faith.

PENCILS AND CHALK

Positive DIRECTION

JESSIE DYKSTRA

Punish your children when they continue in wrong doing. Punish them even though it hurts you more than it does them. Do not try to hide the pain in your heart when you do it. Punish them thoroughly, finish it, do not stop short no matter how you dislike doing it. And now you are still not finished. You have gained nothing yet. Now comes the positive part. Discuss the wrong, why it is wrong, and what would have been the right behavior in the situation. How much happier everyone involved would have been if the right thing had been done. Don't preach; discuss simply, and on the child's level. This level is not too far below yours. You are wicked too. You know how hard it is. Your place is to direct.

This is still primarily negative. It is therefore not complete. If a person asks you the direction to a certain place, you do not tell him all the roads not to take. This would only serve to frustrate him. Likewise when God commands you to direct your child in the way he should go, do not continually point out to him his wrongs. This can easily frustrate the child. He needs positive direction.

The most effective way to give him this is to watch for any accidental step in the right direction and call attention to it as something desirable. Emphasize every little effort to help or cooperate. This is very effective in the classroom and I'm sure that it is the same elsewhere. If there is confusion, no one seems to know exactly what

to do and so every one is doing something different. Call attention to the one closest to doing what is right. You have pointed the direction to all the rest. Most of them are quick to follow.

It seems to be our natural tendency to point out what is wrong and to criticize negatively. We are basically selfish and therefore we look for the bad in others instead of the good. If we are to give proper direction to children we have to turn our sights so that we are looking for the right behavior instead of the wrong. Of couse, if at any time we fail to call attention to a step in the right direction and do not commend it, we are failing to give direction to our children. We can easily make them utterly lost and confused by constantly pointing out to them the wrong way, by constantly criticizing their actions.

God gives children to his covenant people in love. He commands us to bring up these children in the love of God. We and our children are both very sinful. But somehow we must hold out a hand of love to those children of God and lead them to Him; they are His. We cannot do it. God hallows our feeble efforts. His hand of love will lead us all home together.

MASS MEETING REPORT

MARY PASTOOR

On Tuesday evening, April 26, a group of Protestant Reformed Young People met together in our Hope Protestant Reformed Church for the annual Young People's Spring Mass Meeting. We opened our meeting by singing Psalter numbers 356 and 190 after which Dave Engelsma opened with prayer and read a passage from II Timothy 3. For our first special number, we were favored by two solos sung by John Dykstra, "Oh Lord Most Holy," and Psalter number 28, "Fellowship with God," accompanied by Jim Jonker. After our special number, we were given a most inspirational speech on drama by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema. As a topic he chose "Covenant Youth and Drama." His three points were divided as follows: I. The Basic Attitude Involved, II. The Principal Issue, and III. The Practical Matter of Our Walk.

The purpose of drama is entertainment and the purpose in attending is the same. We live in a pleasure-mad world and have to a small degree fallen victim to this disease. This is shown in our attitude toward society, church papers and entertainment at conventions. The chief purpose for the covenant youth should be, 1. To be joyful in the Lord. 2. To seek relaxation but to maintain it within a proper balance. 3. To make our joy Christian in character, tested by the Word of God. Principally, all drama is wrong and has no place in the life of a Christian. In enacting drama on a suitable stage setting we become and are presented as another person as realistically and psychologically as possible. Our own character becomes *submerged*. The purpose in drama is giving and gaining an emotional thrill. Drama is a misuse of various art forms and talents. Acting is a lie, a violation of the God-given character. The audience is deceived and led into a dream world as an escape mechanism. Therefore, young people do not give in to these worldly temptations and hold the line, for once you give in, you cannot back out. All of the young people who attended this meeting realized the great meaning this had for us today and how we could apply this to ourselves.

After the speech, we were dismissed for recess during which refreshments were served. After recess we sang number 200, and a second special number followed, a guitar and harmonica duet given by Rich Kamminga and Jim Jonker who played, "Lord Take My Hand" and "A Wonderful Savior." Our last number on the program were speeches given by Bob Decker and Daryl Vander Kooi on the subject "Should Young People be Compelled to Devote Time to the Church" after which the floor was opened to discussion. We closed the meeting by singing Psalter number 51 and Rev. C. Hanko closed with prayer. Everyone had an enjoyable evening.

A Protestant Reformed World and Life View

REV. H. HANKO

We are in this world as citizens of the kingdom of heaven!

This is the glorious truth which gives impetus to our lives and meaning to our calling in the world!

LIVE ALWAYS AS CHRISTIANS

But as citizens of the kingdom of heaven living in the world, we do not run away from the world in foolish world flight. We live in this world as we ought. We must live in every part of the world. We must live as citizens of earthly kingdoms. We must live as members of society. We must work for our daily living in shops and factories or business of our own. We must establish families and build homes. We must erect schools and educate our children. We must take the gifts which God gives us whether they be the inventions of the world or our own gifts and talents and make use of them. We must work in the world and work hard.

But all this we must do as Christians. We live beneath the shadow of the cross. The cross of Jesus Christ as the power of our salvation casts its long shadow over the whole of our life and reaches into every part of it. And in this shadow we must continue to live. We must not be merely citizens of the government, but Christian citizens. We must not simply work for a living, but work as children of God. We must not simply be members of society, but Christian members fleeing from fellowship with the world, hating all that is of sin and the devil, and walking as children of the light. We must not live in strife or hatred in society or in government, but keep ourselves away from those that do and foster such strife. We must live in peace and love. We cannot become a partner with the world in their evil endeavors, but must on the contrary establish Christian homes, Christian schools, Christian universities, Christian organizations of every kind and in all of life. We must not bring the world into the church, but go forth from the church as members of it to reveal the light that shines in us, fighting for our principles and truth, maintaing our calling, representing God's covenant and cause and the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When the world opposes us, this is not an excuse to forsake our calling, nor to be unfaithful to our confession, but to submit in willingness and eagerness to the will of our heavenly Father. More and more it becomes a fact of life to reckon with that there is no room for people of God in the world. They share no longer in the prosperity of the world; they cannot use the inventions of the world for the cause of God; they cannot find enough faithful people of God to establish Christian organizations; they have extreme difficulty in supporting their schools ;they are pushed out of business and commerce, science and industry; they are shoved from the world. But this makes no difference at all. Their calling remains the same, and they go forward in the hope that presently they shall inherit the earth.

THE MOTIVE OF THEIR LIFE

But we must do all these things not from the motive of making this world a better place to live in. I have no sympathy for those who are always trying to "christianize" the world. This is impossible anyway,

and is wrong to try. While the world boasts about its glorious attainments and significant strides forward, and while the modern church tries to capture part of the glory for such amazing success, the stark fact is that the world gets worse and worse. Sin abounds more and more. And even the Christian cannot overcome the power of the curse and has not desire to. "No more than the natural man can the Christian by 'Christian culture' attain to the ideal of the perfect soul in the perfect world. For he also lives in the body of this death and with all his earthly life is subject to corruption; and also for him all earthly things are vanity. Just because a man is a Christian doctor and surgeon, he cannot save his patient from disease and death. He cannot escape the 'vicious circle' of cultural efforts. But he strives to make all things subservient to the kingdom of God." *The Christian And Culture*, p. 15.

To make all things subservient to the kingdom of God! That is the glorious calling of the believer. That is the very heart of his calling in the midst of the world. That is the deepest meaning for him of his own Reformed world and life view.

And this is not some abstract and fanciful ideal—a mirage for which he strives; but it is something which takes on concrete meaning in his life. The kingdom of God is represented also on this earth in the church of Jesus Christ of which he is a member. This church becomes the center of all his life. He does whatever he does for the sake of his church and for the sake of the church of God in the world. His life revolves around his church and is centered in it. For it is in this way that he serves His God with all that he has, loves Him with his heart and mind, and praises His most holy name.

No matter what he does, this is his calling. Perhaps you go to school in order to study for your future life. Perhaps you establish a home by marrying a wife and having children. Perhaps you work in a shop, in a school room, in a laboratory, in the pulpit. Perhaps you are a member of a school board, a committee, a organization. And certainly you are a member of society, a citizen of a government, a person who is called to live for a time in this world. But no matter what you do, what vocation you choose, what your duties and labors, your obligations and calling, you do all things for the spiritual well-being of the church of Jesus Christ. You work or teach or preach for the sake of the church. You build a home and raise a family for the sake of the church of Christ in the world. You drive your automobile, listen to your radio, read your daily newspaper, teach your children, build your schools, talk to your neighbor, for the benefit of the body of Christ. No matter what may be your calling, your station, your place in life, you are first and foremost a member of the church of Jesus Christ. For that church you live and die—yea, do all things.

This is the glorious calling and life of the child of God.

THEIR HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

And because this is their calling, so believers look forward to the future. They do not walk through life with long faces drowned in the hopeless depths of pessimism. Nor yet do they eat and drink and be merry reasoning that tomorrow they die anyway. They look with uplifted heads to the future. They know that this world is not their home, but that there awaits them beyond the horizon of history a new and glorious kingdom of heaven where Jesus Christ their Lord shall be all in all, where sin and death and the curse shall never again intrude, where the weary load of guilt will be completely removed, where all the weaknesses and infirmities of the flesh shall pass away as a bad dream.

There shall be a glorious and perfect creation, and the believer in the midst of it, where he will be able to rule perfectly as king under Christ, and lay it all on the altar of perfect consecration to His God. This is his hope and his comfort. For this day he lives!

ATTENTION SOCIETY TREASURERS —

Your Society's assessments must be paid before the convention. Those delegations which have unpaid balances will not be reimbursed for their convention expenses.

LAM LUBBERS, *Treas.*

music

young people should listen to

RICHARD L. BLOEM

Richard Bloem, of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church, is a member and former director of the Hope Choral Society. He also is one of the founders of the Hope Heralds, an all-male singing group.

A maxim reads, "Show me your friends and I will tell you what kind of man you are." Similarly we can say, "Show me what kind of music you listen to and I will tell you what kind of man you are." Such a statement may seem absurd or unreasonable and at the very best a matter of opinion. For surely, you may ask, how could one's musical tastes be used to determine one's thoughts, desires, or characteristics. The character of youth in particular is so flexible that an abstract thing such as music could not possibly produce a positive idea or determination as to what their qualities may be. But let us be a bit constructive and look into the matter. We may also determine what music young people should listen to. For that is the positive aspect of the matter.

What Is Music?

We may define music as an expressive or intelligible combination of tones or sounds having rhythm and melody. These sounds are produced by setting up vibrations of varying degrees which produce musical tones. Tones produced by the use of different materials or methods vary in intensity, resonance and expression. In combination they produce sounds that may be pleasant or unpleasant to the ear but only harmonies produced according to general techniques of music writing are music.

Such a definition of music is proper but in itself lacks the necessary elements to produce a perspective for our evaluation to it. Music is the many moods of men. It is utterance, assertion, indication, representation, interpetation; it is suggestive, forceful and graphic. Music is a medium of expression, a gift of God to compliment man's speech. Through the medium of music, man's joys, sorrows, victories, defeats, conflicts of the soul, and superficial expression are revealed as he combines tones with rhythm to represent his particular mood and accent his verbal expression.

That such is the case no one can deny. One who is skilled in the art of listening to music easily recognizes in a composition the intent of the composer, whether it be to produce a musical picture of a place or an event, or whether it be the image of his soul. A skilled listener can easily feel the relationship between words and music, whether fitting or not. But one need not be skilled in the listener's art to feel the movement of music. All its implications may not be recognized but music impels the listener to be aware of the emotion, tenderness, sympathy, fervor, eagerness, zeal, or passion that is present with it. Who has not thrilled to a stirring march, or listened with rapture to a full organ rendition of a masterful composition, or sat with mixed feeling of joy and sorrow at the funeral of a loved one while a comforting hymn was played or sung. Music imparts a definite something that cannot be overlooked in its effects upon us.

Music Classified

The church and the world have long used music as an expression of their way of life. Although similarities in purpose may seem to exist, their music types differ.

It is difficult to define good sacred music since there is no one attribute that makes music sacred. Great composers have long since used the same style of writing in both their sacred and non-sacred music. However, music comes as close as possible to what we mean by the word 'sacred,' when the typical secular harmonies, rhythms and general techniques of writing are not present. A careful wedding of words and music are an inherent quality of sacred music. Sacred music, as an expression of a Christian's life, is recognized by its particular union of music and words whether the mood expressed be joy or sorrow or whether the music be simple or complex. God is a God of order. Sacred music is therefore orderly. God is to be honored and praised. Sacred music honors and praises God. God is the source of all our comfort through Christ Jesus our Lord. Sacred music speaks of the peace of mind that comfort brings. Although sung in many tongues and played on many instruments, sacred music always has those recognizable attributes.

The simple but heartfelt psalms set to music or the profound message of Handel's "Messiah" are but examples of the distinct character of sacred music.

Secular music is distinguished from sacred music in its lack of sincerity and depth of purpose. Its composition does not eminate from a regenerated spirit but from unregenerated man. While evil in its intended purpose, the music is a commentary of the life and loves and languishes of human nature. And although interpretive of man's earthly, carnal thoughts, it in some small way displays God's gift of music to man. Classical music in various forms as well as simple lyrics set to music generally fall in secular classification. Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" and "Old Black Joe" are typical examples.

Popular music is an outgrowth of man's complete rebellion against God. Its syncopated beat or uneven rythem are representative of man's ruthless existence and unsettled moods. The sentimental style which is used in our present day popular music is indicative of the sensual spirit of man as he woos his fellows into emotional ecstasy and attempts to sooth his own godless spirit. Any similarity to sacred music is purely co-incidental and even when an attempt is made by a popular song writer to adapt sacred music to his use it is obvious that the reprobate heart is not attuned to God. God is not mocked. Man's true character is clearly shown as he gives it expression in popular music. "Sentimental Journey," "Beer Barrel Polka," "Memphis Blues," "Tiger Rag," and "Hound Dog" typically bring God and His precepts into disrepute and blaringly hold forth the precepts of unregenerated man.

Listening – By What Standards

To hear is to have the sense or faculty of perceiving sound. And although to hear does not necessarily imply attention or application, any act of hearing by man causes a reaction in his heart. The man of sin responds against God: the new man in Christ rebels against sin and praises God. The sound of the wind blowing causes blessing and cursing for that sound also affects the human soul. So it also is with the sound of music. For music always has a message.

It is therefore important that we hear and listen to the proper sound and messages. We must filter out the base and deceitful sound that reaches our ear and become deaf to those of like kind. On the other hand we must digest and use those that have a message for the Christian's renewed heart. Christ exhorts us in Mark 4:24 to – "Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given." And in Luke 8:18 Christ also tells us to "Take heed therefore how ye hear." To hear is to listen and to listen is to harken, to give heed, to yield to advice.

The church listens and in her listening she is discerning. To be discerning she also cultivates a good musical discrimination. And in our musical discrimination we must consider the implied meaning in each music classification and separate them by discerning differences. Our existence as Protestant Reformed Churches testifies that the antithesis must be maintained. Our position in the world carries with it the obligation to also use the gift of music for the glory of God and the praise of His name. "No man can serve two masters: – Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matthew 6:24.

Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth also when you listen to music.

NEWS from, for, and about our churches

MRS. C. H. WESTRA

Rev. G. Vanden Berg has declined the call tendered him from our Randolph congregation.

Randolph's new trio includes: Revs. M. Schipper, G. Van Baren, and R. Harbach.

Rev. M. Schipper received the call from Hull.

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We're happy to report great improvement in the condition of Rev. H. Kuiper, who was seriously stricken during the past month. He is again home and recuperating nicely.

Fuller Avenue's bulletin reports the following news about their servicemen:

"Oscar Faber is doing clerical work at Fort Leonard Wood. He attends chapel on the base, but misses the services at home.

"Donald Ezinga expects to be home on furlough in June. Don and his wife attend services at the Presbyterian church near the base.

"John Bult is expecting to be discharged from the Air Force in September. We look forward to his return among us after being gone for four years."

° ° ° °

Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Kuiper (Hope) celebrated their Silver Wedding Anniversary on April 30. Congratulations!

"Thanks to my God for ev'ry gift
His bounteous hands bestow;
And thanks eternal for that love
Whence all those comforts flow."

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Southeast Church enjoyed the Annual Congregational Social on April 26. A program, lunch, and social hour rounded out the evening.

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This month's Future Conventioneers include: A baby boy born to Mr. and Mrs. A. Dykstra of Hope; a boy to Mr. and Mrs. L. Regnerus of Oak Lawn; a girl to Mr. Mr. and Mrs. R. Moelker of Southeast; and a boy to Mr. and Mrs. James Veldman of Southeast.

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A Barbecue and Sandwich Supper was held on April 23 at Adams School under the sponsorship of the Athletic Association. From comments I overheard as well as my personal testimony, everything was luscious!

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The cantata "Life Eternal" was rendered by the Hope Choral Society on May 1st. The collection taken was for our own high school.

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The Men's Chorus is planning a Spring Program to be given on May 22 at First Church.

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According to Hudsonville's bulletin, Sunday School was to be organized there on May 1, for all children three years of age and older.

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We received news from Redlands this months. We appreciate it – please keep it up! Donald Feenstra, who attended the convention last summer, and was seriously injured last October while working for the state on a freeway, is improving. He has been working for some time again although one of his legs is still in a cast below the knee.

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One more news item from Redlands – The children are at present attending the local Christian school, while the Protestant Reformed School building remains empty, as the "O.P.R.'s" have it in their possession.

Wedding bells rang recently in Hudsonville for Mr. Lambert Holstege and Miss Barbara Jean Poortenga. In Oak Lawn they rang for Mr. E. Medema and Miss G. Ipema. May the Lord walk with you as you begin your married life.

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On May 10 the young people in the Grand Rapids area held their Annual Spring Banquet. Rev. H. Hoeksema spoke on "The Strength of Youth," comparing and contrasting physical strength with spiritual strength. A committee for the summer outing was appointed. They were asked to investigate the possibility of having a late afternoon and evening outing, rather than the customary all-day affair, as this might enable a greater share of the young people to participate.

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Called Home:

Janice Marie, 7 year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Zwak of Hudsonville.

Mr. G. Vander Tuuk of First Church at the age of 75.

The Hope Heralds have set the date for their Spring Concert. Reserve June 12 for this event – we're sure that a real musical treat awaits you.

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April 21 was Alumni Night at Hope School. After election of officers and other business, there was a short program, lunch was served, and old acquaintances renewed.

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Hudsonville's oldest member, Mr. Cornelius Woudwyk, celebrated his 87th birthday on May 1. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken." Ps. 37:25a.

All news information should be sent directly to

MRS. C. H. WESTRA
845 Alexander St.
Grand Rapids 7, Michigan

and now a word from OUR SPONSOR

JIM JONKER

Welcome to Camp Shawanoossee, located on the shores of beautiful Duck Lake, near Muskegon, Michigan.

That was almost the way this article was going to begin. And, since it has already begun that way, we'd better leave that sentence there, but add another, at the risk of disappointing our readers.

Welcome to Grand Rapids, Fine Furniture Capital of the World, location of several Protestant Reformed Churches, home of countless Hollanders, and scene of the 1960 Protestant Reformed Young People's Convention.

We, the host society, First Senior, are very happy to have you coming here. We have been busy, are still busy, and undoubtedly will be busy for some time with our plans to make this convention one of the most worthwhile and enjoyable that you've attended. We'd like to give you a little preview of what you may expect.

By way of background, we'd better explain the camp situation. Those of you who have not yet been reached by the rumors flying from Grand Rapids are probably wondering about the opening sentence of this article. Last fall we had decided to hold this convention at a camp. After looking over several possibilities, we chose Camp Shawanoossee and reserved it for convention use. But investigation concerning conventions of other groups held at camps and a careful consideration of the problems we would face at a camp led us to abandon this idea. We know this may disappoint some of you now, but we're confident that the 1960 Convention, held in Grand Rapids, will not disappoint you.

Our plans, for the most part, are still very general, but beginning to crystalize. Tuesday, August 16, will be our opening day. Out-of-towners will be greeted by a smiling welcoming committee and be assigned to their lodging places. Tuesday night will be the mass meeting, location still uncertain. Thursday will probably be according to tradition, beginning with a pancake breakfast, ending with the banquet.

Wednesday promises to be different. Since many conventioneers are too tired to listen to a speech after a vigorous outing, and since two speeches would tend to crowd Thursday's activities, our second speech will be on Wednesday morning. The outing for Wednesday afternoon is shrouded in mystery yet, classified Top Secret, so we can't tell you about that.

Our theme is "Faithful Today." Our speakers will develop its three sub-divisions: "Faithful in the Truth Today," "Faithful in Life Today," and "Faithful Unto Death." We'll all be singing "The Church's One Foundation" as our theme song.

We hope you're making your vacation plans for fellowship and fun with us in the Water Wonderland. We remind you to inform your society secretary of your plans and we remind the secretaries to send us this information to facilitate our convention arrangements.

If any of you Westeners happen to get lost on the way, stop in Chicago, Holland, Hudsonville, or any other suburb of Grand Rapids, and some friendly native will gladly give you directions.

See you all in August, D.V.