BEACON LIGHTS

for

PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

November 1960

Suicide
LOUIS REGNERUS

The Problem of Disarmament
JIM JONKER

The Scientist's Vocation
AGATHA LUBBERS

Adjustment Problem
REV. A. MULDER
BEACON LIGHTS
FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

VOLUME XX
NOVEMBER, 1960
NUMBER 9

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

David Engelsma Editor-in-Chief
Rev. Alvin Mulder Associate Editor
Jim Lubbers Managing Editor
Nancy Heemstra Finance Manager

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:
Rev. Robert Harbach Truth vs. Error
Agatha Lubbers Critique
Rev. Herman Hoeksema Bible Outlines
Rev. Richard Veldman From the Pastor's Study
Mrs. C. H. Westra News Editor
James Jonker Current Comments

STAFF:
Marcia Newhol Asst. Clerk
Mary Pastoor Asst. Clerk
Roger Harbin Chairman
Mary Pastoor Public Relations Staff
Marian Kunz
Edward Langerak
Jim Jonker J. Buukamp
Judy Bouw<br>Janet Kunz C. Streyle

All material for publication should be addressed
to MR. DAVID ENGELSMA,
846 Thomas, S. E., Grand Rapids 6, Michigan.
Grand Rapids subscribers please forward subscrip-
tion dues to CORRAINE STREYLE,
1125 Franklin St., S. E., Grand Rapids 7, Michigan.
Subscribers outside of the Grand Rapids area
please forward subscription dues to
JANET KUNZ
1131 Ariano St., N. W., Grand Rapids 4, Mich.

All undeliverable material (Forms 3579) should
be returned to CHRISTINE FABER, 1028 Temple
S. E., Grand Rapids 7, Michigan.

Subscription price: $3.00
Second Class Postage paid at
Grand Rapids, Michigan

In This Issue

SUICIDE
Louis Regnerus

ADJUSTMENT PROBLEM
Rev. A. Mulder

A LETTER TO A FRIEND ABOUT SEMINARY BEFORE COLLEGE
Rev. R. C. Harbach

SPELLING - A TOOL
Winfred Koole

THE PROBLEM OF DISARMAMENT
Jim Jonker

WHY YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES SHOULD CONTINUE ALL SUMMER

DWELLING IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD
South Holland Protestant Reformed Young People's Society
Rev. R. Veldman

THE SCIENTIST'S VOCATION
Agatha Lubbers

OUTLINES ON THE BOOK OF REVELATION (Revelation 7:1-8)
The Sealing of the One Hundred and Forty Thousand
Rev. H. Hoeksema

NEWS FROM, FOR, AND ABOUT OUR CHURCHES
Mrs. C. H. Westra

POTENTIAL WEALTH
Ed Langerak

IN GOD'S COUNTRY
Jim Jonker

1 2 4 7 8 10 11 13 14 16 17
suicide!

LOUIS R. REGNERUS

Webster says, quote: “Act or an instance of taking one’s own life voluntarily and intentionally; self-murder; deliberate and intentional destruction of his own life by a person of years of discretion and of sound mind,” unquote. It seems to me that the foregoing definition is as good as any. I understand this definition to mean any act of self-destruction which is motivated by a desire to accomplish this one purpose of self-destruction. Such was the act of Judas Iscariot. However, we understand that there are many instances when the definition as qualified above does not apply, yet there is the act of wilful self-destruction. The pagan of heathendom who casts himself into a seething volcano to appease his god certainly has destroyed his own life, yet, at face value, his act was not motivated by a desire for death and obscurity alone. I say at face value since it is hardly possible to respect any such idol worship in which the worshipper sacrifices himself to his idol. It would be utter nonsense to justify such a heathen and sinful deed on the grounds that after all it was committed out of a desire to fulfil the dictates of a form of religion. To me this is also suicide and yet it does not fall within the structure of Webster’s definition.

In many lands suicide is an honorable and respected way of dying. This is the tradition in the Orient. Many of our young men who fought in the Pacific theatre during World War II saw this demonstrated many, many times, especially in the later stages of the war. “Kamikazi” pilots chose to suffer a hero’s death rather than suffer the humiliation of defeat or the possibility of losing face. In many European countries there is no stigma attached to the act of self-destruction, either as regards the person committing the act or his arriving family. However, Society in general, especially as we know it here in America, does not regard suicide with favorable eyes. The philosophy is rather that things are never so bad that they cannot be remedied by something a good deal less drastic than suicide.

Yet, I am sure that the BEACON LIGHTS staff was not merely interested in definition of suicide when they requested an article on this subject. Rather I assume they would not only like to know what suicide is but also are concerned with the proper attitude of covenant young people toward this act of self-murder. I would not consider the act of self-murder any differently than the act of murdering someone else. They are both murder and as such direct violations of the sixth commandment. Yet, perhaps involuntarily, the act of suicide is more repugnant to the mind than the act of murder, murder other than self-murder, that is. No doubt this stems from the fact that, according to our old nature, we attempt to justify murder under certain conditions. If a man is persecuted by the world to the extent that he is deprived of home and family and in retaliation he commits murder, our first reaction is that he certainly had cause and “you really can’t blame him.” This, of course, is wrong. God’s commands do not change as we find ourselves in different circumstances and environments. “Thou shalt not kill” means just that; in times of tranquility and also in times of adversity. Hence we can come to no other conclusion than that murder, in no matter what form, is a terrible sin and which, apart from the Grace of God, is punishable by eternal death.

Many words have been uttered as to whether a believer, an elect child of God, could commit suicide. My own reaction to this question would be an admonition that we never forget that according to our old nature we are prone to all evil, including the evil of murder. That we do not murder ourselves or others is simply because God

(continued on page 15)
I am pleased to be associated with the staff of Beacon Lights, numbered with people who have a living and unfaltering interest in the needs of our young folk. All of whom are dedicated to the task of supplying Christian literature for our youth enabling them, in some way or other, to participate in the battle of faith well armed and trained. It is my hope that these pages will prove entertaining and enlightening to our readers, as we converse by medium of magazine. My interest is in your problems about which we hope to write from time to time.

First of all we would examine the youth and his adjustment problem.

The youth, the age of adolescence, is well beyond definition. But this does not prohibit examination of or forbid remarks about this important phase of human life. And we readily confess that what we have to say about it is far from an attempted definition. Many correctly conclude that the age of youth is mainly characterized by one thing: strength. Far above everything else he is energetic, enthusiastic, persevering, daring and determined. While glancing at the negative column we find it all recorded in one word, unerring.

But isn’t this saying too much? I don’t think so; compare him with the child or with the adult!

Whether his strength is used constructively is one question. Whether he is strong in everything is another question.

Indeed physically he is strong. Working from morning to night besides doing countless other things, is simply routine. Mentally he is strong. Learning of everything under the sun he becomes wise. The young can memorize easily, comprehend readily, digest hastily, all of which are assets and advantages, great advantages. Spiritually he could be strong, but this is a sad story. Carelessness attends youthfulness resulting in waste of strength and abuse of power. His energy is spent on the mundane; he delves deeply in the things of Mammon. For both young men and women alike a usual aim in life is clothing or cars, not to mention other earthly ambitions. His strength is not utilized with God in his thoughts. The Singer of the Old Testament, whom we know as David, recalling these sad experiences said, “remember not the sins of my youth.”

So the teenager is not without problems, without perplexities, without anxieties. His strength does not make him trouble free, does not exempt him from difficulties. Sympathy and support is our calling over against him.

Let us analyze a chief problem! It is adjustment.

Adjustment is to “fit into.” It is to fill one’s own position in every sphere or situation that overtakes us. In the home I have a spot. In it I must take up my respective place at every age level, participate in family communion, endure family troubles, enjoy family pleasures. In the classroom or the shop I have a role. I must fit in with friends, fellow members or fellow-workers. Unitedly tasks must be accomplished, projects must be completed, goals must be reached. In the church I have a calling. There is worship itself: my voice in the congregational choir, my gift in the congregational offering, my prayer in the congregational supplication. There are the extra ecclesiastical functions, the societies and programs. In all of these I must live my own place, actively and with interest, making personal contributions.

Then there is society in general. My own neighborhood, my daily associates, my own community, all expect me to comply with their pattern. And who wants to be the sore thumb, the ugly duckling or black sheep? So we struggle within the home and without in order to fit into our place.

The principal factor with which we have to deal is people. Our place is amidst people of all kinds. They vary in character:
some are vicious, others are gentle, some are noisy, others are quiet, some are calloused while others are sympathetic. They vary in color; they vary in creed. They come from all walks of life: the high and lowly, the rich and poor, maimed and whole. Dealing with such variety requires genius.

Even then my own ways and personality may make it difficult to adjust. It’s worth examining! But be that as it may, the fact remains: it is not an easy thing to live my place.

But there is a deeper stratum to adjustment. There is the religious angle of, “taking a stand.” This literally means that one must be a soldier of the Cross and, by faith, take his position in the ranks of righteousness. He must stand for truth, stand for godliness. Side with the church without wavering. Quite naturally this action results in opposition and resistance to evil and untruth. Or, to sum it all up, taking our stand with the Cause of Christ indicates that we take a stand against the Devil and his hosts. Such adjustment is to be in line with God’s precepts no matter where I am: home or away from home.

Such a one does not fit into the scheme of the Schemer, the father of darkness, the roaring lion, who goes about seeking whomsoever he may devour. Beware! By many existing and available means he entices us. Tempts us, lures us and charms us especially by means of worldly entertainment and earthly-mindedness. To yield to him is disastrous...a perfect misfit.

Let us as young men and women by all means adjust ourselves to our own position, whether in home or away from home. Fit in each sphere only as one who takes a stand, and then according to the standards of righteousness.

But this is our problem is it not? We know and understand the principle! The question now is the practice! To this we shall refer at a later date.

Please strive, however, to “fit into” and “take a stand” always as a true Christian. The apostle Paul once gave the church at Rome two beautiful rules to employ while engaged in and involved in this problem. They are, “be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God,” and, “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.” So let it be!

rev. a. mulder

Books
They Found the Secret
(159 pp.) — V. Raymond Edman —
Zondervan ($2.50)

Dr. V. R. Edman, president of Wheaton College, takes a poll of some twenty religious notables and discovers that the secret of their intensely spiritual lives has been an intimate brush with the Eternal. The recounting of these amazing contacts and their effects upon the lives of the religious giants is the task of They Found the Secret.

From John Bunyon, author of The Pilgrims’ Progress, through Dwight Lyman Moody, ultra-enthusiastic “soul-winner,” to William P. Nicholson, sea-dog turned evangelist, direct experience with God supplies the primary impetus to a life formerly marked by rank unbelief or casual belief. Each in his own way heard “a voice saying, ‘Now or never. You must decide to accept or reject Christ.’” And each responded, “‘Lord, I yield. I repent of all my sin...and now accept Thee as my Savior.’”

The valuable insight given by Edman into the lives and confessions of these promulgators of religious movements (e.g., Samuel Logan Brengle was a prime mover of the Salvation Army) is a pretty good explanation of the nature of the movements themselves. Religious experiences are necessarily indistinct and highly mystical; the contents of resulting varieties of religion are correspondingly vague and intangible. Dwight L. Moody had as little education as he had much mystical experience. This goes far to explain his own statement that “The only way any church can get a blessing is to lay aside all difference, all criticism, all coldness and party feeling, and come to the Lord as one man...”, and it makes understandable the watery mixture presented as Truth by his multitude of disciples.

One might wish that author Edman had including in his poll those who explained their Godly walk as being entirely the gift of Divine Grace and their confidence in life upon the solid basis of the Bible.
Dear Pat:

Still I must disagree with you that college education should come before seminary training. The implications of Reformed truth, I believe, support my contention. For it is the knowledge of God and of His truth which enables the proper understanding of any given thing in life. In order to have correct information on any subject, that subject must be understood in the light of the teaching of the Bible, God’s Word. Mere human wisdom cannot furnish us with true knowledge, but God’s truth can and does. Only what He says is true and good is actually so. Then a “secular” education in itself will not provide us with the wherewithal to apprehend the truly good and beautiful. For we cannot discern the truly excellent, except that our whole inward state be enlightened by God’s Spirit and Word (1 Corinthians 2:14, 15). A man does not know the things that pertain to men except by the discerning spirit within him. But the unregenerate man, whose spirit is darkened by the ruin of sin, how can he understand any creature as God does? Even so the things of God we do not know except as the Spirit of God reveals them to us (2:11). The knowledge we have we know to be true only in so far as we know it to correspond to His. My point then is that we have true knowledge not when we have assimilated a certain body of instruction, but when we have God’s interpretation of that body of instruction. Only then do we have the truth.

The college education in itself will provide a set and knowledge of facts; and there is certainly no harm in learning the facts. That is imperative. Yet the facts of themselves do not declare all the truth. The truth lies in the interpretation of the facts. In most institutions of higher learning, especially in non-Christian schools, the facts only are studied. But what do mere facts in themselves mean without an interpretation? And what a dangerous meaning they have when given the wrong interpretation! One may learn the facts of history, for example, but no one can do this without giving some sort of interpretation to those facts, and then we have what we may call a philosophy of history. Every man has a philosophy of history, whether he realizes it or not, if he does not hold the Christian view of history. But what is one philosophy of history over against another? We still do not arrive at the truth concerning history unless our understanding of history is true. And how may we be assured that this is so unless we have the interpretation of history given it by God Himself! The authoritative and infallible Word of God alone lends that interpretation. To arrive at the truth, one must have more than human wisdom. The facts must be seen in the light of the wisdom of God. Scripture must interpret Scripture; and Scripture must give meaning to everything else. The Spirit Himself must instruct us in the things of the Spirit; and the Spirit Himself must give us His own explanation of any field or aspect of knowledge (1 Cor. 2:13).

You agree, I know, that God has created all reality. He is the Creator of history, literature, the sciences. God has made all reality, with the exception of Himself; and He has interpreted all reality, including Himself. This interpretation is supplied in His Word and only in His Word. Therefore I maintain that it is better to obtain a knowledge of the truth before acquiring a knowledge of the facts. For the truth alone makes the facts understandable, to understand them as they really are, in relation
to God. The truth (or the interpretation of the facts) had a place, objectively, before the facts. For the truth is from eternity. But the facts had no objective existence until the creation. God has created His own universe, and because His attributes are eternity and truth, He has interpreted His own universe; and therefore to understand anything of this universe in which we live to any degree of truth we must have that interpretation of God, in a creaturely reflection of God's interpretation. It may be possible to know the formal facts of mathematics, and yet not have the truth, materially, concerning this science. God has interpreted all the things which He has made. He has given meaning and purpose to all things. Apart from His interpretation it is not possible to have the truth about anything. A star out in space may be regarded as an objective fact, but it has absolutely no meaning unless it has an interpretation. And it has no interpretation which conveys the truth concerning it unless God has given it such. Humanism is not true, that we can know the facts and their meaning whether or not God exists and speaks. From the Bible, we know that God has done this. Then why study the facts apart from the truth? Or, to put it another way, isn't it illogical to study the facts first and hope to find out what they mean later? Isn't it better to have a knowledge of the doctrine of creation first, before we attempt to obtain a knowledge of creation, or any part of it? We must certainly avoid the pragmatic pedagogy of instructing pupils to think without giving them something to think about.

It may be that in a Christian school the facts are taught along with the truth, and that is better than teaching the facts on the basis of denial of the truth. But then it is often so in many Christian schools that although the truth is there to a greater degree than in the public schools, that nevertheless no given subject is taught from a Christian point of view. The subject may be taught by a Christian teacher, and in somewhat of a Christian atmosphere, but is it taught with a Christian view of education itself, and with the light of God's interpretation upon it? The things of the spirit of man, to be right, and to be seen aright, must be seen in the light of the things of the Spirit of God.

I would further illustrate this distinction between fact and interpretation of fact. Consider the word “papplesplat.” To my mind it is a perfectly good word, even though, as far as I know, it is not found in any dictionary. Perhaps some day it may have the honor (?) of appearing in a dictionary. But that would not make the word any more a fact than it is. For “papplesplat” is a fact. It has objective reality, may be spelled, divided into syllables, and pronounced by anyone of ordinary intelligence. It may appear to be of German derivation; however it is not. It is not derived from any language foreign to the English. But what does “papplesplat” mean? I must tell you! It does not mean anything; it has no meaning. You see, I composed it only last night. I am thinking of having it copyrighted. Although “papplesplat” is a fact, then, it does not mean a thing. No one in the wide world has given it a meaning. It is a fact without an interpretation. “Papplesplat” is an abstract fact, for no one knows whether it is a noun, pronoun, participle, adjective, verb or what. Perhaps you are now ready to suggest to me that “papplesplat” should mean “poppycock.” But I am shocked at the thought. Papplesplat” has no meaning whatever. It is simply a cold “fact.” My point is that facts have an interpretation; they mean something. We can and ought to know what they mean. But “facts” have no meaning and are worse than useless.

I remember, in grammar school days, we were presented with the fact that “Washington crossed the Delaware.” At first I found that this meant very little, if anything, to me, for I was not taught my “secular” history from a Christian point of view. Not that I consciously denied the historicity of the fact or the fact of history. To me its factuality was good; sound too. But that “Washington crossed the Delaware” without an interpretation meant nothing to me until I could think in harmony with and in the light of the Word of God. Here beside my typewriter is my two-year-old niece. Naturally she knows nothing of the three R’s as yet, so that modern educators might say that
she is practically neutral. What if I tell her, “Carol, girl, Washington crossed the Delaware!” She is a bright little child, but at that her face shows not a sign of appreciation. That historical fact means to her about as much as “papplesplat” means to me, for she before this had never heard of Washington or the Delaware. She has not yet learned to distinguish Washington from Peter Rabbit. She needs a little correct interpretation mixed with her cup of facts. She should be told that Washington was a little boy, very much like other little boys, that his mamma and dad called him George, that our heavenly Father made him, just as He makes all boys and girls, and that God made him to grow up to be a big man, and a strong soldier, etc. Then she might be informed that the Delaware is a big, wide river which the Lord made with some people living on one side of it, and some other people living on the other side. In this way she will begin to distinguish Washington from “The Little Toot” of her Golden Book library, and the Delaware from Farmer Brown’s frog pond. For according to as much as she can place her little mind on that fact, she would have her own interpretation of it, unless she could be given the right interpretation in a simple enough form for her to grasp. And the right interpretation always comes from God and His Word. That is where we must begin, even from infancy.

Therefore the Christian must evaluate the statements of the historians, for example, and find them to be at least factual, not merely philosophical, for a philosophy attached to any science or field of knowledge is an interpretation of that science, but is probably not only not true, but an anti-Christian interpretation. The non-Christian may be able to give us the factual material, but since he cannot also give us God’s meaning of that material, he is really only giving us “factual” material, i.e., some form of abstraction. Take the proposition that $2 \times 2 = 4$. We may regard that as an objective fact. The unregenerate man may know and accept it as such. But he does not have nor receive God’s interpretation of that fact. For He does not know the God of numbers and of arithmetic, He does not know the God who is essenti-ally one and yet also ultimately three. The unenlightened Christian student may also receive this same proposition as a universal fact, yet without knowing the Divine trinitarian interpretation of that fact. Indeed he may not be aware that there is such a proper interpretation. He may not be aware of the need for such an interpretation. He may not expect to get such an interpretation, after becoming aware of the need of one, until he finishes his mathematics course, and enters upon his seminary or more extensive Bible-training. Meanwhile, he may think in a rather non-Christian manner, that $2 \times 2 = 4$ simply because that’s the way the multiplication table works out. When asked why does it work out that way? he may answer that so the rules of arithmetic dictate. But why and whence the rules? Perhaps the simplest non-Christian answer is that, it has always been that way. This answer then is that it is because it is. The same answer might also be given to the question, Does sin exist? and why? But the non-Christian interpretation will not do. It either ignores, rejects or flies in the face of the true God. It would be better to say that $2 \times 2 = 4$ because God made it that way.

To me, biblical training, training in the Scriptures and their doctrines, should come before with, and as a background to all other training. Hence, seminary before college, and for the above reasons. God has given meaning and purpose to every reality, both temporal and eternal. Even then, there is much of reality, temporal and eternal which is for man a mystery, and will remain a mystery for ever. For God there is no mystery. Nor is there for Him any such thing as a “fact,” an abstraction. All things are related to and dependent upon Him. Therefore, the knowledge of God first. Man’s knowledge of God is more fundamental than man’s knowledge of the universe. The latter depends upon the former. The latter is not possible without the former. The chief end of man is to know and glorify God, and fully to enjoy Him, and the creatures He has given, for ever. But to have that knowledge and experience that joy, we must always be reinterpretative of God’s interpretation. Always look at the stars through the telescope of Holy Writ!
Spelling as a basic tool of written expression is as important today as it was in the past. The ability to spell correctly is one essential aspect of the writing task for both the writer and the reader. A person who is able to spell with ease is not hampered by the mechanics of putting his thoughts into words, and the correct spelling of the words facilitates the reading of what is written.

Spelling is one of a group of subjects known as the Language Arts; reading, language or English, and handwriting being others. There is a strong interrelationship among these subjects. Spelling deals with words as written symbols that express thoughts and are substitutes for oral speech. These symbols are necessary because of the entrance of sin into the world, and even man’s ability to arrange consistently the letters into intelligible combinations is corrupted by sin. Yet accurate spelling is essential to effective communication and is expected of us as Christians who are striving for perfection. This human skill must be used in God’s service.

Much more is involved in Spelling than a list of words that must be memorized each week. It is a subject that must be taught systematically. First of all the pupil learns best to spell a word if he knows the meaning or reality for which the combination of letters stand. New words should be introduced in a meaningful situation—a contextual setting—which is a story or article with high interest value. This can be read and discussed, and then the word list should be pronounced correctly and carefully by the pupils. Correct pronunciation—the pupil proceeds to the many spelling difficulties stem from careless enunciation. After starting with the whole word—recognition, meaning, and pronunciation—the pupils proceeds to the analytic study of the parts. Studying words analytically and discriminatingly involves the same phonetic skills as those used in learning to read. A sound phonics program is valuable both to reading and spelling, and such skills as are developed in one area are reinforced and utilized in the other. Visualization and actual writing are also important parts of the spelling process, because in them the pupil is again directed to the whole word. Clear and legible handwriting should be insisted upon by the teacher, and should be a matter of personal pride to the writer.

Spelling, like correct word usage and handwriting, requires steady practice and repetition of the writing of the word in meaningful sentences. This is particularly true of words that do not follow the general rules with respect to letter arrangement. Each spelling textbook follows a carefully chosen basic word list which conforms to the three to four thousand functional spelling vocabulary used by the typical adult. In addition the pupils in a Christian school are expected to spell correctly certain words that are common to the Christian faith and doctrine. The more able spellers should be constantly encouraged to add new words to their spelling vocabularies through various activities involving the use of dictionaries and other reference materials. Practicing spelling in actual writing, both practical and expressive, helps to establish the habit of spelling correctly. Part of the weakness in our spelling program today can be traced back to a neglect of activities that would furnish rich content for written expression, which in turn builds the spelling vocabulary. In our precipitant age we extract the answers to questions as painlessly and concisely as possible, without requiring any effort on the student’s part to formulate his own thoughts in writing.
There should be more emphasis upon written composition, and that at an early stage.

Between reading and spelling there is a very intimate relationship, each enriching the other. If a person spends very little time in reading, he lessens his familiarity with new words that are spelled correctly. Reading experience helps to strengthen word images, as well as to widen one's vocabulary. This in turn makes it easier for one to express his thoughts with clarity and conciseness. The more writing one does the more exercise his spelling vocabulary gets. Common words are used over and over again, but unusual words are also needed to meet the exigencies of different situations. Good spellers are curious about words: their construction, pronunciation, meaning, and origin. The dictionary and other resource material have great appeal for them; the intricacies of orthography can provide a life-long enjoyment for them. Many students are given a better insight into the structure of the English language through a foreign language program, adding new words to their written vocabulary at the same time. All these means should be used to stimulate interest in expressive writing. After all writing is the reason for spelling. Let's encourage it and develop it at every opportunity.

**CURRENT COMMENTS**

**THE PROBLEM OF disarmament**

**JIM JONKER**

...and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

A short, squat man with a tendency to shake his fists and pound his desk, an unshaven beatnik poet, the editor of the New York Times and the editor of the Calvin College Chimes, the frocked pastor on the pulpit, the "coffee-kletzers" in the restaurant, the man-on-the-street — almost everyone who takes anything at all seriously is or has been discussing it. From the United Nations to a Sunday evening visit or a college bull session, the topic of nuclear disarmament is being considered and argued. From the day that mankind realized the tremendous annihilating power it possessed, from the time that the scientist began to warn of the deadly dangers of radio-activity, men have lived in fear of what would happen when "someone pushed the button." Immediately the cry was raised, "Stop the arms race." "We must have disarmament." Some undoubtedly raised the cry fanatically — not realizing all the implications involved; others raised it seriously, convinced that it is essential to the life and welfare of mankind.

What must the Christian say regarding this issue? Is there a moral argument involved, necessitating that he take a definite stand? How must he look at this problem? We will attempt to investigate it a little farther.

**THE PURPOSE OF ARMAMENT**

Why did the arms race begin, and why has it reached such gigantic proportions? Since the discovery of atomic power and the potential it had as a weapon of warfare, the nations that possessed knowledge of nuclear energy have been developing nuclear weapons. The two principal opponents in the present cold war, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., have given different reasons for their actions. The United States, which spends half of its annual 80 billion dollar budget for national defense, has developed an atomic stockpile as a deterrent to war, following the theory that if we as a nation are strong enough to deal a devastating retaliatory blow, no other nation will dare attack us. Russia undoubtedly maintains its weapons as a deterrent also, but its aggressive intent cannot be denied. Communism's declared purpose to rule the world, to bury us, testifies to this. No
one doubts that if we had no atomic weapons and Russia had them all that we would be attacked promptly. At the present, however, the U.S. and the Soviet Union are like two scorpions in a box: one could destroy the other, but only at the great risk of self-destruction.

NECESSITY OF DISARMAMENT

Those who argue in favor of disarmament often claim to be arguing on moral grounds. But they tend to mix the moral with the practical. The "moral" arguments they advance are based not on the moral code of Holy Writ but on general moral principles regarded as good and right for mankind. They do not argue from the perspective of Scripture nor make any claims as to what God's revelation shows to be the proper thing to do. The practical reasons, however, which they give are pertinent and interesting. These reasons can be summed up in one statement: no one can win an atomic war; everyone will lose. Mankind, they say, has the power to destroy itself. Those who would not perish in the original atomic holocaust would suffer from radiation, breathe tainted air, produce a mutant race. The human race conceivably could perish entirely.

When we evaluate these arguments, we find that they are a mixture of the true and the untrue. No one can deny the tremendous powers of nuclear energy nor underestimate the devastation that would result from such a war. We know, however, that mankind will not destroy itself nor will the human race perish in its entirety. Such a view is contrary to everything God has revealed in His word. But this does not, admittedly, take away from the fact that a good share of mankind could be wiped out and that much of the world as we know it today could be destroyed. The question is whether these are the only considerations we must observe and whether these are sufficient to warrant a crusade for disarmament.

POSSIBILITY OF DISARMAMENT

Regardless of whether or not we feel that disarmament is necessary, we must also consider it on a practical level. If it is a practical impossibility and can never be realized, we are foolish to argue in its favor. That such actually is the case should not be hard to see. We do not and cannot trust the Russians; they are not foolish enough to trust us. Hence a system of controls and inspection would be necessary to insure entire disarmament. But such a system could never be worked out. To maintain certainty of disarmament, every square foot of the Soviet Union and the United States would have to be searched; the oceans would have to be combed lest bombs be hidden there. With man establishing stations in space, every satellite would have to be examined. If a disarmament agreement were reached, the Russians undoubtedly would hide nuclear weapons; and no one is naive enough to think that the U.S. would not store some for emergency use. Remember, it would not take many bombs or missiles to destroy another nation.

NECESSITY OF ARMAMENT

For us as a nation, it appears that armament is necessary if we are to resist the Communist's intent to rule the world. It is the only way to keep the division of power favorable to us and not give the Russians a decided advantage over us. Even if it were possible to have complete nuclear disarmament, what would we gain? War will be a much more probable happening when the Russians know they can win it, by conventional weapons or sheer weight of numbers. Such a war and its results would not be pretty, either.

The American nation has often been called "a Christian Nation." We know that its Christianity is superficial and for the most part worthless. We cannot defend democracy or America on those grounds. But we must remember the blessings we have as a church in this nation, which we could never have under Communism. We must remember too that our country must be given our support in all lawful things. We must be careful lest in our great fear of a horrible war we are ready to give up anything and everything to try to prevent it. World peace sounds like a fine aim, but it is the aim of the Anti-Christ, not of the church. We can but trust, knowing that despite wars and rumors of wars He has the whole world in His hands.
WHY YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY SHOULD CONTINUE ALL SUMMER

Summertime is generally considered by all to be a time of vacations. Schools are recessed and students are freed from their studies. Everywhere families pack their bags and head for their favorite vacation areas, and still others take time off simply to relax. Even in the church summertime has become a time of vacation. The catechism classes are discontinued and also the Men's and Ladies' Societies are dismissed for the summer. Then, in keeping with the trend, the Young People's Societies, too, have decided that a summer vacation is most necessary.

Our society has often debated the question of whether or not we should have our meetings in the summer. Quite often the excuse of conformity has been brought up. "None of the other young people's societies meet in the summer so why should we?" And also, "The men's and ladies' societies recess for the summer so we should too." But conformity in itself is a very poor excuse.

Since the excuse of conformity can be ruled out we must look for other excuses. But what other excuses can we find? The men's and ladies' societies can use the excuse that summer is a busier time of the year and often circumstances make it impossible for the mother or father to be absent from the home. Yet we as young people usually don't find summer a busier time. In fact, we actually have more leisure in summer than in winter.

Then again some say that we need a rest from society; that if we have summer vacations we will be more enthusiastic and more interested in the society meetings when they resume again. And also that we will be able to study and comprehend the Scriptures better after a rest. This is pure nonsense. From what do we need a rest? We haven't been over-taxing ourselves intellectually or haven't been so busy with our meetings that we have no time for anything else. Society meetings can't possibly be such a great burden that we need a rest from them.

These few excuses given for not holding meetings in the summer were easily ruled out as insignificant and I doubt if any other excuses found can be considered significant or of any importance especially when compared with the benefits that are received from the society meetings.

Most young people desire a social life. We want to go away at night; we want an opportunity to meet with friends and to talk together. Where is a better place for this than at the young people's societies? Our desire for a social life is not limited to the winter. We also want to go away in the summer and if we have no society meetings to attend we certainly aren't going to sit home and rest. We're going to go away or do something and will we do something or go somewhere more beneficial than the society meetings?

Yet even more beneficial than the social life we receive at the meetings we also receive the opportunity to discuss and study the Scripture. Can we as covenant young people slight this opportunity and the benefits received from it; can we say with good conscience that nine months out of every twelve is enough time devoted to the study and discussion of the Scriptures? We should hope and pray that we cannot.

We have found some difficulties to be sure. Often society attendance dwindles in the summer due to family vacations and occasionally lack of interest. But we know that even a small group can have a very edifying discussion on the Scripture portion for the evening. For Christ says in Matthew 18:20—"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

***

May we suggest that each society read carefully this article and then consider, in society discussion, extending society sessions throughout the “vacation” months?

—ed.
Dwelling in the House of the Lord

REV. R. VELDMAN

"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple." Psalm 27:4

"THAT I MAY DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD . . ."

In our previous discussion we talked about the house of the Lord as such. It is not a mere building of wood and stone, pulpits and pews and fixtures. It is not even the formal, visible gathering of the saints to worship, however, closely this divine worship may be related to the life of God's house. It is God's covenant, God's everlasting family life, the place where Jehovah dwells in all the beauty of His love and friendship. In the highest sense it is Christ Himself. In living fellowship with Him it is the church, the living body of Christ, in and through which God dwells with us and we with Him. Ultimately it is heaven, of course, where we shall behold forever the perfection of all the house of God stands for.

What does it mean to dwell in that house of the Lord?

The word, as used in the original, means: to sit, rest, sabbath; further, to remain, abide; thus, to live, dwell. David is not content with a mere, casual glimpse into this house of the Lord, if that were possible. He wants to sit, rest, live, take off his coat as it were and remain there all the days of his life.

Thus it is more than plain what David desired for himself, when this burning request was pressed from his soul. Indeed, it was also that he might worship Jehovah in that tabernacle on Mount Zion. That was the place where the people went to serve their God. There he desired to be, every day, to worship His God with them. However, it was only because and for the sake of that God. He wanted to dwell with God, in living fellowship with the saints, through the typical Christ. He wanted to know God, serve Him, commune with Him, praise and glorify Him, live His life, work His work, do His will. He wanted to abide in unceasing fellowship with his God. "How amiable," he says, "are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."

For us today the meaning of dwelling in God's house is quite the same. It is to abide in living fellowship with the church, which is the body of Christ: to commune, study, work, pray, sing, worship God with her. It is to abide in living fellowship with the Mediator and Savior of that church; hear His word, live His life, enjoy His benefits, eat His body and drink His blood unto eternal life; praise and glorify Him. Above all and in connection with both, it is to abide in living fellowship with the God of that Christ and of that church and to live the full, glorious life of His covenant in the unbroken and unbreakable consciousness of His presence.

"ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE"

The psalmist refers here, not only to the days of his life on this earth, but to his life hereafter as well. In that gem of all gems, Psalm 23, we hear this same poet cry from the bottom of his soul: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord FOR EVER."

This desire, therefore, reaches out to heaven itself. He who really longs for the house of the Lord must long for heaven itself. He who does not long for heaven itself really does not long for the house of the Lord at all.

All the days of his life, therefore, now on this earth and presently in heavenly glory, he wants to dwell in the house of the Lord.

The psalmist means to say: One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I, in my study; I, in my shop; I, in my business; I, in my home; I, in my kitchen; I, in my work and play, my school and family, my amusement and
sports, may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. Sunday, but also Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, etc. From morning until night. In unbroken fellowship of everlasting life with the church, with my Christ, with my God.

One thing have I desired of the Lord that... after; that the consciousness of my God may be diffused throughout the whole of my life, like a deep, clear, refreshing stream. By nature that is so different. In daily life that is so different. To be sure, if I am a born-again sinner I am in the house of the Lord, certainly and forever. But, the consciousness of it, the experience of it, the exercise of it, is so spurious, so spasmodic. Christian life is so much like a river in great drought—a stagnant, stinking pool here, a stretch of bare gravel there, then a few more drops of lukewarm water, then a stretch of foul-smelling water, then a shallow pond, etc. The inner desire of the Christian is that his life may run as a deep, clear, fresh stream.

All the days of my life. Not only on Sundays, but every day. Not five minutes in the morning when I am eager to go to work. Not five minutes at night when I am half asleep. But the whole live-long day.

"TO BEHOLD THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD"

That is the purpose of it all, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, for our own sake. For truly, therein lies our whole salvation, now and forever, that we may behold the beauty of the Lord our God.

The beauty of the Lord is His loveliness, grace, glory. It is the radiation, the manifestation of all His perfections, His power and majesty, wisdom and knowledge, righteousness and holiness, love and truth, grace and mercy. It is the full and glorious revelation of God Himself.

To "behold" means, not only to see in a casual way, but to gaze at, rejoice in, experience; to share in the loveliness and glory of God; to experience all the riches and fruits of His divine power and majesty, wisdom and knowledge, love and truth and

"My God, how wonderful Thou art, Thy majesty, how bright! How beautiful Thy mercy-seat In depths of burning light!

"Father of Jesus, Love Divine, What rapture will it be, Prostrate before Thy throne to lie, And gaze and gaze on Thee."

Everything in God is so beautiful, so lovely, so adorable. God Himself is beautiful beyond compare:—His being, His nature, His Name. His work in Christ is beautiful;—the incarnation, the cross, the resurrection, the benefits merited by Him for a world that is lost in sin. His work in the church is beautiful;—regeneration, faith, conversion, justification, sanctification, preservation, Word, sacraments, etc. All His works are beautiful, in Christ and His church, nature and grace.

To behold the beauty of the Lord implies: to see, enjoy, experience, share in the incomprehensible riches of it all.

This is possible only in the house of the Lord, nowhere else. In living fellowship with God's church, with Christ, with God,—never in the realm of darkness and death. Also, in the gathering of the saints, where His Word is preached and His sacraments administered,—never in the way of the world. Remember that, young people! It's so important.

"ONE THING HAVE I DESIRED, THAT WILL I SEEK AFTER"

One thing! That is the basic desire of my soul, the one purpose of my life. Having that I have all,—there can be nothing more.

I! Notice how personal is this confession. It's so characteristic of all the psalms.

Desired! Craved! Wanted more than anything in the world.

That will I seek after! In my prayers, my study of the word of God, my life, my worship in God's house.

Of the Lord! Who else can give it? Is that your confession too? It should be! It must be! It is, principally, if you are a child of God!

And with that as our inmost desire, all is well. We can go on in the fear and power of our God, however dark the way or rugged the road may be, knowing that the end will be His glory and our salvation in His eternal home, where we shall behold the beauties of the Lord forever "and gaze, and gaze on Thee."
“How can I, as a Christian, conduct my research to the glory of God? What must I do different than non-Christian scientists?”

This was the repeated question asked by one scientist at a joint meeting of scientists and theologians, devoted to a better understanding of one another’s work and to clarifying tensions between scientific and theological disciplines.

Oscar T. Walle, who is Professor and Registrar at Concordia Senior College, Fort Wayne, Indiana writes concerning the scientist’s vocation in the September 12, 1960, issue of Christianity Today. The professor points out that the answer to the question posed in the previous paragraphs is a problem that is no greater than those problems encountered by Christians in every other lawful occupation. “It is the old problem of letting the light so shine that the Father may be glorified.” It is a touchy situation because strong feelings have developed over the years because of some tension areas and because of some “problems” which the scientist’s discipline have created for theology.

Professor Walle takes a look at the problem from a three-fold point of view. He first examines the non-Christian approach to the whole problem of scientific research. He says that for the non-Christian, science is an empirical activity whereby one tries to enhance his approximation of what he thinks is a reasonable explanation of the world about him. “The activity includes careful observation, creative imagination, hunches, trial and error, instrumentation, controlled experimentation, mathematical analysis, and logical deduction.” Professor Walle believes that for the most part the work of the non-Christian is intellectually honest but that the non-Christian since he is unregenerate “tries to suppress any thoughts within him that there is a Supreme Being, a Creator who transcends the material world, and who may not be truly known through avenues of knowledge which lead to empirical understanding of our world.”

In the second place Professor Walle considers the believer’s approach. According to the writer the believer considers science an activity whereby he increases his knowledge of God’s creation. The Christian scientist must start from the basic position that this is a fallen creation. He realizes therefore that “his efforts in a particular science will be limited, that his methods are fallible, and that even the most rigorous experimental and statistical technique may be subject to valid criticism if appraised from some reference outside its own postulates. Furthermore he knows that induction and deduction both have inherent limitations, and that models or theories developed from either mode of logic contains the cumulation of all original error plus errors within the theories themselves.”

Thirdly, Professor Walle notes that both the Christian and non-Christian follow one of the operational concepts of science, namely, that of “reserved judgment and tentative conclusions” but the non-Christian’s skepticism and caution are based on an inherent scorn for all authority while the Christian knows that there is only one reliable authority, namely, divine authority.

The Christian scientist “Will therefore tend in his theoretical projections to be guided by other criteria than the popular one which states that an hypothesis is good if it works. His hypothesis will be tempered by ultimate implications, if these are foreseeable. In so thinking, he is not only being a good Christian but realistic, for many are the hypotheses that have been workable but completely unconformable with the facts later discovered. In many cases such facts have been useful scientifically because they have stimulated further research. But the fine line between workability and representation of reality is often overlooked, and right here great harm has been done to the cause of truth and spiritual values, which are quite obviously the deep concern of the believing scientist.”

Professor Walle comes to the conclusion
that outwardly the Christian scientist and the non-Christian scientist are both doing the same thing and that if methods of science are at all valid in their own realm, both will arrive at the same generalizations and laws. The essential difference is that the two are working for a different reason and with a different purpose.

Much of what Professor Walle says in his thought-provoking article is very true and much to the point. The assumption by Professor Walle that the scientist’s discipline has created problems for theology is undoubtedly a point well taken but whether problems should or should not exist is not discussed.

It is obviously true that there are many so-called Christian and believing scientists today who claim to be conducting research to the glory of God but whether they are or not still remains an unanswered question. When “Reformed” scholars and scientists attempt to explain things empirically and at the same time pose as Scriptural exegetes, (and in the process become guilty of the same errors committed by the higher critics) one begins to wonder about the veracity and legitimacy of such experimentation.

---

**HELPS FOR BIBLE STUDY ON THE**

**Book of REVELATION**

by REV. H. HOEKSEMA

*Lesson XIV (Revelation 7:1-8) The Sealing of the One Hundred and Forty Thousand*

1. Vs. 1. a. “And after these things I saw”, i.e. after the sixth seal vision. A new vision is introduced here. The sixth seal is accomplished. The seventh seal, however is not opened until ch. VIII. In our chapter, therefore, we have an interlude or episode, consisting of two visions. They are closely related to the seals, yet do not belong to them. These visions are rather preparatory to the opening of the seventh seal. b. John beholds “four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.” We note here: (1) That the four angels are “ministering spirits”, agents in the execution of God’s judgments on the earth; not to be interpreted as evil spirits, or as representing mighty men. (2) The four winds are destructive forces that are about to be released on the earth. Not to be explained as wars, etc. The number four indicates their universality (four angels, four winds, four corners of the earth). (3) Earth and sea and trees are not to be interpreted allegorically, but represent “the earth and its fulness”. (4) That the winds are held by the four angels “that the wind should not blow”, indicates that the time is not yet ripe for the execution of the judgments symbolized by the four winds. Something else must first be accomplished. What this is we find explained in the following verses.

2. Vss. 2, 3. a. “And I saw another angel ascending from the east” (the R. V. translates literally “from the sunrising”). Also this angel is one of God’s spiritual agents, and not to be interpreted as Christ, or as the Holy Spirit. While the other angels stand at the four corners of the earth, this angel moves upon the scene. Many interpretations have been given of the detail that he ascends from the “rising
of the sun”. The truth is: this angel comes with a mission of light and salvation. b. “Having the seal of the living God”. The seal is not to be confused with a mark or sign as in Ex. 12:13; Ez. 9:4. It is a sign of proprietorship, and of security and inviolability. The latter is emphatically the meaning here as is evident from the context. It is the seal of “the living God”. God has life in Himself, and He is able to give and preserve the life of His servants. The seal is an operation of the living God. e. “And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea”. The angel cries with a loud voice, because his voice must be heard over the whole earth. The four angels have power to hurt the earth and the sea by releasing the four winds. He cries: “Hurt not the earth” etc. vs. 3. Before the winds are released the servants of God must be sealed. Note: (1) That the angel says “we”, suggesting that he has associates. (2) That those that are to be sealed are called “servants of God”, viewing them as those that do the will of God. (3) That the seal is to be pressed on their foreheads, the seat of the mind, the intelligence.

Note. Meaning of the sealing. The sealing certainly signifies that the servants of God will be safe and secure in the storms that are about to break loose over the earth. However this is not to be understood as a physical security, so that these storms will not touch them and they will be passed over, not come in the tribulation. This is (1) Contrary to all Scripture that exhorts God’s people to be faithful in tribulation. (2) To the warning concerning those days by the Lord Himself, Matt. 24:21ff. (3) Contrary to the very idea of sealing. What is meant is that God’s servants will be preserved spiritually that they may persevere unto the end.

3. Vss. 4-8: “And I heard the number of them that were sealed”, etc. The number of the sealed was evidently announced by the angel: 144,000. The number 12 is the number of the people of God: 12 tribes, patriarchs, apostles, 24 elders etc. It is the number of election: 3 times 4. 12 times 12 (144) probably denotes the elect out of every nation (every tribe of Israel in the vision). 10 is the number of fulness. 1000 indicates a large multitude. “Of all the tribes of the children of Israel”. Not to be limited to the Jews or the elect from the Jews, but to all the elect, because: (1) A literal interpretation is impossible: Dan is not mentioned, Levi is; Joseph is mentioned and so is Manasseh, but not Ephraim. (2) Contrary to the general idea of the book of Revelation. (3) All God’s people need this sealing, the Christians from the Gentiles too. (4) 144,000 in other parts of Revelation denotes all God’s people, the Church. Ch. 14; 21:12ff. Hence: they represent the Church of Christ in the world at any period of history; also in the period of the final great tribulation.

SUICIDE!
(continued from page 1)

has given us a new spirit, the Spirit of Adoption whereby we cry, “Abba Father.” I am personally convinced that the only way that it is possible for the child of God to destroy his life is a state of great confusion of mind. I am also convinced that this happens. Man was created with a terrific instinct for self-preservation, and for the child of God to overcome that instinct to the point where he can deliberately seek extinction rather than preservation would certainly indicate that his mental equilibrium has been drastically upset if not destroyed. If you ask a doctor who has made a study of human behavior why people do commit suicide he will tell you that the person does it for one reason; that reason is to hurt others. He has a private notion that he can hurt others by causing them grief and sorrow and that he will be an invisible witness to this grief and sorrow he has caused. He then feels he will satisfy his urge to be recognized and appreciated.

I have no doubt that this may be true. It is also indicative of the state of mind of such a person and you certainly could not say that he is in possession of all his faculties. I would say suicide is the tragic result of mental illness.
Call News:

Rev. A. Mulder declined the call from Randolph.
Rev. C. Hanko declined the call from Isabel-Forbes.
Rev. H. Hanko declined the call from Grand Haven.
Rev. G. Vanden Berg received the call to Creston, from a trio consisting of the Revs. H. Hanko and A. Mulder also.

At Southwest Church, Mr. and Mrs. R. Kooiker, Jr. made public confession of faith on October 9th.
Mr. Max Moore made his confession of faith on October 16th in Loveland.

Mr. and Mrs. D. Vander Schaaf and sons have transferred from Hull to our Southeast congregation.
Darrel and Jon Huiskens came to Southeast church from Edgerton.
Mr. and Mrs. R. Longstreet and daughter have transferred from Southeast to Southwest church.
Miss Audrey Klaver returned to First Church from Oak Lawn.

Future Conventioneers:
A daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. J. Van Dyke of Kalamazoo.
A daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. M. Koerner of First Church.
A son born to Mr. and Mrs. K. Rietema of First.
A daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. J. Lanning of Southeast.

Congratulations:
To Mrs. John Heys of First Church who celebrated her 81st birthday recently.
To Rev. and Mrs. G. Vos who celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary on September 7th. Their congregation helped them celebrate the event by planning a program complete with refreshments and gifts for them that evening.

Wedding Bells Rang:

On September 15 for Miss Phyllis Ann Wolfert and Peter Miedema (Hudsonville).
On September 23 for Miss Betty Kooienga and Mr. S. Dykstra (Hope).
On September 23 for Miss Jean Zandstra and Albert Buiter (Oak Lawn).
On October 6 for Miss Marlene Westrate and Jack Hager (Southeast).
On October 13 for Miss Melva Wiersema and Marvin Mastbergen (Southeast).
We pray that they may all experience God’s blessing as they begin a home founded on His fear.

School Activities:
The 9th grade of Hope School sponsored a Rummage Sale on October 17th.
Adams School’s Athletic Club has scheduled their fall Pancake Supper for October 29th.
Hope School Circle plans to hold their annual Fall Sale on Friday evening, November 4.
On October 12th the Protestant Reformed Mothers’ Club held a Coffee Party at Adams St. School gymnasium.
South Holland – Oak Lawn Ladies’ Auxiliary sponsored a Sing-spiration at Oak Lawn on October 10th to raise money for their school.
A Reformation Day Program is scheduled by Adams St. School for October 27th. This is sponsored by the 9th grade class and is to be held in Southeast Church.
Called Home:

The infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Larry Van Putten of First Church.

Hudsonville reports that their service boy, Garry Gras, was recently home on a 15-day furlough.

Is your church conspicuous in our column because of its absence? If so, won't you please send bulletins and other items of interest to

Mrs. C. H. Westra
845 Alexander St., S. E.
Grand Rapids 7, Michigan

POTENTIAL WEALTH
ED LANGERAK

Wonderful gift God gave us, this ability to read. This ability to sit in our living room, pick up a book and converse with authors, new and old. What a vast opportunity to improve ourselves, to broaden out our lives, to discover other people's ideas and compare with our own, to learn more about this wonderful creation and its contents.

Sadly disused gift, isn't it? How often do we read? How many evenings have we passed up the television set or any other useless time-consuming project, to read a good book? How many of us get beyond the stage of the newspaper and let it go at that.

Badly misused gift also. Did God give us this gift so we could read the material we are so often tempted to read? The material that we so often do read? The material that so often finds its way into our Christian homes? A good question to ask ourselves when we pick up something to read, might be, "Would I want to be reading this if Jesus were in this room with me?" He is you know.

We in the Protestant Reformed Churches are sometimes known as being unnecessarily "narrow minded." I wonder if there could perhaps be some small element of truth to this. How many of us say, or at least think, "I know that I believe, and I know that what I believe is the truth, therefore it is only profitable for me to read about this truth," promptly rejecting and refusing to read about all other ideas, most of which we know nothing about.

Some people, with various reasons, cannot read. This is indeed sad. They will never, for circumstances beyond their control, know the wonderful pleasure of enriching their lives, both spiritually and mentally, by reading. I don't believe there are many of us in this group.

Some people, with various excuses, do not read. This is sadder. They pass up the privilege of reading with the standard pretext, "Yes I would like to read more, if I only had some time." I hesitate to say that there aren't many of us in this group. Next time we sit back to enjoy another evening of television, maybe we should remember that if we don't read good books, we are no better off than those who cannot read them.

IN GOD'S COUNTRY

The rolling fields of brown and green
Embraced the purple mountains high;
The rugged peaks with snowy lips
Reached bravely up and kissed the sky.

The azure blue stretched out its hands,
Pulled up the eastern shining sphere;
The sun with kindly smiling face
Gave light and life and warmth and cheer.

The great Creator, moved by love,
Looked down on hill and plain and wood
And saw His handiwork divine
Tell forth His praise and said, "'Tis good."

Jim Jonker

BEACON LIGHTS

Seventeen
THE FALL MASS MEETING IN THE GRAND RAPIDS AREA

- THE PLACE
  First Protestant Reformed Church (Basement)

- THE TIME
  November 8, 1960
  8:00 P.M.

- THE SPEAKER
  Rev. C. Hanko
  "Reformation in Holland"

- THE PROGRAM: A Discussion
  Resolve: That Bible Should be Taught as a Formal Subject in Our Schools.